

CONFERENCES, RESEARCH SESSIONS, ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS



Jan Hus and Hussitism in the Hungarian culture

The 600th anniversary of the death of Jan Hus was commemorated in 2015 with a number of events in several European countries, first and foremost in the Czech Republic. On 10 November, also National Széchényi Library held an international academic conference, entitled *Jan Hus and Hussitism in Hungary*.

The conference was part of the two-day series of academic and cultural events related to Hus, organized by NSZL, the Faculty of Humanities of ELTE (Department of Cultural History, Institute of Slavonic and Baltic Philology, Center for the Study of Religion), and the Czech Center in Budapest with the support of the St. Adalbert Foundation for the Research of Central and Eastern Europe and the Hungarian Academy of Arts.

The event was accompanied by an exhibition of Czech and Hungarian bilingual informative posters as a contribution of the Hussite Museum in Tabor and the Czech Center in Budapest, and 16–17 century Hussite prints from the NSZL Collection of Early Printed Books.

The conference started with the lectures of three guest scholars from the Czech Republic (Sixtus Bolom-Kotari, Prague, České akademie věd; Jan Pišna, Prague, Strahovská knihovna; Zdeněk Vybíral, Tábor, Husitské muzeum) who explained what Jan Hus meant for the Czech people in different periods of their history. Jan Pišna's lecture included the presentation of some of the rare Hussite books exhibited during the conference. The Hungarian language lectures that followed summarized the effect Hussitism made on the history of Hungarian culture from the Middle Ages to the beginning of the 20th century.

It was an honor for the organizers to have the representatives of the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Budapest as guests. The printed version of the conference papers was published in 2017, edited by Eszter Kovács and Andor Mészáros.

Eszter Kovács

kovacs.eszter.at.oszk.hu

HUSZ JÁNOS
és a huszitizmus hatása a magyarországi művelődésben
Ohlas díla Jana Husa a husitství v uherské kultuře

Előadások, hangverseny és tudományos konferencia
2015. november 9–10.

2015. november 9. (hétfő)
ELTE BTK, Múzeum krt. 4/f. 212.
12.00–16.00 Egyetemi előadásorozat

Szilágyi Dezső téri református templom
18.00–19.00 Előadás a huszita liturgiáról és zenéről
19.00–20.00 Ünnepi koncert: huszita és cséhestvér liturgikus énekek | Antonín Dvořák: Tíz biblikus ének

2015. november 10. (kedd)
Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, VI. emelet
9.30 Husz János és kora (kiállítás-megnyitó)
10.00–16.15 Husz János és a huszitizmus hatása a magyarországi művelődésben (tudományos konferencia)

A rendezvény szervezői és támogatói: ELTE BTK (Művelődéstudományi Tanszék, Vallástudományi Központ, Szlav és Balti Filológiai Intézet) Országos Széchényi Könyvtár | Czech Centrum | Szent Adalbert Központ és Közép-Európa Kutatóközpont Alapítvány | Magyar Művelődési Akadémia

Taking care of our academic wealth – Research Sessions at NSZL

The traditional November Research Sessions of NSZL were also held in 2015, 2016 and 2017, related as always, to the Hungarian Science Festival. Following the past years' encouraging experience, all these conferences had a thematic framework in which our researchers found points of connection within their own special fields. The keywords inspired many common ideas, converging and crossing trains of thought, and inspiring discourses.

The main topic of 2015 was the notion and representation of power, a source of inspiration for many participants in terms of space, time and content. Immediately after the lectures, researchers found new points of view for reflection in their own area, academic field and historical era studied, and a dialogue started between the experts of different disciplines, periods and forms of art.

The first day of the conference organized and administered by Csilla Bíró and Beatrix Visy started with the keynote lecture of literary historian Gábor Kecskeméti (HAS Faculty of Humanities, Institute for Literary Studies) who presented the perspectives of power and the intelligentsia in the Early Modern Period. The comprehensive topic created an excellent context for the first day made up by two sessions. The first unit entitled *(Self) realization and (self) representation* included works with Hungarian and international focus on the forms of representation and genre of monarchic, aristocratic and church power mainly in the Early Modern Period.

The context of the afternoon section *Suppression and Resistance, Politics and Opposition in the 19th century* was drawn up by *The Politics of The Death of King Buda*, a lecture by literary historian József Takáts (University of Pécs). János Arany's narrative poem gave chance to the lecturer to touch upon the power phenomena of Arany's era with an insight into Hungarian history. The lectures that followed analyzed specific segments of power in function throughout the 19th century Hungarian history and politics related to different academic disciplines and forms of art.

The second day of the conference was dedicated to the history and art of the 20th century with the main contribution of the individual panel of the 1956 Institute that mostly analyzed the period between 1945 and 1989: *Power and Society: their discourses in Hungary during the second half of the 20th century*. The plenary lecture by historian Éva Ständeisky *The Gate to Power: the intelligentsia in public roles* offered a valuable introduction to the expert discussion that followed.

The closing *(In)prints of Power* section offered an insight into various areas. Apart from literary history lectures that analyzed the representations of power, its possible descriptions in literature and the relation of certain authors to the power structures of their time, there were contributions also on book history (possessors and book plates), photograph history and dance art. The conference was closed by the multimedia lecture (with visual and audio effects) by Ferenc Földesi who presented and interpreted a sound installation in Vienna.

It is also a tradition by now that the written and edited material of the Research Session is published within the *Bibliotheca Scientiae & Artis* series. After the 2015 publication of *Interpretation of Interpretations. Scholar Librarians, Scholar predecessors* edited by Edina Zsupán, now the *Power Discourses. Representations of Power in Science and Art* volume was published for the 2016 Festive Book Week with the essays of our conference edited by Csilla Bíró and Beatrix Visy. The book was officially presented on 18 January 2017 at Nyitott Műhely [Open Workshop], with the introductory words of poet and aesthete Márió Nemes Z. and an inspiring roundtable debate between literary historian Sándor Bene, historian Iván Szegő, poet and aesthete Márió Nemes Z. and Beatrix Visy.

Also the keywords of the 2016 November Research Session offered a great opportunity to place notions and procedures into a new context. The conference *Translation, Interpreting, Interpretation* started with the exploration of the traditional meaning of the words “translation of languages” and “literature”. Topics in this first section covered a broad spectrum from Dante's medieval epics and the fiction and non-fiction literature of the Early Modern Period and the Enlightenment to the translation literature of the second half of the 20th century. They explored the Hungarian language, the source languages of translations into Hungarian, the mutual influence of translations of different times, and the translations of Hungarian literature into foreign languages. The keynote lecture was held by the excellent linguist and literary translator Ádám Nádasdy who analyzed his own translation of Dante in a most entertaining way to explain the basic questions of linguistic situations and environments and the changes of language strata within source and target text. A dialogue was offered immediately by Zsuzsanna Rózsafalvi who exposed in her lecture some of the dilemmas of Mihály Babits when translating the *Divine Comedy*. The researchers who followed elaborated upon the translation history of works in their own fields of research.

Two thematic sections were held in the first day's afternoon. The first, *Translation and interpretation in music*, observed the application of a general topic to a specific area, the second presented the relation between *Event and interpretation* with historical examples. As an introduction to the music section, academic László Somfai analyzed Béla Bartók's musical transcriptions – also with regard to the current Bartók Memorial Year –, and organized this remarkable part of the composer's oeuvre

into smaller groups according to the circumstances of their creation and their common artistic features. His contribution was followed by three lectures by the NSZL Music Collection staff presenting three very different possibilities of “translating into music”.

The contributors of the first day’s closing section offered really surprising approaches to the topic. The basic notion of “translation” was broadened by the interpretations of the 1896 Budapest Millennium festivities and their reception in the press, an exchange of letters during the Second World War, and even the Christian-Democrat thought between 1945 and 1989.

The *Myths, Topoi, Commentaries* section of the second day was opened by literary historian György Eisemann. He looked into the 20th century literary and musical reinterpretation of one of the most famous pieces of chivalric literature, *Tristan and Iseult* by Wagner in his opera *Tristan und Isolde*, and drew a comparison between the interpretation possibilities and tools of different art forms. The lectures that followed analyzed the transmission and interpretation of genres, forms and topics, with focus on the environment and the language of transmission, especially in the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

The *Intermedial Relation of Image and Text* section at the end of the conference discussed the transparency of verbal and visual signs and the relation between them though the analysis of additional meanings and forms of artistic representation. The researchers brought examples of the almost two millennia from Late Antiquity to the 20th century to illustrate the effects of the cultural and intermedial context on artistic transferability with special focus on the anthropological dimensions of language.



The written material of the conference was published as the 9th volume of the *Bibliotheca Scientiae & Artis* series, edited by the organizers and administrators Balázs Mikusi, Zsuzsanna Rózsafalvi and Ildikó Sirató.

2017 was a favorable year for the Research Session, as the researchers who participated had the opportunity to present their results and thoughts in two significant topics. As the 200th anniversary of the birth of János Arany in many aspects defined and organized the year’s cultural and academic life, the first day of the conference was dedicated to the poet’s oeuvre. Our guest lecturers were László Szörényi in the morning section, and Péter Dávidházi in the afternoon. László Szörényi interpreted the words of Toldi to Piroska in the grave scene in *Toldi’s Love*, and explored the questions of genre of the poem, and the European textual tradition of which Arany, directly or indirectly, took his inspiration. The lectures that followed focused on specific parts and details of Arany’s oeuvre. Péter Dávidházi, in his paper *Arany and the poetry of crisis* analyzed the situations of crisis within the oeuvre, and studied the roots of the notion with similar expressions in the poems and letters, and the linguistic manifestation of crisis. The lectures of the afternoon were more distant from Arany in time and genre, as they elaborated on the image of Arany in the *Nyugat* generation, the influence of Arany in contemporary poetry, a musical composition of *I lay down the lyre*, the bookplates of Arany, Petőfi and Tompa, and the poetic theory of Arany.

On the second day of the Research Session, we celebrated the 215th anniversary of National Széchényi Library with lectures on our library founder Count Ferenc Széchényi, his relation to his contemporaries, activity as a sponsor, and his collections. The keynote presentation of Ambrus Miskolczy *Ferenc Széchényi and his contemporaries* described the main social, family and cultural aspects of Széchényi’s environment and thought. The papers that followed focused on specific documents and parts of the collections of the vast legacy, offering a picture of the founder’s activity as a sponsor, the binding types of his books, the ongoing reconstruction of his collection, his map collection and the Széchényi family’s interest in music.

(Special thanks to the organizers of the conferences whose reports were used for this summary.)

Beatrix Visy
visy.beatrix.at.oszk.hu

Roundtable discussions on old books at NSZL

Upon the initiative of the Working Committee for Book History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the editorial board of *Hungarian Book Review*, two roundtable discussions were held at National Széchényi Library on 2 March 2016 and 8 November 2016 with the participation of collectors, antiquarians and bibliographers.

The keynote topic was *Thoughts on Bibliography*, an essay by antiquarian Lajos Borda on the bibliographical elaboration of old prints in Hungary and their protection as artworks, submitted by the author to the editorial board of *Hungarian Book Review*. The participants of the first discussion on which the questions of retrospective national bibliography were raised (*Old Hungarian Prints I.–IV.* Budapest, 1971–2012. and Géza Petrik's *The Bibliography of Hungary 1712–1860. I.–IV.* Budapest, 1888–1892, *Addenda 1712–1800. V.–VIII.* Budapest, 1971–1991), were Lajos Borda from the antiquarian profession, Gabriella H. Hubert representing the experts of old books at church libraries, László Szelestei Nagy on behalf of researchers, and Judit Ecsedy, Judit P. Vásárhelyi and János Heltai from the Old Hungarian Prints Bibliographical Editorial Board.

On the second meeting, Lajos Borda met the director of the Collection of Early Printed Books at NSZL Gábor Farkas, and legal expert of monument and artwork protection Péter Buzinkay on behalf of the Forster Artwork Supervision Office. Both discussions were moderated by the Director-General of the Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and editor-in-chief of *Hungarian Book Review*, István Monok.

The summary of the discussions and the short version of the comments are available in the 1st issue of 2017 of *Hungarian Book Review*.

Judit P. Vásárhelyi
pvj.at.oszk.hu

FITA – Young Writers' Exhibition

The *FITA – Young Writers' Exhibition* offered contemporary authors (unpublished or with few works published) an opportunity to introduce themselves with a photo, a résumé, and what matters most, with new and original works of poetry and prose. An exhibition of these “ink-stained” manuscripts was inaugurated by writer György Ferdinandy at NSZL on 8 March 2016. The material of the one-month exhibition of thirty-some authors was put up to auction hosted by antiquarian Endre Szőnyi in the 6th floor ceremonial hall of our Library on 12 April 2016. The purpose of the exhibition and the auction was to create a framework for civil sponsorship of literature, a new way of funding and supporting literary projects.



The funds raised at the auction were entirely handed over to the participating young writers and poets.

The auction was preceded by a roundtable discussion on the situation of contemporary young authors in Hungary and the possibilities of their sponsoring. The participants of the discussion of these timely and sensible problems were literary historian László Boka, Director of Research at NSZL, Renátó Fehér (JAK, [József Attila Circle]), Éva Veronika Kalapos (FISZ [Young Writers' Association]) and Tamás Korpa (member of the Presidium of FISZ). The moderator was reviewer and literary historian Beatrix Visy.

These events were worthy of the support of a long list of organizations and individuals: NSZL, FISZ, JAK, Szőnyi Antiquarium, Argumentum Publishing House, KÜRT Information Management and Data Recovery Co. Károly Alexa and the periodical *Életünk*, winemaker Ferenc Séllei, entrepreneurs Lajos Pató and Simon Pató, journalist László Temesi, and last but not least, literary historian László Urbán who had first proposed the idea of this project.

Beatrix Visy
visy.beatrix.at.oszk.hu