

FURTHER EXHIBITIONS



Comics as Narrative

Our exhibition took place in the Corvina Exhibition Rooms between 14 May and 26 July 2018 (curators: Anikó Ágnes Patonai, Eszter Szép, Rita Szűts-Novák) and it reflected on two chapters of the history of Hungarian comics: comics as literary adaptation between 1957 and 1975 and contemporary comics. Apart from presenting the different comics principles of these two periods, we have also considered the beginnings of Hungarian comics and the afterlife of comics based on literary adaptation.

We aimed at exhibiting such treasures from the library as the volume including the well-known *The Siege of Sziget* by Miklós Zrínyi presented next to its comics adaptation in the first display case. Its inner title page is an excellent example of the attitude towards the unity and interaction between picture and text specific of Baroque emblems, which later characterized the comics as well. Without claiming to be comprehensive, our concept of organizing the exhibition cases was led by the selection of literary works adapted into comics. We have also presented different editions of these books: publications decorated by illustrators like Miklós Borsos, Álmos Jaschik, Róza Jókai, János Kass, Erzsébet Wojnich or Ádám Würtz. Further original drawings could be seen by courtesy of kArton Gallery and the Korcsmáros family.

Among the works adapted by comics artists we can find: outstanding pieces from the literary canon (Miklós Zrínyi: *The Siege of Sziget*, Mihály Vörösmarty: *Csongor and Tünde*, János Arany: *Toldi* trilogy, *A nagyidai cigányok*

[The Gypsies of Nagyida], Sándor Petőfi: *The Hammer of the Village*), works by canonized writers (Mór Jókai: *Szeretve mind a vérpadig* [Loved up until the Scaffold], *Pretty Michal*, *A löcsei fehér asszony* [The White Woman from Lócse], *The Nameless Castle*; Kálmán Mikszáth: *The Siege of Beszterce*), gems of young adult literature and historical novels (Emil Kolozsvári Grandpierre: *A törökfejes kopja* [The Lance with a Turk's Head], Ferenc Móra: *The Gold Coffin*, Géza Gárdonyi: *Eclipse of the Crescent Moon*, *Slave of the Huns*) and miscellaneous works (Jenő Heltai: *Az ezerkettedik éjszaka* [The Two Thousand Second Night], László Passuth: *Tlaloc Weeps for Mexico*, Ferenc Karinthy: *Spring Comes to Budapest*, Gyula Krúdy: *Ál-Petőfi* [Pseudo-Petőfi]). The last in line are Jenő Rejtő's representative pulp fiction works which have turned into classics, illustrated by Pál Korcsmáros' and Sándor Gugi's original drawings.

Apart from the two periods examined thoroughly, some works from the beginning of Hungarian comics were exhibited. From Mór Jókai's and János Jancsó's co-authored works we could see *Gömböcz és Csukli* [Gömböcz and Csukli], and the momentous volume about Jozef Pulitzer from the early period of comics history. The visitors could see simple stories with captions from the magazine *Áller Képes Családi Lapja* [Áller's Illustrated Family Magazine] and Károly Müllbeck's booklets containing characteristic headings drawn for early magazines that would resemble comic strips. The tradition of Hungarian versions of American comics with speech bubbles was carried on by the comics magazine *Hári János* first published in 1936. The Anti-Jewish Acts introduced put an end to the publication of many magazines and the employment of talented illustrators. After 1945, illustrated stories with captions were published in *Hüvelyk Matyi* [Tom Thumb], *Képes Úttörő Gyermekekújság* [Children's Illustrated Pioneer Magazine] and *Pajtás* [Mate]. From 1948, the Hungarian term for comics 'képregény' became generally accepted and used. The most significant event in the history of Hungarian comics was the launching of *Füles* magazine (Füles is the name of the magazine's iconic figure, a donkey) in 1957, the exhibition displayed the cover of the first issue featuring the donkey designed by





Pál Korcsmáros. The visitors could take a look at the adaptations of the novels *Les Misérables* by Victor Hugo (Cs. Horváth – Pál Korcsmáros, published in *Füles*) and *Winnetou* by Karl May (Cs. Horváth – Ernő Zórád, published in *Pajtás*). The latter was the first of those adaptations which consistently used text bubbles for the dialogues. Next to the works of Pál Korcsmáros, Ernő Zórád and Imre Sebők, the adaptation of *Csongor and Tünde* could be seen.

After the end of state socialism, American and French comics became available in Hungary, too, their influence being detectable first in reader experience, then later in page layout, character creation and genre. As early as in the 1970s, comics were published in the journal *Mozgó világ* [Moving World] which defined themselves as going against the tradition of adaptation. The contemporary comics presented at the exhibition are characterized by specific visual approaches and messages, literature not being the foundation, but only a point of reference. Artists and readers today look at comics as an individual and flexible medium of self-expression and storytelling, and it is in this spirit they resort to literary legacy, namely to the texts of János Arany, György Petri or István Kemény. The ‘graphic novel’ – comics in form of a book – is differentiated from the works indicated as ‘comics’ and due to its form, it can be separated easier from the pejorative associations related to comics, which brings it closer to literature. The first graphic novels were Dániel Csordás’ *Nocturne*

(2008), Miklós Felvidéki’s *Némajáték* [Pantomime] (2011), Márton Hegedűs’ *Slusszkulcs klán* [Car Key Clan] and the exhibitions’ main attraction *Nyugat + Zombik* [Nyugat + Zombies] (2017) by Olivér Csepella.

Whereas during state socialism comics were mainly published in periodicals, after the political changes the genre became characterized by a constant search for new formats and distribution models. Examples for this are the works by Balázs Gróf and Dániel Csordás. As presented at the exhibition, today both the printed and the online versions of literary journals (*Műút* [Hard Road], *Szépirodalmi Figyelő* [Literary Observer]) publish comics. Earlier, half of the content of the satirical magazine *Kretén* [Cretin] (1994–2009) was made up of comics and *Pinkhell* (2005–2012) only published comics in Hungarian. *Roham* [Stroke] (2005–) is a platform of literature and experimental comics, while *Epicline* (2013–) reflects the influence of American booklets. As comic magazines struggle hard to stay alive, today most of the comics are available in author’s editions.

In the exhibition we presented the contemporary Hungarian comics with books, comics booklets, magazines, posters, video footages and original pages, highlighting the diversity of compositions and storylines and the variety of visual techniques applied.

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Eternally Júlia – Faces and Question Marks



The exhibition based on the National Széchényi Library's abundant material – complemented with relics belonging to the collection of the Petőfi Literary Museum – was dedicated to present Júlia Szendrey's roles in literature and her private life. It was open between 20 November 2018 and 9 March 2019.



Zoltán Lenkey: *Petőfi and Júlia Szendrey*. In: 150 éve született Sándor Petőfi, Budapest, 1972.

This exhibition (curators: Anikó Ágnes Patonai, Rita Szűts-Novák) was connected to multiple anniversaries and in order to present Júlia Szendrey's oeuvre, it displayed documents (letters from and to her, diary fragments, editions of books, among others her own poems and her translations of Andersen) and contemporaneous newspapers with their supplements which offer a glimpse into the fashion and social history of the time. The fragments from correspondence between Júlia and her beloved sister, Mária, displayed in the exhibition cases were abundant in interesting historical facts of the time like a reference to a concert conducted by Ferenc Liszt, the contemporary fashion, and the touching letter written before the birth of her daughter in which she asked Mária to become the guardian of her child in the event of her death.

On the one hand, the exhibition aimed at introducing how Júlia presented herself to her contemporaries, how her contemporaries, other authors and literary historians saw her as a writer, a poet, a daughter, a woman and a mother in her own time and afterwards; and on the other hand it focused on raising the possibility of new questions, approaches and interpretations with the help of recent reflections and rarely exhibited documents (the majority of them being diary entries and letters kept in the Manuscript Collection of the NSZL).

The contemporary artistic interpretations reflecting on Júlia Szendrey's versatile personality, her literary legacy and her image were represented through five installations made by the students of the Fashion and Textile Department of MOME (Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Budapest). One of these was the work by Beáta Tringer and Ágnes Varjú, entitled *Szendrey Júlia skatulyája* [Júlia Szendrey's Pigeonhole]. The artists attempted to present the various opinions about the poet through an open 'pigeonhole' containing several 'layers'. When going around the installation, different layers come to the surface whilst when viewed from the front, these 'fragmented' pieces merged into one, forming Júlia's shape and character. According to the artists, every individual associates different feelings and interpretations to this visual representation, and they considered it very significant to show how the all-time public opinion presents a complex and layered picture about Júlia Szendrey.

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Mrs. Árpád Horvát, née Júlia Szendrey and her children (photograph), (NSZL Manuscript Collection)

The First World War on Maps – Border Disputes



The fourth and last part of the exhibition series presenting the First World War maps of the Map Collection concentrated on territorial disputes, pursuits of independence and nationality issues of the time. The border disputes in Europe which had already been going on for decades – like the reversion of the Alsace-Lorraine territory to France or that of South Tyrol and Trento to Italy – had always been in the centre of attention of propaganda and politics. This increased even more during the Great War, similarly to the internal tensions of multinational empires and the aspirations for independence. Many people of countries not existing yet or any longer aimed for independence, for example the three divisions of Poland or the Baltic countries. The foundation of independent nation-states had only become possible by the end of the war, when many empires, such as Russia, the Ottoman Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed. As the exhibition focused on presenting a more complex picture about this topic, it covered a longer period than the 5 years of the war and it displayed cartographical works made between 1909 and 1920, the majority of them being nationality maps. Each of the three exhibition cases was dedicated to a specific geographical territory: the first one contained maps of the Balkans, the second displayed maps of Poland, the Baltic region and Italy, and in the third one maps of Western Europe and Hungary could be seen. Apart from these some lesser known maps of temporary borders drawn during the ceasefires and peace treaties were also included. Many cartographical documents presented side-by-side were issued by opposing countries and emphasized how they aimed at distorting statistical data, illustrating the distribution of nationalities or underlining the sparsely populated areas according

to their actual interests. Similarly to the previous exhibitions, visual documents from other special collections elevated the material on display: copies of contemporaneous photographs from the Photo Collection and graphic posters from the Collection of Posters and Small Prints were borrowed and included as well. Among the maps worthy of mentioning was the Polish national atlas which in the year of its issue (1916) presented a not yet existing, unified Poland and a German wall-map depicting the new European borders in November 1919. The visitors could also explore the map often referred to as *Carte Rouge* by Count Pál Teleki and its lesser known counterpart, the map of Hungary's nationalities by Károly Kogutowicz.

The exhibition was open between 11 September 2018 and 27 April 2019, located on the 6th floor of the library, on the corridor of the Map Collection.

Botond Gergő Samu



Si Deus Pro Nobis Quis Contra Nos – The Treasures of the Széchényi Family Chamber Exhibition in the Manuscript Collection



Childhood drawing by Dénes Széchényi (NSZL Manuscript Collection)

In Hungary, the name Széchényi sounds familiar to everyone. Who would not know that István Széchenyi had the Chain Bridge built, or that in 1825 he donated his one-year income to the founding of the predecessor of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences? Fewer people are aware of the fact, however, that other members of the great, historical family whose members are active even today, have contributed to the enrichment and development of Hungarian culture and other specific fields. 2018 was the Year of the Family, so this was a great opportunity to present the Széchényi family, too. The staff members of the Manuscript Collection organized a chamber exhibition displaying the document of the special collections and the general collection, this also serving as the quiz game's last stage at the Night of Museums. The exhibition organized into nine display cases presented seven members of the family and due to the high number of visitors, it remained open for three more months, until the end of October.

The Széchényi family has a great history. Their motto – Si Deus Pro Nobis Quis Contra Nos (If God is with us, who can be against us) – summarizes appropriately their attitude

towards development and improvement, transmitted submissively through generations. The family's prestige and wealth were primarily established by György Széchényi (1592–1695), Archbishop of Esztergom, the count title was received by his nephew of the same name, György Széchényi (1656–1732) in 1697 from Leopold I for his gallantry. His great-grandson is our founder, Count Ferenc Széchényi (1754–1820), from whom all the still living Széchényis descend from. The chamber exhibition begins with him as well, and follows the life of his descendants through five generations. The number of family members whose career could be displayed was limited by the narrow space and by the parts of legacies found in the NSZL.

Observing the underdeveloped cultural and intellectual life of the country, Count Ferenc Széchényi of Sárospatak paid great attention to the development of Hungarian literature, language and education in general. His donation of greatest influence is undoubtedly the national library named after him that he founded in 1802. As a patron, reformist thinker and collector, his ideology had

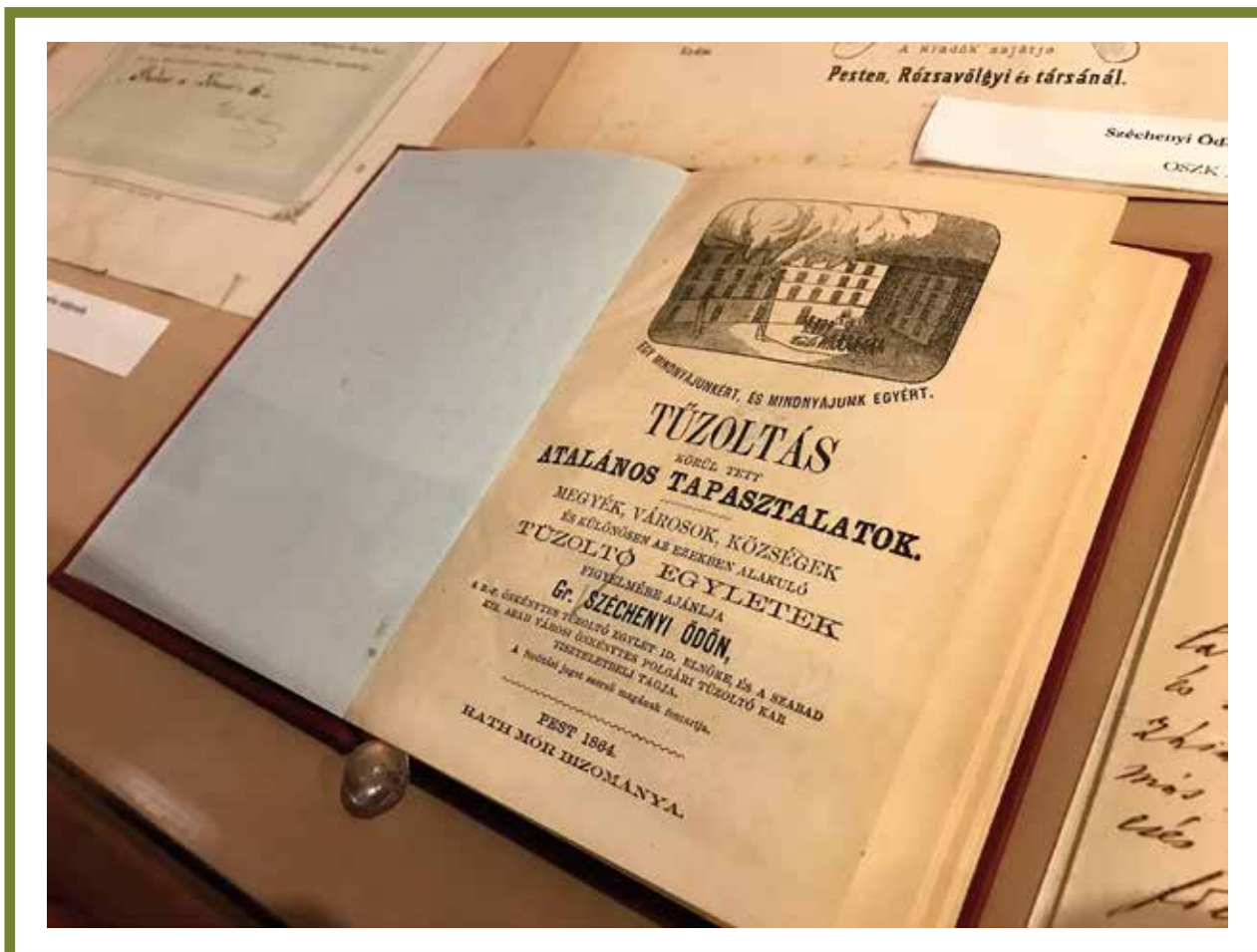


great influence on his descendants as well. He had three sons and two daughters who lived to be adults. The dedication towards the development of Hungarian culture defined the career of his sons significantly. The letters of István Széchenyi and his older brother, Pál, written in Hungarian in their childhood to their father kept in the Manuscript Collection also prove that the count found it important that apart from languages considered as *lingua franca* in the era – German, French, English – they should know their native language as well. The most famous representative of the language reform, Ferenc Kazinczy remembered with respect that during a visit paid to the Count, his sons greeted him in Hungarian.

The youngest of his sons, István (1791–1860), was involved in almost every large-scale innovation during the Hungarian Reform Era. He found the public limited company a suitable form to make his enterprises successful. This was rarely a profitable means at that time, however, all his initiatives met with success. This also proves his tendentiousness and good turn for business. He founded the Theatre of Pest and initiated the regulation of the lower Danube with exemplary

diplomatic sense. The first steamboat was launched on the Danube by his initiation in 1831, and later, in 1842, on Lake Balaton, as well. He took part in the founding of steam driven roller mill of Pest and the Commercial Bank. Thanks to his rich field of interest and modern way of thinking, improvements of European level were implemented in our country in economy, sciences and sports. He became a statesman, who imagined the changes thoughtfully as part of the Monarchy, keeping in mind circumstances, this generating many conflicts between him and Kossuth, who claimed for much more radical economic and social changes. In the exhibition, we primarily focused on the circumstances of the construction of the Chain Bridge, the historical background and the hardship of the work – as it is widely known that the first permanent bridge linking Buda and Pest can be credited to him, but it is still little known that the idea was met serious resistance. This decade-long persistent work also depicts István Széchenyi's character.

The son of the greatest Hungarian, Count Ödön Széchenyi (1839–1922) carried out his activities with the same persistence as his father. Many of his ideas outpaced his times, some



Ödön Széchenyi: *A tűzoltás körül tett általános tapasztalatok*. [General Observations on Firefighting] 1864 (NSZL General Collection)

of his innovative ideas only took shape half century after his death. Similarly to his predecessors, his primary aim was to embrace the opportunities for development. In 1867, he sailed solely on rivers to the World Exhibition in Paris with his steamboat *Hableány* [Mermaid], raising attention to the opportunities of developing riverside economy within the continent. He had the popular Funicular of the Buda Castle built in order to make the transport to the Buda Castle much convenient. His most outstanding activity was the organization of the fire department. He established the first voluntary fire department after the firestorm in Cenk in 1860, then continued with a professional one. With the help of the equipment acquisitioned from England and based on the trainings experienced there, great results were achieved in a very short time in the field of extinguishing fires. This mission was so successful that he was invited to Turkey, to carry out the same project, which he accepted, and as a consequence he had than been living in Constantinople until his death. As a reward for his achievements, he received the honorary title of Pasha from the Sultan, this making him to be the first

person of such a high military rank who could maintain his Christian faith. In order to present his wide range of interests, his shipmaster certificate, his book on firefighting, his letters and the sheet music of minor dances composed by him kept in our Music Collection were displayed.

The activities of the other members of the Széchenyi family are even less known, although their role is rather important. Count Imre Széchenyi (1825–1898) was Lajos Széchenyi's son, Ferenc Széchenyi's grandson and István Széchenyi's nephew. Starting from his twenties he travelled around Europe as a diplomat, serving in the Vatican, Stockholm, Rome, Brussels, Paris and Saint Petersburg. In 1861, during Garibaldi's siege of the castle of Gaeta, he was in there with Francis II, up until its occupation. During his diplomatic career, he became friends among others with Bismarck and Emperor Wilhelm II, who later visited him on his estate. Between 1878 and 1891, he served as the ambassador of the Monarchy to Berlin, where he played an important role in the cooperation between the two great powers. As a recognition of his excellence, he was awarded with the order of chivalry of the Distinguished



Selected item from Viktor Széchenyi's family photo album – Csokonya, November 1906 (NSZL Manuscript Collection)

Order of the Golden Fleece by Emperor Franz Joseph and with the highest merit of Prussia, the Order of the Black Eagle by Emperor Wilhelm II. He had been passionate about music since an early age, he composed and played the piano. He was friends with both Franz Liszt and Johann Strauss. He composed mainly songs and dances, his polka-mazurka was one of the works that were dedicated to the wedding of Emperor Franz Joseph and Princess Elisabeth. The exhibition case primarily focused on the sheet music of his works.

Imre's brother, Count Dénes Széchenyi (1828–1892) had been passionate about horse riding since his childhood. He studied law, and at the age of twenty-one, he served in the national defence during the Hungarian Revolution of 1848. He took an active part in public affairs but did not hold office. He was an outstanding sportsman, he received acknowledgement as equestrian and charioteer of special talent. Later, due to his lower back pain, he could not ride the horse anymore, but he refreshed the methodology of horse training so successfully that his reforms were adapted worldwide. His book *Adalékok a lovaglás tanításához* [Addendum to the

Education of Horse Riding] was published in 1871 in Pest, in which he raised attention about the horse-riding culture of the time with two novelties, and his method proved to be especially successful. The so called Széchenyi-strap soon became popular among charioteers, with the insertion of which the driver was able to control the horses separately. Based on his proposal, the 'Association for Well-Trained Horses' was established in 1872, and the world's first show jumping competition was organized, which was a milestone in the launch of modern equestrian sports. Our exhibition displayed his drawings and letters on horse riding, and the first edition of his book.

His son, Count Viktor Széchenyi (1871–1945) started his career in the military, then in 1902 he demilitarized and apart from dealing with the family's estate, he was the president of the Hungarian National Firefighter Association. He soon became the lord-lieutenant of Fejér County, the office which – due to shorter interruptions by the military service he carried out in the First World War – he had until 1936. During his office, the health situation of the county improved significantly, the Tuberculosis Sanatorium of Székesfehérvár

established by him was opened in 1913. During the First World War he did everything in order to protect the poor families of Fejér County, the veterans and the injured soldiers. He tried to take care of those he was responsible for in the most appropriate manner even among harsh political and economic circumstances. Keeping the history of his family was important to him, so he commissioned the work from László Bártfai Szabó, who wrote the three-volume work *Sárvár-felsővidéki Széchényi család története* [The Story of the Széchényi Family of Sárvár-Felsővidék]. The count himself also contributed to making the family's life widely known: he edited into a volume his great-grandfathers correspondence with his first and second wife, and compiled the portraits of the family members. Starting from 1941, he lived in the Buda Castle, in Úri Street and he witnessed Siege of Buda Castle in 1945 from there with his wife. After the siege he was captured, then he passed away in 1945 after escaping, being weakened by the injuries suffered there. The visitors could see his diary written during the Siege of the Buda Castle, his letters, and selected photos of the family album compiled by him.

His son, Count Zsigmond Széchényi (1898–1967) was primarily famous for his diaries on hunting, his works being sold in a huge number of copies nationwide. In 1916 he got enlisted, he served in support units in the First World War until 1918. Following this, he attended famous European universities, then he managed the family estates. His expeditions abroad led him to Africa, and he wrote a successful novel about it called *Csui!*. Between 1927 and 1964

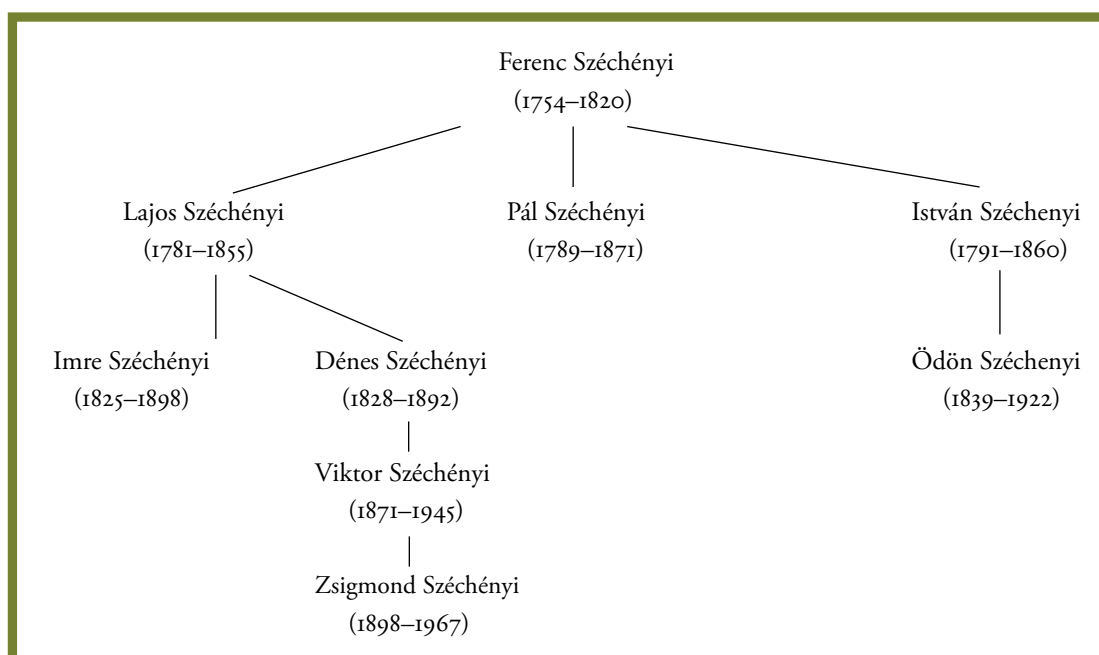
he travelled around Europe, Africa, India and Alaska. In 1951, he was relocated to Balatonyörök and he was employed in the Helikon Library of Keszthely as a 'contingent' worker. His items collected during his journeys enriched the collection of the Natural History Museum, however, his valuable collection of trophies was lost during the Second World War, when his mansion on Istenhegyi Road was hit by a bomb. Ten of his works were published during his lifetime, those being the most famous Hungarian books on hunting even today. The exhibition introduced the visitors to contemporaneous newspaper articles, his letters, photographs and books.

Among the exhibition's aims were to present the diversity of the family and the way they inherited the commitment to the nation, arts, profession through generations. Apart from this, the visitors could gain insight into the everyday life of the historical family, for example through the personal belongings of the family kept in the NSZL, like photographs from the album by Viktor Széchényi unexhibited so far. Many other treasures were also exhibited for the first time, like the sheet music of Imre Széchényi, Dénes' drawings of horses, Ödön's letters, and Viktor's diary written during the siege of Buda Castle in 1945.

The exhibition and the adventure game were the work of the staff members of the Manuscript Collection: Ildikó Beöthy, Eszter Feké, Katalin Fülep, Krisztina Kádár, Tünde Méry and Zsuzsanna Rózsafalvi.

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Memories '89 – At the Border of a New Era

Virtual Exhibition about the Heritage of the Regime Change



As member of Photoconsortium, a European professional association of photography, The Photo Collection of the National Széchényi Library was invited to set up a pop-up exhibition. The relevance of the exhibition displayed the Manuscriptorium (curator: Katalin Fűri, graphic design: Szilvia Rebeka Tóth) was the European Year of Cultural Heritage, as well as the application of crowdsourced collection and elaboration of photographs as a method of presenting a shared European cultural heritage. Through the exhibition, we wanted to underpin that the material collected by society courtesy interpreted as a special method of heritage research is suitable for constructing a self-standing exhibition. The exhibition was experimental, its implementation was sponsored by the European Commission within the framework of the programme *We Are the Culture for Europe*. Throughout the year, 10 cities have joined the initiative altogether, these including similar exhibitions in Sofia, Helsinki, Kraków, Pisa, Basel, Vilnius, Amsterdam, Girona, Nicosia, and Brussels. All of them had crowdsourcing as a mutual element, and the accompanying mobile phone application developed for visualization of it. We chose the change of the regime as topic, an area of collective memory not yet explored to a greater extent, another motive being its 30th anniversary this year.

We entitled the exhibition *Memories '89 – At the Border of a New Era* and tried to evoke personal memories related to the change of the regime. The fall of the one-party system in 1989 transformed not only the political environment and brought democracy to Hungary after many years of dictatorship, but is also changed our everyday life: the appearance of the city and the village, fashion styles, leisure activities, consumerism – basically everything. However, this historical turning point did not mean a positive change in every aspect: the monuments, symbols and street names reminding us of that era have indeed vanished, although the ruins of still-standing abandoned and unexploited buildings, factories, one-time corporate holiday resorts, barracks and clubs still mark this change. We were curious about which of these elements are still related to the regime change in the collective memory, what kind of memories have survived in family archives and personal recollections.

With the help of the app developed for this exhibition, we gave voice to the collected digital images: one could listen to interview and personal reminiscences while browsing through the photographs. The virtual exhibition was enriched with 'tangible' items in order to generate a more comprehensive experience. We also set up a bulletin board where visitors could place letters written back to the past on contemporaneous postcards. During its opening, more than 100 messages were added by the visitors of the exhibition. The majority of these was humorous, but surprisingly numerous honest and painful messages could be found, addressed to lost parents, estranged friends, one-time teachers and lost communities. The meticulous study of the postcards' content is a task yet to accomplish.

Those sending in the pictures through the crowdsourcing method took active part in shaping the galleries. This took place in a workshop organized by the National Széchényi Library on 23 April 2019. The collection was also enlarged with documents from the Collection of Posters and Small Prints and with artefacts from communal contribution.

During collecting, three different exhibition groups were formed:

Memories from the family. The most exciting group of photographs consisted of private material based on personal experiences sent in for the exhibition: family photographs, views of cities, hikes, pictures taken during celebrations, an abandoned Soviet barrack, memories of everyday life in primary school, pioneer camps, vanishing cinemas and department stores and the malls replacing them, the transforming lakeside of the Balaton and its clubs and bars.

Then and now. The Photo Collection of the National Széchényi Library invited the students of the Pázmány Péter Catholic University and the University of Theatre and Film Arts to take part in a mini research in the framework of which the students had to examine and document the later life of monuments, buildings and locations. The phases of change and transformation could be seen through «*then and now*» photographs. The students set in contrast the current state of these works with that from the end of the 80s, and in the lack of these with earlier archive photographs. This



The crowdsourced collection was completed with photos originating from Fortepan (www.fortepan.hu) and with the photographs of Piroska Nagy depicting key protest marches and events of the regime change that documented the political turnaround. Copies of contemporaneous postcards and posters were also borrowed from the NSZL's Collection of Posters and Small Prints and set up in the Manuscriptorium Exhibition Space. A large amount of the received

so-called method of rephotography also happened to be an important tool of research regarding collective memory and we wanted to grab the opportunities of this.

Objects' 89. Thanks to communal contributions, we received personal items evoking the change of the regime. Many of the contributors were colleagues of the National Széchényi Library but others joined as well, after getting informed about the collecting from radio and television shows. These objects were categorised in three thematic groups. In the first exhibition case we presented the tangible memories of cultural life and entertainment: a treasured Santana concert ticket, music records, posters and a train ticket with the fare price on it and passports. In the second exhibition case the objects evoked past 'movements'. A huge number of objects were received related to the compulsory one-party system mass movements: membership booklet of young pioneers (drummer-boys) and other requisites, awards, badges of the KISZ (Hungarian Young Communist League) and also a membership booklet of the MSZMP (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party). The third exhibition case provided place from the documents of 'resistance': copies of samizdat, Duna Körös pamphlets, the 12 points read on 15 March 1989, flyers of the alternative music scene and other memories worth of 'pennies' that have also been kept in the memory for the past 30 years.

items that could not be exhibited were presented via a short footage that ran continuously. Taking advantage of the exhibition space's features, we set up small discussion corners decorated with contemporaneous pieces of furniture and other objects: cups, toys, weekly papers, vases and an original frame backpack, that was donated only after the opening of the exhibition. Covers of records and floppy disks were hanging from the floor in order to allude to the technological paradigm shift that occurred in the meantime.

The content of the mobile app was displayed on three screens and the visitors could connect to these via their phones. They could browse in two different ways. First they could select from the galleries on the two monitors right next to each other on the corridor, while the third monitor placed at the end of the corridor perpendicularly displayed three independent pictures, and by choosing one and navigating to the dots they could listen to essential information regarding the origins of the given photo. According to our observations, not all of the visitors used these technological opportunities, many obtained a comprehensive experience of the exhibition only by observing the exhibited objects.

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Red Stars – Entertainment Industry and Socialist Revues in the Rákosi Era

A Chamber Exhibition of an Unusual Atmosphere in the Theatre Collection



The chamber exhibition displayed in the Catalog Space of the Theatre Collection was open between 19 March and 12 October 2019. The external curator of the exhibition was the young researcher and creative artist Dániel Molnár, who had been carrying out research in the library for long and had been also contributing to many popular events organized here. The topic of the exhibition was based on his PhD dissertation and his book published at the beginning of the year by Ráció Publishing House.

The almost forgotten era and topic belonging to the so-called incomplete past of cultural history arrived to the focus of Dániel Molnár's scientific interest probably in the last moment from the 'perspective of theatre history and philology'. He could still interview those witnesses from the stage and from the audience of the shows before the war and of the transforming entertainment industry between the years 1945 and 1951, and he was able to explore the documents found in our collection of this almost one-decade-long period. During his PhD work, Dániel's own collection has also been enriched with numerous pictures, playbills, personal documents, manuscripts and letters given to him as gifts or obtained from legacies.

After examining the topic from a scientific perspective, the curator had the aim of (partly propagating his book) establishing a popular exhibition that would (again) link the memories of performers with those of the audience's by satisfying the audience's interest in history and the history of the theatre by displaying the results of academic and archive research. The chamber exhibition fulfilled this aim successfully.

The graphical elements were designed by the young curator, who also implemented the design digitally and took predominant role in presenting and popularising the topic and the exhibition in the media. The scenery using the spacial elements of the Catalog Space was also implemented according to his imagination, and complementing it with three exhibition cases of uniform design was also his idea. The elements evoking the atmosphere of the 1940s and 1950s – red banners and drapes, the advertising

pillars welcoming the visitors – and the displayed originals and copies of photos, playbills, documents, letters reminded us of the Rákosi Era effectively and authentically. This given era centred around the stage entertainment differentiated earlier (according to the audience's demand and various stage genres) found itself face to face to the (cultural) political moral and economic requirements so it had to build new methods of operation and find new artistic tendencies. Even though the institutional experiments failed after a couple of years, the new, modern forms of entertainment and humour that played out the aim of political interference infiltrated into the next decades of cultural life of the country's 'existing socialism' – starting from the new waves of political cabaret through the television revues, from musical comedies to the quality operetta.

At the opening of ceremony, Zsolt Gyökössi, entry assistant at the time and later director of entertaining plays and television shows, now retired, guided the audience back to the past. On 9 May 2019, Dániel's book was presented, and during the last day of the exhibition a vernissage was organised which was accompanied by a special curatorial guided tour, presenting documents unseen so far.

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Sándor Sára Memorial Exhibition



In order to pay tribute to the artist one week after his death, three Collections of the National Széchényi Library (the Photo Collection, the Collection of Posters and Small Prints and the Collection of Historical Interviews) organized an ad hoc exhibition in the Catalog Space. Commemorating him was a question of moral duty as we are the keeper institution of many interesting art objects of his oeuvre that the artist himself donated to us, these including not only well-known pieces from his activity as a filmmaker but also his lesser known works of photography. Apart from his many other roles, he was the president of curators of the Foundation of Hungarian Photography Collection of Film History, the whole collection of which (consisting of 1100 film still albums of Hungarian feature film production and 250 000 negatives) is kept in the Photo and Filmstrip Collection. These albums of film history served as the core of the exhibition, we selected the most important stills of the artist's career as director and cinematographer. We did not strive at presenting this in its entirety as

that would outgrow the limits of a chamber exhibition. Our aim was not a comprehensive presentation of the oeuvre, but paying tribute to the excellent artist. Therefore, we chose such artworks that were not only important stages of a lifetime but also became representative movies in the history of Hungarian motion picture. The Sándor Sára portraits exhibited were the works of Magda B. Müller and Gyula Szóvári. We turned the original-scale film stills into posters to decorate the walls with them, and under them photo albums containing the originals of these were presented in display cases. Sándor Sára was a cinematographer and director, so we aimed at presenting both of these roles simultaneously to the same extent. Apart from many other movies, we chose from film stills of the movies *Szindbád* (*Sinbad*) and *Árvácska* (*Nobody's Daughter*) by Zoltán Huszárik, *Apa* (*Father*) by István Szabó and *Tízezer nap* (*Ten Thousand Days*) by Ferenc Kósa he contributed to as cinematographer. From his directed movies we displayed the albums of *Feldobott kő* (*The Uproven Stone*) and *80 huszár*

(*80 Hussars*) and regarding his documentaries, in one of the exhibition cases we put the album of film stills of the documentary series *Krónika/Pergőtűz* [Chronicle/Barrage], and in another one the letters written to him by those actors applying for the documentary could be seen. Here were exhibited those handwritten notebooks that he kept during the production of the documentaries *Krónika* [Chronicle], *Sír az út előttem* [The Road Before Me Weeps], *Magyar nők a Gulágon* [Hungarian Women in the Gulag]. The original movie posters selected by the colleagues of the Collection of Posters and Small Prints constituted an individual unit in the exhibition.

Sándor Sára left to the National Széchényi Library not only valuable documents, but also a beautiful task. The Collection of Historical Interviews keeps the uncut recordings of many of Sándor Sára's emblematic documentaries. This is an irreplaceable collection of interviews and a primary source of information for those researching the 20th century. Only a fraction of the interviews was included into the final version of the documentaries, so the collection kept here had never been studied or released before. The easy access to the material was also supported by the artist Sándor Sára as well. The digitization of the more than 1000 audio-visual material was launched two years ago with his permission. At the exhibition we played films fragments on two television sets.

One of the most important works of Sándor Sára's oeuvre is the documentary series *Krónika* [Chronicle] conveying the tragedy at the Don River. One of its episodes, *Hadtudósítás* [War Coverage] – an interview with Ferenc Gallyas (episode 15) was one of the showed clips, the other was Géza Pörös' biographical film about Sándor Sára from 1996 entitled *Bekezdések – Egy óra Sára Sándorral* [Paragraphs – One Hour with Sándor Sára].

Contributors to the organization of the exhibition (27 September – 31 October 2019):

Staff members of the Photo Collection: Katalin Fűri, Ádám Kovács, Blanka Nagy, Réka Sárközy, Kristóf Szabó, Szilvia Rebeka Tóth

Staff members of the Collection of Historical Interviews: Gergely Ballagó, Mrs. László Hajdu, Luca Hanák, Bea Lukács, Gergő Szűcs

Staff members of the Collection of Posters and Small Prints: Mrs. Elbe, née Magdolna Mester, Ágnes Kopcsay, Anita Szarka

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Guest Exhibitions



2018

The exhibition *Zipsers and the Reformation* was arranged by the Department of German Studies of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies of Pázmány Péter Catholic University and the German Reformed Church of Budapest with the support of the Memorial Committee of Reformation. The exhibition was open between 12 January and 14 February 2018, and it presented the Zipser Germans in three thematic sections. In the first, general historical section several well-known Zipser cities were primarily included. The next one outlined the role of Zipser people in reformation, with particular attention given to the city of Lőcse (Levoča). This section was accompanied by the presentation of the renowned Brewer (Breuer) Press in Lőcse and the introduction of the Zipser peregrination. The third section discussed famous Zipser people and individuals of Zipser origin. The exhibition consisted of several colourful display cases, and in three of them original documents from the NSZL's collection were installed. The curators were Klára Berzeviczy and Péter Lőkös from Pázmány Péter Catholic University.

On 22 and 23 January, as part of the celebration of Day of Hungarian Culture, the library organized a photo exhibition in order to commemorate Béla Bartók's 125th birth anniversary. In 2006, the artists of the Musical Department of the National Association of Hungarian Creative Artists took new footages for their thematic exhibition entitled *Bartók's House*. Béla Bartók's former home, the house on Csalán Road (at present Bartók Béla Memorial House which now houses concerts and performances) was presented through the photos of eleven artists. The memory of the composer was evoked on the photos that recorded his personal belongings, his office room, furniture, room interiors, musical instruments and sheet music. The vision and the reinterpretation of the elements of reality strongly reflect the artistic perspective of the particular photographers and their relations to the discernible objects of the surrounding world and to music, as well. The displayed footages have only been available to the Hungarian public three times: in 2006 in the Flag Hall of the Palace of Arts, in 2008 in Farkas Ferenc Art School in Dunakeszi, and in 2011 in Klebelsberg Cultural Centre, so in this respect, this exhibition could be considered as a curiosity.

By courtesy of the artists, the photographs of the exhibition now enrich the NSZL's Photo Collection.

In January 2018, the Institute of Visual Communication of Budapest Metropolitan University also inaugurated an exhibition at the National Széchényi Library. The visitors of the exhibition could see a compilation of posters and illustrations sent in for the graphics competition entitled *Food Chain*. These were accompanied by the works of the university's bachelor and master students of graphic design. The announcements of the results and the award ceremony took place at the opening event, on 27 January. A greeting speech was delivered by Gyula Július, head of Visual Communication Institute and the exhibition was opened by artist Sándor Pinczehelyi, holder of Munkácsy Mihály Award.

Between 6 March and 7 April 2018, the Ars Librorum Space on the 6th floor housed the travelling exhibition *Southland Hungarian Golgota 1944-45*. The exhibition of the Keskenyúton Délvidéki Tragédiánk 1944-45 Alapítvány (On Narrow Road – Our Southland Tragedy 1944-45 Foundation) presented on twenty-one display boards the history of the tragic genocide of Southland Hungarians. The lucid captions summed up in concise and informative texts were completed by a rich array of powerful images. The tragic events on the turn of 1944-45 were presented with the help of historical facts highlighted and inserted into reminiscences, serving as a frame for the exhibition.

The traditional exhibition displaying the best works received for the *Beautiful Hungarian Map* contest in 2017 took place between 24 March and 7 April 2018 in the Ceremonial Hall of the library. The competition has been organized since 1996 by the Department of Cartography and Geoinformatics of Eötvös Loránd Science University (formerly Lazarus Cartographic Foundation) in cooperation with the Map Collection of the National Széchényi Library. The aim has been to raise the quality of Hungarian map culture and help beautifully made maps gain more ground. The entries provided an overall picture to the public about the mapmaking community's achievements in the last year. The companies and organizations making cartographic works provided the opportunity to draw the attention of

not only professionals but also of the general public to new developments in this field. For the competition arranged in 2018, 27 entries were received from 12 contestants that were evaluated and awarded by a jury including both experts and non-professionals. At the ceremonious event the awards were handed by the chairman of the jury János Káldos, head of the National Library System Project of the NSZL.

As part of the series of events of the Night of the Museums 2018, the public could visit the exhibition *Dream Painting* by children's book illustrator Eszter Nagy. The exhibition consisted of a plethora of colours condensed into cheerful paintings of animals and it could be visited between 23 June and 16 July. The works of the artist were products of her imagination, some recurring motifs being small animals held in hands, almost coming to life and portraits inspired from oriental fairy tales.

The exhibition *Changing Spaces. The Danube Region on Historical Maps* took place between 2 August and 13 September 2018 in the Ars Librorum Space. The inauguration speech was delivered by László Tüske, Director-General of the NSZL and Volkmar Wenzel, Germany's Ambassador to Budapest, and curator Josef Wolf M. A. introduced the exhibition to the public. The 70 valuable maps of the exhibition depicted the cartographical development of the Danube region between 1650 and 1800. This material was based on the rich collection of maps and landscapes which had been collected by the Margraves of Baden for military and strategic purposes. The exhibition was enriched by pieces from the Institut für donauschwäbische Geschichte und Landeskunde and private collections. The chamber exhibition *The First World War on Maps: IV. Border Disputes* organized by the Map Collection, which presented around 30 maps, contemporaneous posters, postcards and photographs of the maps created between 1909 and 1919 was also connected to exhibition. Their peculiarity laid in the fact that they represented the temporary situations of the First World War, prior to the permanent borders having been shaped up. The visitors could also attend two accompanying events: on 31 August, György Danku discussed the maps of Hungary during the Ottoman rule, referring to selected valuable items of the Map Collection; on 1 September, Dóra Kerekes presented an exciting lecture on imperial diplomats and spies of the early modern period. Two publications related to the exhibition have been launched: the exhibition catalogue *Változó terek. A Duna menti térség történeti térképeken, 1650–1800* [Changing Spaces.

The Danube Region on Historical Maps, 1650–1800] and the essay collection *A kései török háborúk. Megtapasztalás – tudás – emlékezés* [The Late Turkish Wars. Perception – Knowledge – Remembrance].

In September 2018, those interested in ancient Chinese culture could attend the series of exhibitions *Centenary of Xiling, the Chinese Seal* launched in 2008 by the Xiling Seal Engravers' Society, hosted in the Relic Space of our library. The exhibition showcased around one hundred Chinese paintings, the seal engravings created for the Beijing Olympic Games and creations from classic Chinese poetry in order to present the ancient traditions of Chinese painting and seal engraving. Prior to its arrival at Budapest, the exhibition has already been a great success in Los Angeles, Paris, Rome, Madrid, Ankara, The Hague and Colombo. The opening ceremony on 3 September 2018 was enriched by a spectacular seal engraving performance. The host of the exhibition was the Xiling Seal Engravers' Society and the European Society of Chinese Associations; the organizers were Sino – European Foundation for Chinese Culture and Education and Zhongbo International Cultural and Arts Centre. Further support regarding the arrangements was provided by Nanyang Cultural and Arts Centre and Xin Ziluolan Cultural and Arts Company. Further sponsors were the Cultural State Secretariat of the Ministry of Human Capacities and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Hungary.

In order to commemorate and honour the Hungarian caricature on its 170th birth anniversary, the exhibition *Graphig* took place between 9 and 27 October 2018, organized in cooperation by CAFe Budapest Contemporary Arts Festival and the National Széchényi Library. Many satirical magazines from the second half of the 19th century belonging to the NSZL's collection were displayed, among them the





first illustrated edition of *Charivari* (*Dongó*), and *Üstökös* [Comet] or *Bolond Miksa* [Fool Miksa] published by Mór Jókai. These satirical magazines flourished around the Compromise of 1867, therefore many papers from this period were exhibited, like *Borsszem Jankó* [Johnny Peppercorn] and *Pikáns Lapok* [Juicy Papers]. Humorous magazines like *Az Ojság* (a satirical magazine based on Jewish humour), *Pesti Posta* (magazine of political humour), *Szabad száj* [Loose Tongue] and *Pesti Izé* (satirical weekly) and their caricatures from the interwar period and the years after 1945 were also displayed. The visitors could discover the most famous paper of the 20th century, *Ludas Matyi* ['Mattie the Goose-Boy'] which had run almost 50 years, up until 1993. Apart from the satirical magazines of the library's collection we could also see a broad selection of drawings from four excellent contemporary artists: László Dluhopolszky, Tibor

Gaál, Judit Prihoda and Krisztián Takács. The title of the exhibition was coined by comedian and poet János Kemény: the term 'GRAFFITYISZ' (coined from the expressions graffiti and fig sign) expresses fantastically the main idea that the exhibitioners show the finger to the problems and shortcomings of life through their illustrations, drawings and caricatures.

At the opening event of the exhibition András Szőke, Sándor Badár and László Dluhopolszky entertained the large audience with a 'sit-down' comedy. Furthermore, two additional guided exhibition tours were organized in October 2018, held by the curators: László Dluhopolszky, Tibor Gaál and Ágnes Szemerédi. On 16 October a roundtable talk was held featuring literary museologist Gergely Thúröczy, literary historian Lajos Szokolczay, graphic designer László Dluhopolszky and writer Csaba Urszinyi Fehér.



2019

The first guest exhibition of 2019 offered an insight into the mysterious world of Armenian culture and religion. At the exhibition *Unity and Variety – The Armenian Bible and Religious Tradition* the first three complete Armenian Bible editions (Amsterdam 1666, Istanbul 1705, and Venice 1733) were displayed, together with numerous family relics, and the audience could encounter art objects related to the religious practices of Transylvanian Armenians. One could learn about the microhistory of a few Ottoman-Armenian families from the treasures that are more than one hundred years old. Several personal items of those surviving the Armenian genocide were also displayed, which mirrored the social, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the Ottoman-Armenian society. In the exhibition cases we could also find documents serving as examples of Armenian cultural memory. The exhibition taking place between 25 March and 11 May 2019 in the National Relic Exhibition space was organized with the cooperation of the Institute for Armenian Studies of Pázmány Péter Catholic University, the Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO), the Bavarian State Library and the National Széchényi Library.

In 2019, the *Beautiful Hungarian Map* contest was organized for the 23rd time by the Department of Cartography and Geoinformatics of Eötvös Loránd Science University and the Map Collection of the National Széchényi Library. Every Hungarian workshop also from abroad making and

publishing cartographic works could enter the competition with unlimited number of printed or digital original works published in 2018. The aim of the contest was to deepen the Hungarian map culture and present maps of high standard quality and elaboration not only to the experts of the field but also to the wider public. The 25 contest entries were displayed in the Ceremonial Hall of the NSZL between 29 March and 13 April 2019. The opening ceremony taking place at the end of March was attended by István Klinghammer, member of the HAS, and László Zentai, leader of the Department of Cartography and Geoinformatics of Eötvös Loránd Science University and General-Director László Tüske, who awarded the winners.

The national library organized the interactive photography exhibition in the Manuscriptorium, entitled *Memories' 89* within the framework of the series of international photo exhibitions by Photoconsortium and joined the other ten European cities, which also took part in it by processing a unique and local theme. The pop-up exhibitions centred around crowdsourced photo collections and those sending in their items actively participated in forming virtual galleries. The exhibition focused on the regime change and on presenting its influence on our lifestyle through personal photographs and objects. The collection was completed with photos originating from Fortepan, as well as with period picture postcards and posters borrowed from the NSZL's Collection of Posters and Small Prints. Photos by Piroska Nagy, taken from the photo database of 1956

Institute enriched the exhibition with items related to the key protest marches and events of the regime change, and documents witnessing the political turnaround.

The audience could visit the exhibition entitled *The Image of Hungary in European Fiction* in the Ars Librorum exhibition space between 18 and 25 October 2019. The exhibition organized with the cooperation of the Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences illustrated the changes of the image of Hungary and the Hungarian people as featured in the flourishing literary world starting from the European Modernity up until the 20th century which was made vibrant and reachable by the media revolution of modern times. Hungarian prehistory, the legends from the Middle Ages, the news and memory of the Ottoman wars and the anti-Habsburg revolutions were interpreted and conveyed to readers of other nations in European literature. The visitors could look at various illustrations of Transylvanian and Hungarian locations, real and imaginary characters, and all these demonstrate that the modern literary tradition viewed Hungary as both European and exotic. The exhibition's concept itself was special among the NSZL's exhibitions on literary and cultural history. The national library, as the largest collection and primary keeper institution of written Hungarian cultural treasures, usually exhibits the significant artists, memories, topics and processes of Hungarian literature and history to the wide public. This time, with the help of the researchers of the Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (hereafter HAS) we could learn about the period and the intellectual medium from an inverse perspective, together and next to which the modern Hungarian literature was born. 'One of the necessary sources of national self-understanding and Hungarian studies is the image of Hungary and the Hungarian people in foreign literature. Fiction has completely different, but not less significant opportunities of forming the general opinion, than historiography, journalism, political

agencies or films' – formulated in his opening speech professor Gábor Tüskés, head of the Department of Research Centre for the Humanities.

The exhibition entitled *Hungary – Malaysia 50! – Five Decades of Diplomatic Relations* opened to the public on 11 November 2019 in the Catalogue Space on floor 7. The exhibition celebrated the year 1969, when Hungary and Malaysia first entered into diplomatic relations and since then, in the past five decades the cooperation between the two countries has been characterized by mutual interest and respect towards each other. The favourable political relation still standing provides a solid basis for strengthening the cooperation in the fields of commerce, education, culture, technical development, tourism and sport. In 2019, the Hungarian and Malaysian governments celebrated this anniversary with a chamber exhibition, the main organizers of which were the Embassy of Hungary in Kuala Lumpur, the National Széchényi Library, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Embassy of Malaysia in Budapest. The exhibition gave visitors an insight into the history of the relationship between the two countries and how they became acquainted with each other's culture, a process hallmarked by royal, as well as mutual presidential and prime ministerial visits. Visitors could see relics documenting the relation between the two countries, such as old manuscripts, maps, photos, newspaper articles and books, all of which are part of the General Collection, the Map Collection, as well as the Manuscript Collection of the National Széchényi Library, moreover, photos originating from the National Archives of Malaysia and owned by the Embassy of Hungary in Kuala Lumpur were also displayed.

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