

ORIENTALISTS AT THE NATIONAL SZÉCHÉNYI LIBRARY

Lectures on the Results of Hungarian Oriental Researches



In 2018, the successful series of events organized in cooperation with the most renowned representatives of Hungarian Oriental Studies continued, launching already its third season.

The main goal of the monthly lectures, discussions and book launches taking place on Wednesdays at 5 PM, is to convey recent knowledge to the interested audience of various areas, historical periods and the newest research results with the help of Hungarian experts renowned in the international academic world as well.

The season of 2018 has conveyed the recent, internationally acclaimed findings of Hungarian experts regarding the nomadic societies and cultures of the Inner Asian steppes. Through the analysis of *Dzsingisz-náme*, a late 17th century Eastern Turkish record originating from the Volga region, Mária Ivanics presented how the ideal leader was imagined in the societies of the steppe, which, instead of developing into empires, had remained at the level of tribal alliance. András Róna-Tas reported about the decoding of the script of a lesser known conquering nation from Inner Asia, that of the Khitans, a research still being carried out by Hungarian scholars. István Vásáry has explored the survival of Turco-Mongol tradition in the Persian and Ottoman chancelleries of Timur and the Timurids (1370–1506) in the latter period of the Mongol Empire. Ágnes Birtalan introduced to the audience the works of the undeservedly neglected 19th century researcher, Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna, who had carried out one of the earliest linguistic fieldwork studies of the Mongolian language in Inner Asia.

The next season taking place in 2019 presented the newest research results of Hungarian Oriental Studies from Southeast Asia to Pannonhalma through various topics. The lecturer of the first event was Róbert Simon, translator of the *Quran* and several other Arabic historical and literary, presented the historical context of the genesis of Islam, pointing out those powers and factors that have



finally transformed it into a world religion. Through the results of his anthropological fieldwork, Zoltán Szombathy shed light on how the local Islamic syncretism emerged when getting in contact with local tradition in present Indonesian communities. Gyula Wojtilla presented the origins of another world religion, Buddhism from a new perspective, and studied the history of origins of Buddha by taking close look at the Pali Buddhist texts and the achievements of Indian social history and archeology. Éva Jeremiás' topic was geographically closer to the Hungarian audience, as she elaborated on the European reception and representation of the works of Hafez (1315–1390), the most influential Persian poet of the Middle Ages, through an eastern paper codex discovered in the Library of the Archabbey of Pannonhalma. The season's closing lecture was delivered by Géza Dávid, who by studying newly-discovered Turkish records, managed to reinterpret the country's decay after the Battle of Mohács and the history of the agricultural activities and everyday life of the Hungarians under the Ottoman rule.

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