

THE NSZL PUBLISHING HOUSE



Tradition and renewal

NSZL as a publisher has been present in the Hungarian book market with its prestigious titles for years now. The library presents about 30 publications annually, based upon its unique collection and the special knowledge of its staff. Individually or jointly with renowned publishers in Hungary and abroad, NSZL offers a wide range of books including facsimile editions, illustrated albums, volumes of conference papers and essays, gap-filling bibliographies and exhibition catalogues. NSZL is also a founder and partner publisher of prestigious periodicals like the 132 years old *Hungarian Book Review*.

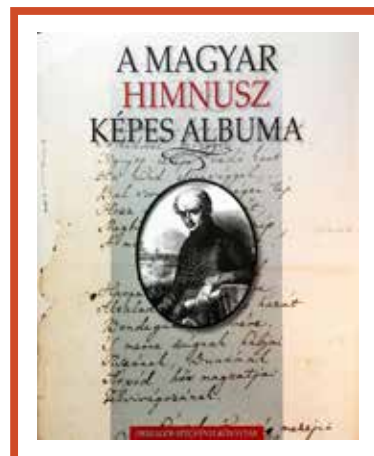
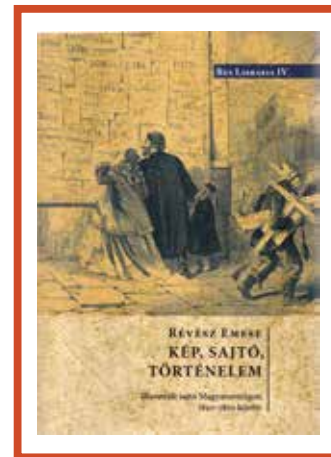
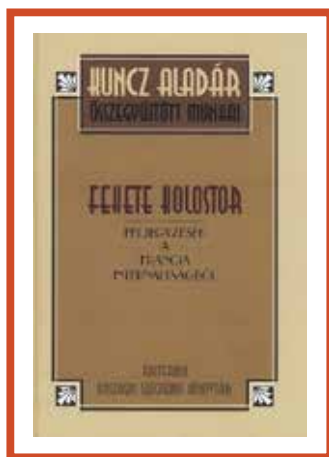
While the primary aim of our activity is to publish the results of academic research, our special library tasks

and Hungarica research require also the publication of facsimile editions of the invaluable treasures of NSZL and an increasing number of bilingual publications, including the present institutional yearbook.

Tradition and Renewal was the title of the rich chamber exhibition on the 7th floor spaces of NSZL that presented our successful publications of the past one and a half decade. The exhibition was set up by the staff of our Secretariat of Research (under the leadership of László Herendi) and was open between March and May 2017. The subpage www.oszk.hu/konyvkiado of the NSZL Publishing House is available since 2016, with our retroactively searchable publications.

László Boka

Head of the NSZL Publishing House



A Home of Arts and Muses: The Library of King Matthias Corvinus – Workshop and exhibition in the Hungarian Pavilion of the Milan Expo

On the request of the Government Commissioner for the Milan Expo, Géza Szócs, National Széchényi Library presented a complex program in the Hungarian Pavilion of the World's Fair in October 2015. The topic was a major chapter of the Hungarian-Italian cultural relations, the Corvina Library.

Both Géza Szócs and NSZL Director-General László Tüske attended the workshop of Hungarian and Italian researchers on 9 October. The event was accompanied by an exhibition of fine copies of Corvinas held in the NSZL collections, arranged by the author of this article. For a couple of weeks, the exhibition was open for the broader audience that could see a short documentary footage on the Corvinas, shot during the previous month by our Web Content Coordination Department, under the management of Annamária Sudár.

The workshop marked the symbolic start of a new chapter in the Hungarian–Italian co-operation in Corvina research. After the greeting words of Géza Szócs, NSZL Director-General László Tüske announced that the national library's Corvina website is about to renew with the purpose of a virtual reunification of the Corvinas of King Matthias's Library now scattered throughout the world. (The reconstruction and modernization of the website is currently under way, as well as the uploading of new content. The task is carried out by the Web Content Coordination Department of NSZL under the management of Annamária Sudár, and together with Ildikó Beöthy and Edina Zsupán.)

The contributors of the workshop, all renowned specialists, held a dialogue of their most recent research. László Csorba offered a general review of Hungarian–Italian cultural relations. Then some important illuminators of the one-time Buda Royal Library were discussed. Mario Marubbi, one of the most excellent researchers of Francesco da Castello of Milan, presented the importance of the master in codex reproduction in Buda. The lecture of Laura-Paola Gniaccolini explained the relation between Giovan Petro Birago, another Italian illuminator less known for Hungarian research, but all the more important, and some Hun-

garian illustrated codices. He attributed the famous Vitéz-Pontificale to Birago. The paper of Hungarian art historian Dániel Pócs was also related to Birago, but focused rather on the provenance research of a beautiful work of Birago's, the Battista Mantuano-Corvina of Budapest, and unveiled misleading pieces of information regarding the history of the Corvina on the book market. The researcher took this occasion to present his amazing finding of the missing pages of the codex. András Németh presented a significant Greek *scriptor*, Johannés Skutariótés, whose activity in Italy was related to the one-time Corvina library. The study of his work can facilitate the understanding of the environment of the Greek Corvinas, the manuscripts related to them, the interconnections between the scholars, and the cultural influences. Árpád Mikó discussed the complex problems of the gilded leather binding of the Corvinas, with subtle remarks on the implicit chronology of the material, and using a new method of style criticism. Gábor Bolonyai explored the contents of the Corvina Library in terms of contemporaneous literary canons, focusing his present lecture on Pindaros. The excellent philologist Concetta Bianca analyzed the connection between Buda and Naples within the topic of the Hungarian–Italian relations that might have influenced the development of the Corvina Library. Edina Zsupán presented the reception of the Corvinas, calling the attention to the genre of Corvina laudation, a phenomenon that greatly determined the picture of the Buda Library in the eyes of posterity including academic research.

The papers of this grand conference of valuable content were published in the *Supplementum Corvinianum* series of NSZL in 2017. The volume also includes Marzia Pontone's detailed description of the two Corvinas held at the Biblioteca Trivulziana of Milan.

Edina Zsupán
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The participation of NSZL at book publishers' events

It might not be common knowledge, but National Széchényi Library, in addition to its broad activities as a library, museum and research center, is also present in the Hungarian book publishing market. The national library, due to its complex basic tasks, published several volumes and periodicals during the 20th century, and its presence became more and more significant in the Hungarian book market in the new millennium. The NSZL Publishing House, under the management of István Monok (until 2008) and László Boka (from 2008 to present) publishes an average of 28-30 prestigious publications annually, built upon its tasks related to social sciences, specialized libraries, and the collections of uniquely rich Hungarica collections. Individually or jointly with renowned publishers in Hungary and abroad, NSZL offers a wide range of books including facsimile editions, illustrated albums, volumes of conference papers and essays, gap-filling bibliographies and exhibition catalogues that make up a rich, colorful and high-quality selection for readers and researchers.

The publishing policy of NSZL aims at high standards in form and content. Apart from our individual activity, we cooperate with the most prestigious publishing houses with whom we have been bringing to the audience several successful book series for years now. It is the result of conscious development. The unparalleled collections of our institution and the “grey matter” of our experts and in-house researchers, paired with the fruitful co-operation with our partner publishers, has resulted in a continuous expansion in the recent years. The knowledge of our researchers and the experience of our staff enables us to prepare high-standard academic and educative publications based upon the rich source material of our collections in book, literature, theatre and music history, as well as library science. The NSZL Publishing House is full member of the Hungarian Publishers' and Booksellers' Association, and awarded with several prizes, including the annual Beautiful Hungarian Book award.

The first important publishers' event each year is the *Budapest International Book Festival* in April. During the past years, National Széchényi Library has participated in this festival in different roles: as a member of the “Librarians' Club”, as an invited guest of the Association of Hungarian Librarians, as a special guest presenting on-premises anniversary exhibitions

(including the celebration of 220 years of Hungarian book culture in 2015), and first and foremost as a publisher, with a stand. Until 2016, we shared a stand with other institutions, and from then on, we have been tending an individual stand in the B Building with interesting and beautiful publications, postcards, and posters of ours on display and sale. We have been happy to see the great number of visitors and purchasers.

In May, similarly to the past years, we were present on the *Festival of Museums* with our own stand, in the garden of the Hungarian National Museum. We presented and sold publications, materials, and souvenirs of the library, held book dedications and presentations, and promoted our library services and museum activities. At our tent (awarded a special prize a couple of years ago), we held museum education activities for children. In 2015, we promoted our exhibition *Hungarians in the Caucasus, (Re)Searching the Caucasian homeland in the 19th century*, inaugurated on the 21st of April. In 2016, we held a discussion on our recently published





award-winning volume *Propaganda in World War I*, between historian Iván Bertényi Jr., literary historian Zsuzsanna Rózsafalvi, Tamás Gusztáv Filep and Miklós Zeidler. In 2017, we also participated. Our program for children, related to the Festival's framework program, the *Path of Knowledge*, was built upon a literary "find the pair" game, where the participants had to find out which characters said the lines quoted from János Arany's poems. This year we were present on the stage, too: literary historian and critic Beatrix Visy invited reviewer Nikoletta Szekeres to discuss our facsimile edition of *La Fontaine's Complete Tales* published in February.

As in the previous years, National Széchényi Library took part as a publisher in the most prestigious booksellers' event, the **Festive Book Week**. In 2015 and 2016, we chose the cost-effective solution of hiring a joint pavilion with the House of Traditions. Apart from the promotion of our annual programs and library services, we offered discounts for the purchasing of our new and old publications, and the readers could meet our authors. In 2017, as a member of the Hungarian Publishers' and Booksellers' Association, NSZL was already entitled to hire a separate pavilion with more room for presenting its novelties published for the event. In 2015, our joint publication with Gondolat Publishing House *The Hungarica Ex Libris of the Moscow Rudomino Library in Hungarian and International*

Context was dedicated at our pavilion by the author Kornélia Vassné Tóth. In 2016, our authors dedicated two new books for the Festive Book Week: *Power Discourses, Representations of Power in Science and Art* (a new volume of the *Bibliotheca Scientiae et Artis* series published from 2010 jointly by NSZL and Gondolat Publishing House), edited by Csilla Bíró and Beatrix Visy, and *Ex libris and Visual Culture. Modern Hungarian Ex libris* by Kornélia Vassné Tóth, published jointly by NSZL and Kossuth Publishing House. Our Festive Book Week publications in 2017 were: the facsimile edition of Géza Gárdonyi's *The Eclipse of the Crescent Moon I-II* published by NSZL and the Pytheas Book Manufacture; *The Perception of Islam in Bohemia at the Turn of the 16th and 17th Centuries* by Eszter Kovács, published by NSZL and Pázmány Péter Catholic University (the author dedicated this work at our stand); "*Not as it is in use today*". *The signs of narration and literary narrative structures in Mihály Babits's The history of European literature* by Beatrix Visy, published by NSZL and Balassi Publishing House; and *24 Carats – Poems by Contemporary Hungarian Poets for the Bicentenary of the Birth of János Arany*, an unconventional but very successful volume related to the János Arany Memorial Year. A gap-filling publication of ours in the same year was *The Bibliography of Hungary 1712–1860, Supplements*.

Every year, in the eve and inauguration of the Festive Book Week, the Beautiful Book Award is handed over for the most decorative publications of the previous year. In 2015, the illustrated album *Picture the Great War* of NSZL and Osiris Publishers was awarded the Prime Minister's special award, in 2016 our essay volume *Collectors and Collections* was awarded; and in 2017, our bilingual catalogue *Propaganda in World War I* was honored a certificate and the Antal József Memorial Prize.

Also in these three years, and in close partnership with the Municipality of the Buda Castle District, National Széchényi Library was present on the traditional **Hungarian Language and Book Festival** of the first days of September. We welcomed our visitors with in-house programs, a bookselling stand, and several on-stage book presentations. Our main activity in the library building in September 2015 was the free guided tour of our exhibition *The Royal Library – Secrets of the 35 Corvinas, Images, Texts and Films*. In 2016, visitors could have a look at the oldest book printed in Hungary, the *Chronica Hungarorum* of András Hess. Our exhibition *Zichy's pencil-drawn heroes* was also open for visitors during the event. In 2017, on the occasion of the *Reformation 500* Memorial Year, we offered a tour guided by the curators to a chamber exhibition of special book relics, including works of Benedek Komjáti, János Sylvester and Gáspár Károli. The exhibitions “*Others only get their laurels leaf by leaf...*” – *Treasures, Cults, Reception History* of János Arany, *Hungarian Sound Film Posters 1931–1944* and “*The song might not be forgotten yet*” for the Mihály Tompa bicentenary, were also open.

Our on-stage programs were the following: In September 2015, Ferenc Földesi, the Director of Special Collections at National Széchényi Library held a lecture on the Corvinas. In 2016, our publication *Almanac of the Budapest Journalists' Association 1909*, published jointly with Argumentum Publishing House, was presented by Ágnes Széchényi, chief research associate of the HAS Institute for Literary Studies, and the authors of the two accompanying essays of the volume, literary historian László Boka, Director of Research at NSZL and literary historian Zoltán Szénási. In 2017, we had two book presentations: *The Illustrated Album of the Hungarian Anthem*, our joint publication with Argumentum Publishing House was discussed by literary historian László Boka, Head of the NSZL Publishing House and the authors, and *24 Carats – Poems by Contemporary Hungarian Poets for the Bicentenary of the Birth of János Arany* was presented by its editor, literary historian Beatrix Visy, with the participation of Attila Jász and Krisztián Bokor.

The presence of the NSZL staff at the booksellers' events gave opportunity to personal encounters and conversations with those interested in the library. Our stands, tents and pavilions were set up and tended during the events by the staff of the Secretariat of Research.

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