

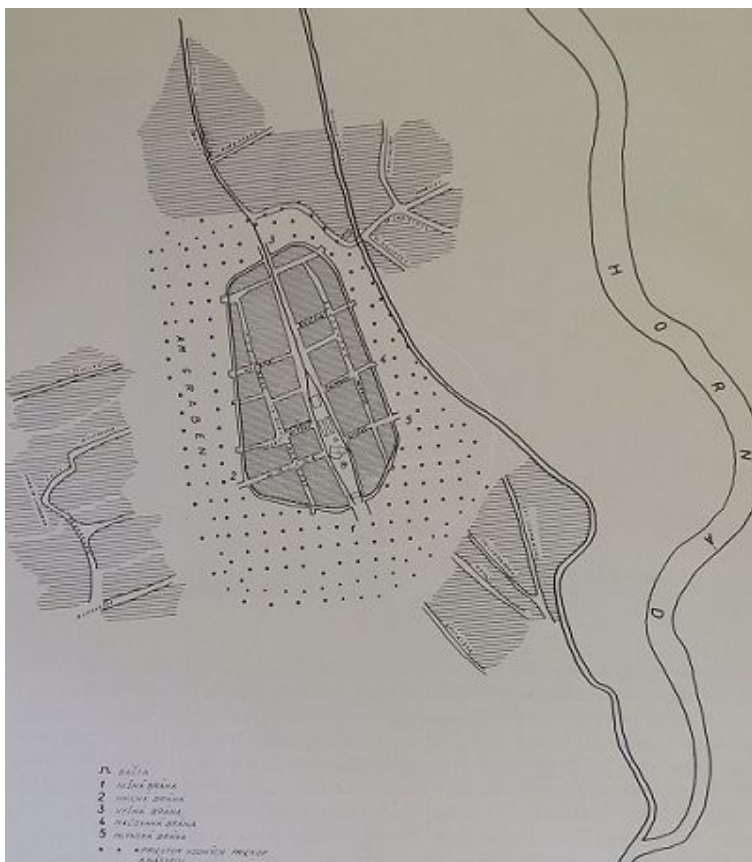
History of the Mill Race

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Landscape-Urban Competition

“Revitalization of the Mill Race in Košice”

Based on historical and archaeological research, it is concluded that the oldest walls of Košice had three gates: the Lower (southern) and Upper (northern) Gates and the “Hnilná” Gate in the western part. In the eastern part of the city, the city gate likely did not exist at first, an arm of the Hornád River flowed there along the walls. Its riverbed could, to some extent, be a construction work of the people of Košice.



The rugged bed of this western arm of the Hornád, in the part leading below the city walls, was gradually modified and its width ranged from 15 to 20 meters. Due to the meandering river, no such significant suburban settlement had been established to the east of the walls, as had been developing to the south, west and north of the city.

The arm flowing near the walls had been named after the water mill that was set up here. To this day, it is usually referred to as “the Mill Stream” (*Mlynský potok*), “the Mill Creek” (*Mlynský jarok*), or “the Mill Race” (*Mlynský náhon*). The first mills at the Mill Race were supposedly established in the middle of the 14th

Stredoveké Košice / Halaga, O. R.: Počiatky a zrod metropoly

century, when the town underwent a significant development of trade and crafts. The documents mention the "Upper Mill", which belonged to the Dominicans at the time. Their order had owned gardens closeby.

At the end of the 14th century, the Mill Gate (later also named the Painted Gate) was built on the eastern side of the walls. Its name also indicates that the mill behind the walls already existed. Defensive ditches filled with water behind the walls and an inner ditch along the wall had been part of Košice's fortification since ancient times. The ditch next to the eastern wall was filled with water from the Mill Race. During the gradual expansion of the fortifications, the Mill Race also formed another natural water barrier from the eastern side.

In the 1560s, probably due to the growing Ottoman danger, the city began the construction of a bastion fortification, which aimed to strengthen the city's defense system so that it could withstand cannon fire. In 1566, under the patronage of Upper-Hungarian Captain Lazar Schwendi, the foundations of the new fortification were laid; this was situated opposite the suburban Tehlova Street to the north. Another part of the fortification was built in the western part of the city, at the end of Žabia Street. Around this time, the construction of fortifications on the east side had begun, towards the mill called Schreiber mühl.

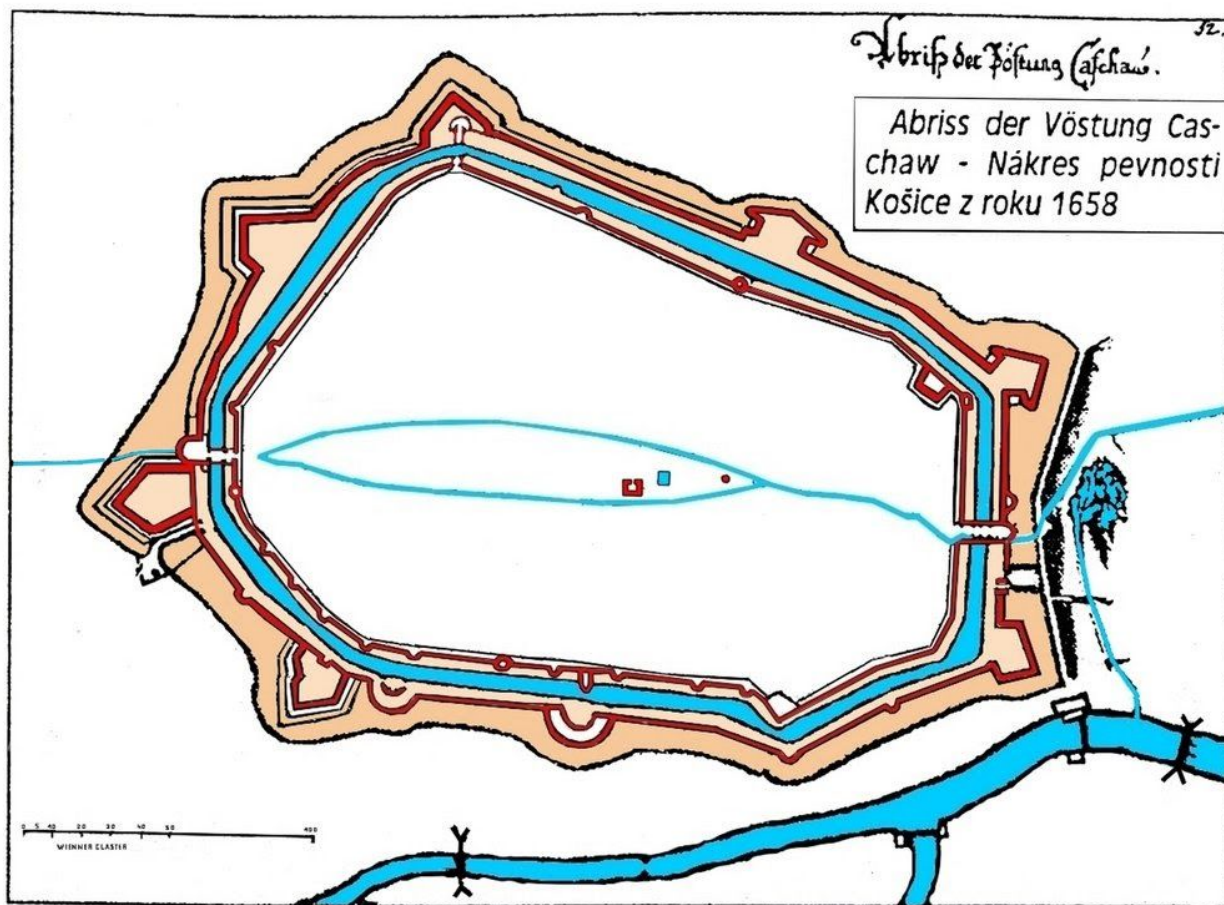


Figure 1.

The oldest known drawing depicting the Mill Race is a plan of the Košice fortress from 1658 and is deposited in the archives of the German city of Karlsruhe. Restored and colored by J. Bauer / HistoricKE

The so-called Maggiorotti plan of the city from the late 17th century shows a developed river network to the east of the city. On the bank of the Mill Race, the ravelins of St. Joseph and St. Peter (under numbers 23 and 24) and two redoubts (number 27), which were part of the city's defense system, had been standing. The town mill was situated behind the walls to the southeast (J1) and even lower there was the so-called Imperial mill (J2).

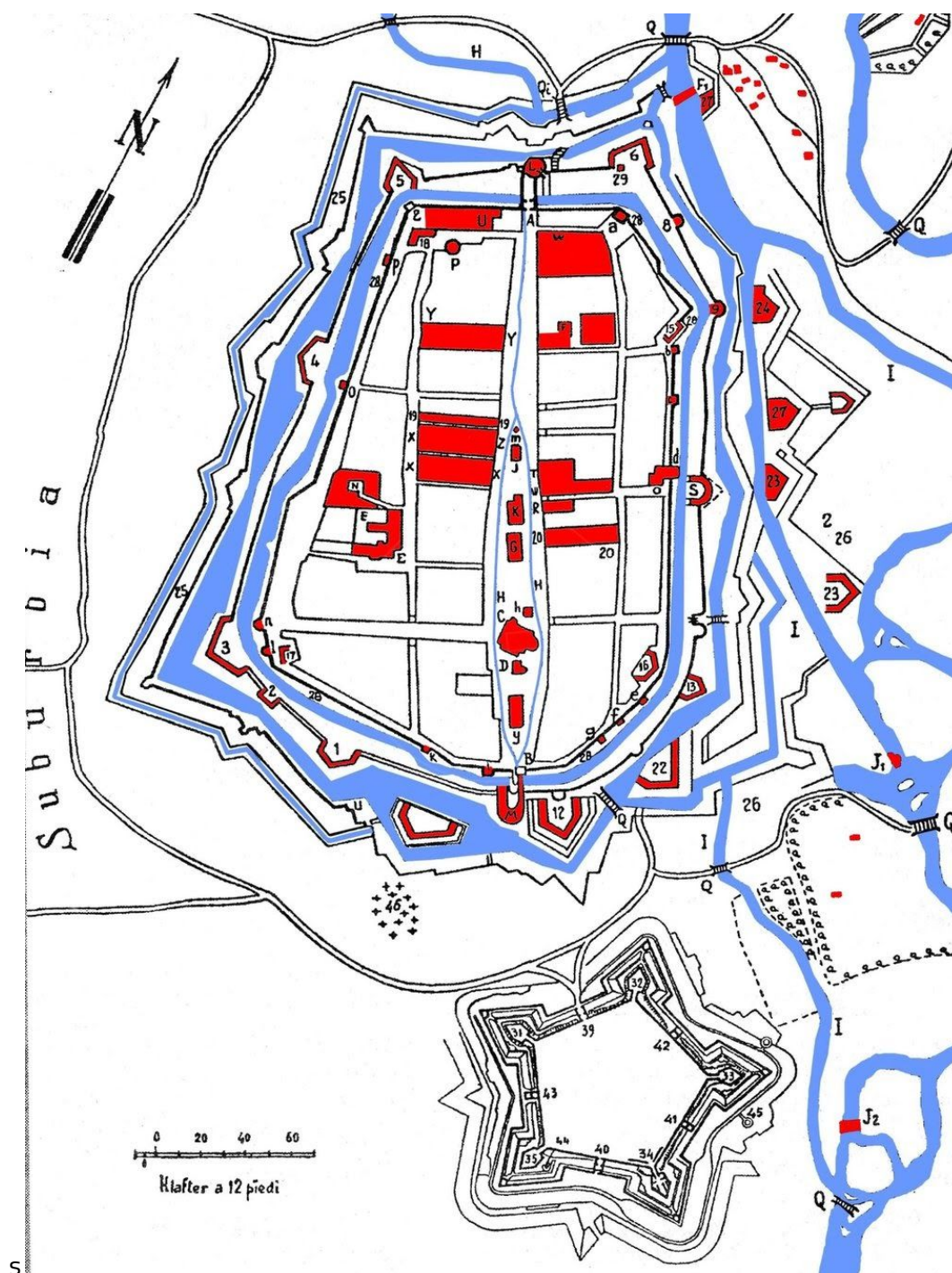


Figure 2.

Maggiorotti's plan of the city from the late 17th century, modified by Juraj Bauer / HistoricKE

On the plans from the mid 18th century, in the northern line with the city walls, the so-called Upper mill is already indicated on the Mill Race.

In his geography of the Kingdom of Hungary from 1780, Karol Gottlieb von Windisch mentions that a strong spring with healing effects sprung at the Mill Race, near the Middle mill. The people of Košice liked its iron-rich water, so the city built a wooden and popular spa here.

The fortification in the eastern part of the city was broken through in the early 19th century and Mlynská (Mill) Street was gradually extended by another 140 meters. In this area, the local aristocracy and wealthy burghers established decorative and recreational gardens, and the whole developing area was named New Town.

After the devastating flood in 1813, the mayor Karol Fischer ordered the building of a new spa in 1825, designed by Jozef Belágh. The simple one-floor pavilion with a spa hall faced the Mill Race and the town. Cabins with bathtubs and other facilities were placed in both side wings. The spa, in conjunction with the neighboring "Fischerka" - mayor Fischer's amusement garden - encouraged the transformation of meadows into a public park. One of the oldest public swimming pools was built near the former ravelins of St. Joseph and St. Peter in 1845. It was a gymnasium of Count Csáky, which consisted of a swimming and fencing school.

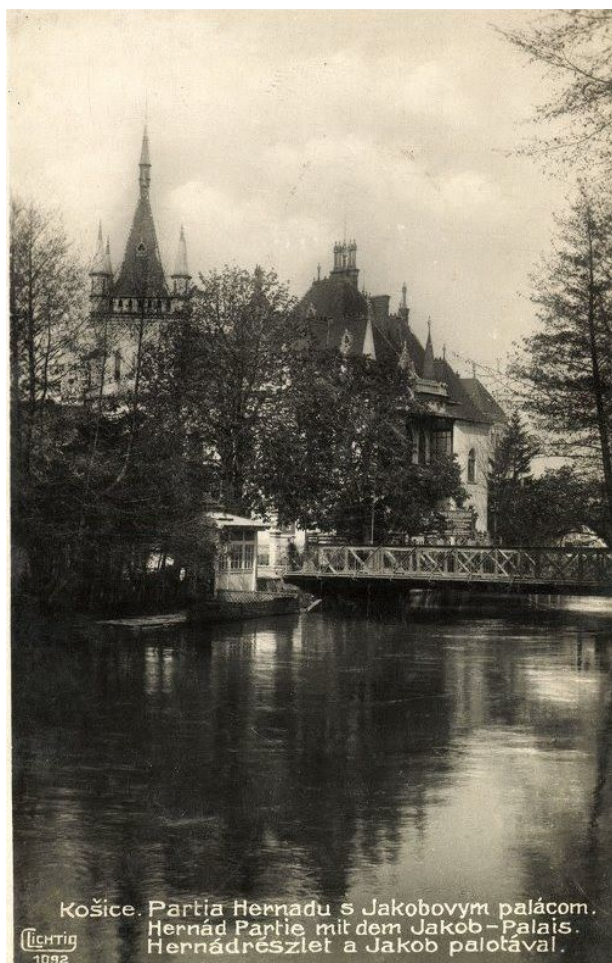
In the second half of the 19th century, with the establishment of a railway station, the entire eastern part of the city began to transform significantly. The first train arrived in Košice on July 5, 1860. The Mlynská Street became the entrance gate to the city and the main artery between the center and the railway station.

The Mill Race was not only a great benefit thanks to the mills, now two hydroelectric power plants powering the city. It had also become a decoration of a growing city. A city park had been created in the area between the Mill Race and the railway station. Until the early 19th century, a number of smaller streams flowed through this area, often changing their bed. Over time, the area was dried up and used as a common meadow, where the people of Košice used to come for amusement in the first half of the 19th century. The park landscaping of the city meadow was stimulated by the construction of the first

railway station. Gradually, the city park began to change into a cultivated park of English style and the Mill Race was its precious element.

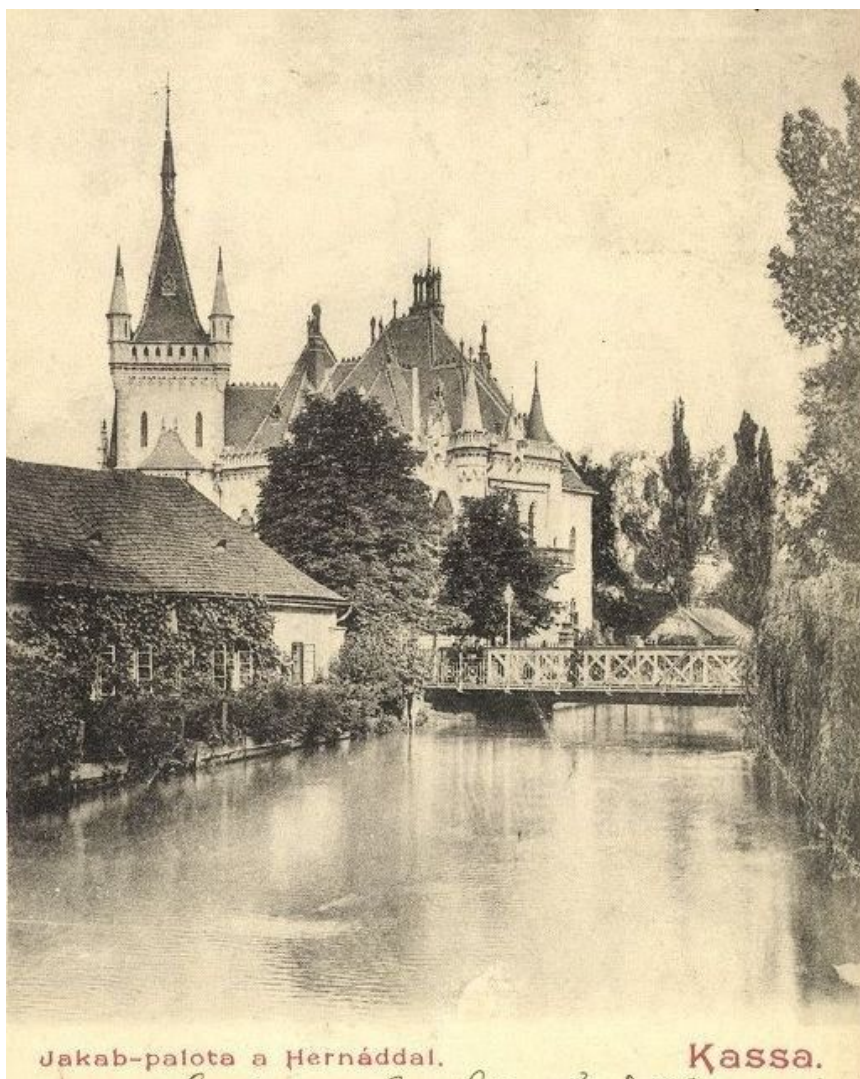
The center and the New Town were connected by bridges built over the Mill Race. In 1900, up to 15 bridges and footbridges led across the stream. Most were simple wooden bridges used for pedestrians. Let's mention at least two most distinctive ones, one of which still connects Mlynská Street with the city park and the other was situated further north.

After the demolition of the eastern walls, the Mlynská Street was extended and in an effort to connect the street with the park, a wooden bridge was built in 1832. In 1882, an iron bridge was built in place of the wooden one, later replaced by today's concrete one, on which a new railing was installed in 1997. A famous iconic building was built by the bridge in 1899 - Jakab's Palace. A well-known Košice builder Peter Jakab built it as his family residence.



Postcard from the period of the first Czechoslovak republic (1918-1938) / HistoricKE

The bridge in the northern part (approximately at today's roundabout on Masarykova Street) was a single-pillar steel structure, built in 1885 on the site of an old wooden bridge. Two lanes and a tram line led across the bridge. The continuation of Ferencz József tér (Franz Josef square - today's Hviezdoslavova Street) over the Mill Race - the newly opened Klobusiczky Street (today's Masarykova Street) became a significant transit artery in 1885, especially with regard to direct access to the railway warehouse.



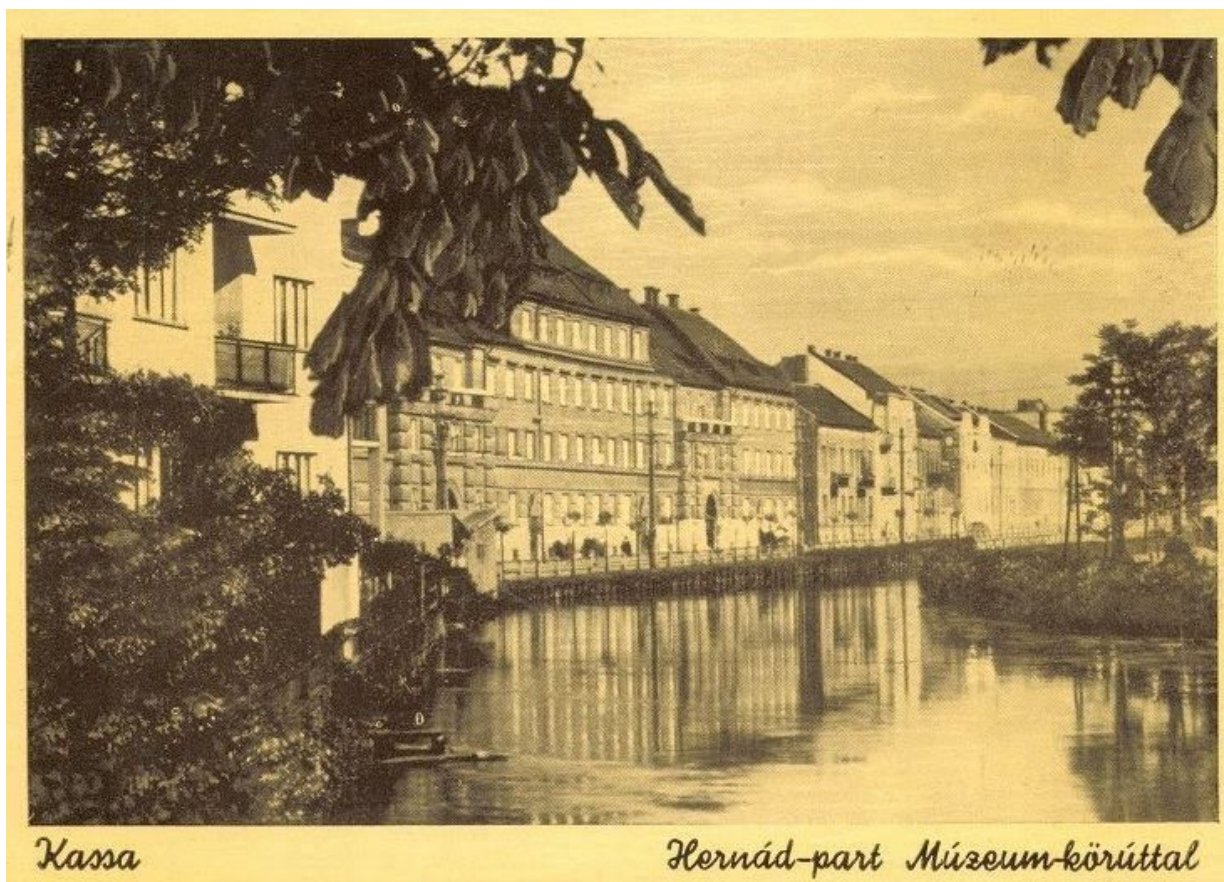
The postcard sent in 1902 shows a new Košice building - Jakab's Palace and the original bridge, which connected the center with the city park / HistoricKE

Watermills continued to be an important economic factor in the city. The old water mill was leased from the city in 1896 by the joint-stock company Hungária. It consisted mainly of entrepreneurs from Moldava nad Bodvou and was headed by the city deputy Dávid Rottenberg. The company got into a crisis and in 1906 the mill was saved as the grain wholesalers, brothers Pavol and Bartolomej Wirtschafter purchased it, and updated it with new water turbines. In December 1910, a fire broke out in the mill, which meant its end. The remains of the mill were removed in 1913.



Bridge on the former street - Klobusiczky utca. A view from the late 19th century / HistoricKE

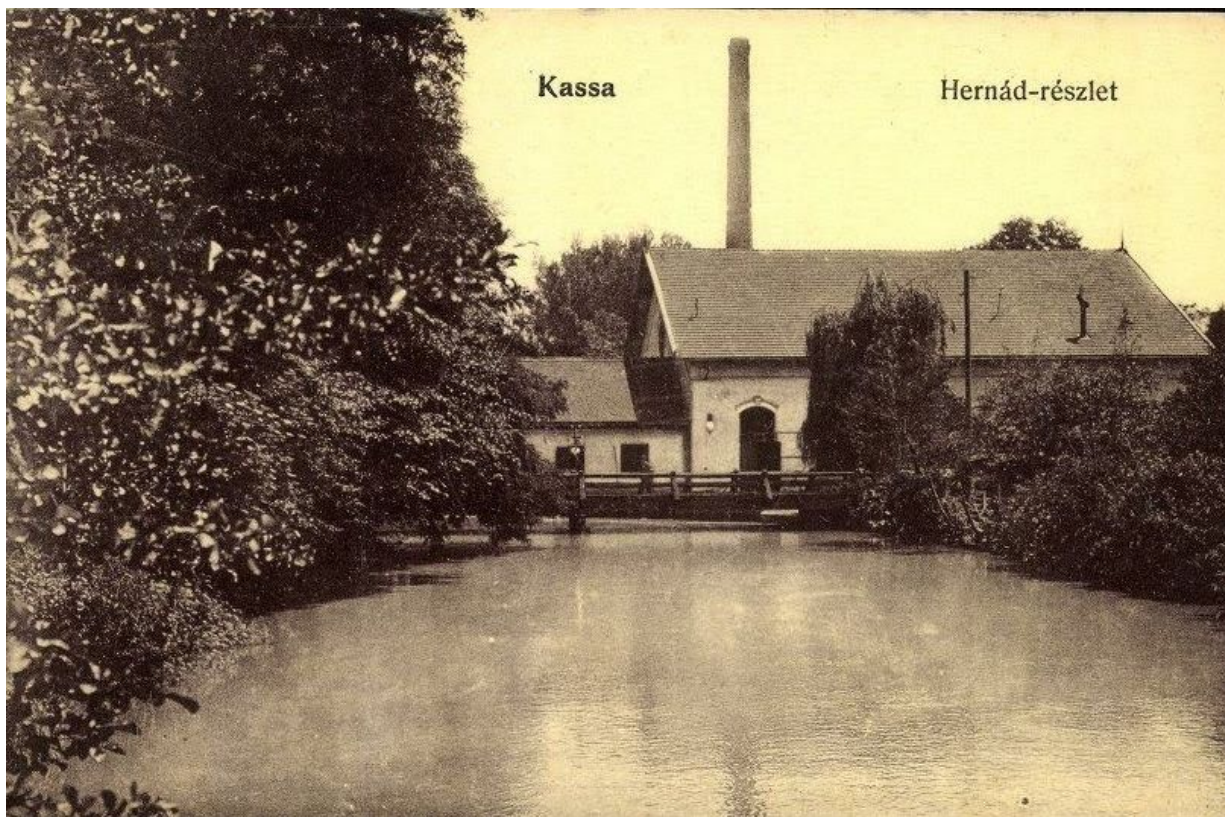
On the site of the Middle mill, Košice entrepreneurs built a new complex of so-called "artificial" mills. The Kassai műmalom (Košice artificial mill) was built on the Mill Race in 1862. It was reconstructed in 1900. The company Košický umelý mlyn a.s. was founded in 1900, used the building and owned the machinery within during the period of Austria-Hungary (until 1918) and the first Czechoslovak Republic (1918–1938). From September 1, 1926, it switched from water power to steam and electricity. The mill served until August 23, 1976, when it was destroyed by fire.



The Mill Race flowed along today's Štefánikova street. Postcard from the 1940s / HistoricKE

Not far from the Middle mill, a hydroelectric power plant was built in 1896, in which a steam engine was also installed in 1897. For example, the power plant had been powering street lighting networks since 1907 and since 1913 had been powering the city's tram network.

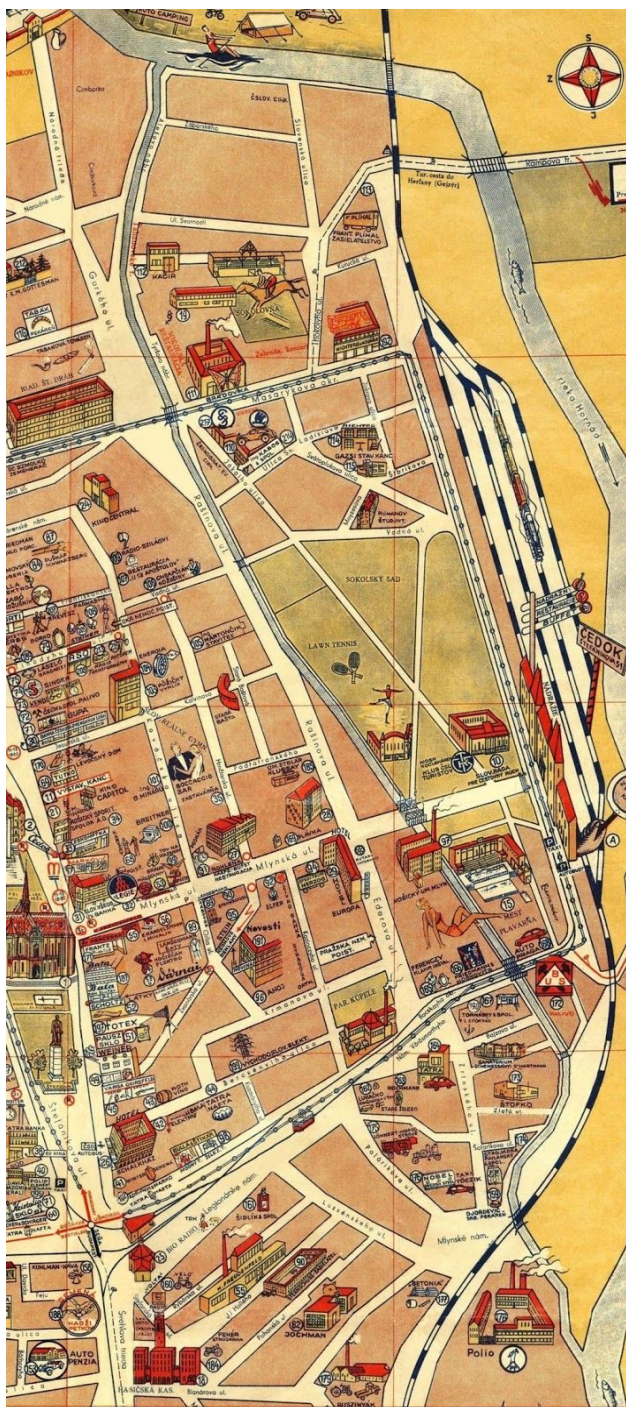
The auxiliary hydroelectric power plant was built in 1910 on the site of the former Hungária mill (by the bridge from Hviezdoslavová Street) with a Francis water turbine and a generator, with an output of 100 kilovoltamperes. In 1937, this power plant was supplemented by another turbine and a generator with an output of 70 kilovoltamperes. The auxiliary power plant was operational even after the war had ended and operated until the second half of the 1960s. After the abolition of Mlynský náhon, they also removed the building of the former power plant in the late 1970s.



Mlynský stream on a historical postcard / HistoricKE

Even in the second half of the 19th century, the Mill Race was used for swimming. On the site of today's Kunsthalle in 1847, they built a wooden swimming pool for the public. Part of the swimming pool served as the Schwimmschule swimming school. In 1853, the swimming pool was rebuilt and served the city public for several more decades.

Under the pressure of increasing traffic, Mlynský náhon was replaced by an efficient road in the second half of the 1960s. Its part north of the historic city center has been preserved, the river Hornád was regulated in the first half of the last century by creating a river profile in the shape of the letter V. With the abolition of part disrupted.



Even today, older Košice people nostalgically remember swimming, fishing, boating, and observing floating swans. Winter fun also included skating on the frozen surface of the stream.

Unfortunately, this beautiful and rare part of the city was removed from the city by the communist establishment.

The Mill Race on a colored map of Košice from 1938 / HistoricKE