

HUNGARICA IN THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY OF CAMBRIDGE*

A British centre with substantial holdings relating to Hungary, in Hungarian and Latin, as well as in English and other West European languages, is Cambridge University Library.

At Cambridge, unlike at Oxford, Hungarian may be studied to degree level: the post of University Lecturer in Polish and Hungarian has been held for over twenty years by the poet, critic and scholar George Gömöri. Although the Government's then University Grants Committee stated in the early 1980s that it would wish to see the maintenance of Hungarian studies at Cambridge, the relatively small number of undergraduates studying for a degree in Hungarian has meant that restraint has had to be exercised by the University Library in the quantity of books in the Hungarian language acquired. Nor is there a full-time post on the library staff for Hungarian alone: as the Hungarian specialist within the Library, I am equally involved, for instance, in the selection and cataloguing of publications in the Byzantine and Modern Greek field. Nevertheless, the size of the Hungarian book stock is estimated to be around 10,000 volumes.

As for the subject coverage of present day acquisitions, the main emphasis is on literature (poetry, prose and drama, both texts and criticism, of all periods) and on history and politics. Acquisitions comprise current publications emanating from Hungary itself, Hungarian emigré literature published in the West and the works of Hungarian writers living in Romania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Some attempt is also made to fill gaps in antiquarian holdings. Interest is additionally shown in Hungarian linguistics and philology, economic history, the social sciences, archaeology, art, the civilisation, culture and folklore of Hungary, and music. The Library subscribes to most of the *Acta* of the various institutes of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and to a representative selection of cultural periodicals from Hungary and the West.

*(Some of the material in this article was incorporated in a paper by Mr John Freeman on "Hungarian Holdings in British University Libraries" read at the 19th Annual Conference of ABDOSD [Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Bibliotheken und Dokumentationsstellen der Osteuropa-, Südosteuropa- und DDR-Forschung] held in Budapest in June 1990.)

Book selection is carried out by George Gömöri, by myself and other library staff using the monthly issues of *Könyvvilág*, the Hungarian Book Review, the Library of Congress card service, and booksellers' lists, including those of *Kultúra*, from whom items published in Hungary have up until now been ordered direct. The Library also maintains exchange arrangements with eight institutions in Hungary, mostly in Budapest, but a few smaller-scale exchanges exist with libraries elsewhere in the country, e.g., Miskolc, Székesfehérvár and Eger. Those from whom Cambridge receives most publications are the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the National Széchényi Library. From the Széchényi it receives all the Hungarian national bibliographies, current and retrospective, and a large quantity of music and musicology. From the Academy Library it obtains the publications of the institutes of the Academy and a sizeable amount of periodical publications and serials. Gifts are received from time to time both from Hungarian institutions and from individuals. For example, about 50 books in Hungarian relating to sociology, psychology and education, which belonged to the late Professor Paul Halmos, were recently bequeathed to the Library by his widow.

The special strengths of the Library's Hungarian holdings lie in the fields of literature and literary criticism, as outlined above. Its nineteenth century historical source material has also been praised by researchers. Special mention should be made of the rich holdings in seventeenth-, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century imprints relating to Hungarian and Transylvanian history to be found in Lord Acton's library, bequeathed to Cambridge University Library in 1902. Recent acquisitions include an annotated copy of Werbőczy's *Tripartitum* interleaved with original manuscripts (some of great historical interest) in Latin and Hungarian, and the Helikon Press facsimile editions of the Jordánszky Kódex, and of János Thuróczy's *Chronica Hungarorum*. The Library has possessed, since 1664, Thuróczy's chronicle in Ratdolt's edition, published in Augsburg in 1488: this was the edition from which Helikon derived and produced its facsimile edition.

So much for current general policies relating to acquisition and collection building in the Hungarian field. To select and highlight a few specific books from each century, since the invention of printing, might help to create a more immediate impression of the colour and flavour of Hungarica to be found within the University Library. The older material relating to Hungary over these centuries is not easy to locate, inasmuch as it is neither subject catalogued and classified as is 20th century material nor is it collected together in one area, but scattered over the many rare book collections which gradually grew in number as books were acquired over the centuries-long history of the Library itself.

From the late 15th century Renaissance court and legendary royal library of King Matthias, the University Library cannot boast a Corvina: that distinction in Cambridge belongs to Trinity College Library, whose Corvinian Livy was on view at the Quincentenary *Bibliotheca Corviniana* Exhibition at the National Széchényi Library, Budapest in 1990. János Thuróczy's *Chronica Hungarorum* of 1488, however, as referred to above, finds its place in the University Library's Catalogue of Incunabula. Also listed among our incunabula are three different collections of sermons by the 15th century Hungarian monk, Pelbárt Temesvári.

From the early 1500s, the Library possesses a further nine editions of works by Pelbárt Temesvári and from later in the century János Zsámboky's *Emblemata, Antverpiae* 1564, and several of his editions of classical Greek and Latin texts. Of historical and biographical works written by two of the Italian humanist scholars frequenting the court of King Matthias and Queen Beatrix, the Library owns 16th century editions of Antonio Bonfini's *Rerum Ungaricarum decades, Basileae* 1568 edited by Zsámboky, and *Francofurti* 1581; from the turn of the century Galeotto Marzio's lively portrait of King Matthias: *De egregie, sapienter, iocose dictis et factis regis Matthiae, Francofurti* 1600.

Pertaining to publications of the early 1600s, our Old Catalogue reveals that the University Library is a rich repository of the linguistic achievements of Albert Szenczi Molnár: his *Nova grammatica ungarica, Hanoviae* 1610, *Lexicon Latino-Graeco-Ungaricum, Heidelberg* 1621 and his celebrated translation of the Psalms into Hungarian, *Amsterdam* 1650. From the following year, there is the inaugural *Disputatio theologica, Hardervici* 1651, presented by János Apáczai Csere for a doctoral degree in theology. He was 25 years of age when this was published.

On the historical, legal and constitutional front, the Library possesses a wealth of pamphlets published on the Continent in the 1620s relating to Gabriel Bethlen, Prince of Transylvania, several contemporary editions of a Treaty between this Prince and the Emperor Ferdinand II, the 1628 Vienna edition of Werbőczy's *Tripartitum* and no less than three copies of János Nadányi's *Florus Hungaricus, Amsterdam* 1663.

Moving on to the early years of the eighteenth century, a 1706 edition of the manifesto *Recrudescunt vulnera inclytae gentis Hungariae* issued by Ferenc II Rákóczi, Prince of Transylvania, surfaces in the Library's catalogue. The same Prince's autobiographical work written in 1717 in French, while he was living in France after the collapse of his revolutionary campaign against the Habsburgs, *Mémoires sur la guerre d'Hongrie depuis 1703 jusqu'à sa fin* is to be found in the library within the final volumes of *Histoire des révolutions*

d'Hongrie, 6 vols, *La Haye* 1739. Count Miklós Bethlen's *Mémoires historiques contenant l'histoire des derniers troubles de Transilvanie* — really not his own work — are also held by the Library in the edition of *Amsterdam*, 1736.

To our 18th century holdings belong seven editions of works by Mátyás Bél, all appearing during his lifetime, notably a dissertation 'Υποτύπωσις γαικινόντων λόγων *sive*, *Forma sanorum verborum*, *Halae* 1707 (published when he was 23 years of age), *De vetere litteratura Hunno-Scythica exercitatio*, *Lipsiae* 1718 and the first three volumes of his massive work *Notitia Hungariae*, *Viennae* 1735–37. There are also first editions of the pioneering philological works of János Sajnovics, *Demonstratio idioma Ungarorum et Lapporum idem esse*, *Hafniae* 1770 and of Sámuel Gyarmathy, *Okoskodva tanító magyar nyelvmester*, *Kolozsvárott* 1794 and *Affinitas linguae Hungaricae cum linguis Fennicae originis grammaticae demonstrata*, *Gottingae* 1799. From the end of the 18th century the Library possesses the *Catalogus Bibliothecae Hungaricae F. Com. Széchényi* in 3 vols, *Sopronii* 1799–1800, Count Ferenc Széchényi's library forming the nucleus of the Hungarian National Library named after him to this day.

The 19th century writers and statesmen, István Széchenyi, József Eötvös and Lajos Kossuth are well represented in contemporary editions. By Széchenyi, the University Library's holdings include *Über die Donauschiffahrt* 1836, *Politische Programm-Fragmente* 1847, *Report on Pesth Bridge* 1852; by Eötvös *A nemzetiségi kérdés* 1865, *Magyar írók és államférfiak* 1868; by Kossuth *Memories of my exile* in English translation, *London*, 1880; and, most interestingly, with manuscript emendations by Kossuth himself *Kossuth in New England*, *Boston* 1852.

Further emphasising historical and political themes, later in the century, are the Library's 72 volume set of *Monumenta Hungariae historiae*, 1857–1903, its 11 volume set of *Monumenta Comitania regni Hungariae*, 1874–99, an almost complete run of the periodical *Századok*, from 1869 up to the present day, published by the *Magyar Történelmi Társulat* and many series such as *Archivum Rákócziánium*, volumes of which have been appearing sporadically between 1873 and the present decade.

Of the works of literary luminaries of the 19th century, contemporary 19th century editions are also in evidence in the Library, from those of János Asbóth to those of Petőfi, Arany and Jókai. We have, for instance, an early collected edition of Petőfi's poems published during his lifetime in *Pest*, 1847 and an edition of a work by Arany, *Murány ostroma* published the following year 1848 in *Pest*. From later in the century, the Library's holdings include an edition of the correspondence between the two poets.

Glancing, finally, at 20th century Hungarian publications in the Library, one finds an abundance of material, easier to locate and evaluate than that of

earlier centuries, since it is not only classified on the library shelves into broad, recognisable divisions, such as History and Politics, Linguistics, Literature, etc., but it is, for the most part, accessible to the browsing student and researcher. It may also be borrowed.

To take the Literature classes alone, one might summarize the scope of our holdings by saying that here will be found collected and critical modern editions of all the standard poets, prose writers and dramatists of all periods, the works of all 20th century Hungarian authors of note and biographical and critical works relating to most of the above: the coverage is wide-ranging and comprehensive. For example, of the 121 writers covered by the bibliography on individual authors included in the *History of Hungarian Literature, Corvina Kiadó, 1982*, edited by Tibor Klaniczay, only 6 minor authors remain unrepresented on our Library shelves. Moreover, as mentioned above, not only are 20th century writers living in Hungary itself represented, but also Hungarian authors living in Romania, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and those of the Diaspora. Out of the total number of authors noted by the *Oxford History of Hungarian Literature, 1986*, as living in Romania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, Cambridge University Library has acquired works by or relating to no less than 87%; out of the total number listed by the same *History* as notable writers of the Diaspora, the works of around 90%—a remarkably high proportion. Although many of the latter are now in present day Hungary being published, it will doubtless be of interest to future researchers and bibliographers to find so many first editions of the same in Cambridge. Countries of publication, apart from the U.K. where books are claimed by the University Library under the Copyright Act, range from U.S.A., South America and Canada to France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and Sweden.

As for Hungarian literary and cultural periodicals emanating from Hungary, from Romania, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and from the West, the Library holds complete sets of *Nyugat* 1908–41, of *Szép Szó* edited by Attila József and others, 1936–39, a set of *Látóhatár* from 1972 to the present day, all the aforesaid published in Budapest, a continuous run of *Híd*, published in Újvidék, from 1969 up to the present day and a twenty year run of *Új Látóhatár*, published in Munich, 1969–1989, to give only a sample from each of the groups delineated above.

I have attempted in the space of a few pages to indicate the rich diversity and colourful tapestry of Hungarica acquired over the centuries by Cambridge University Library. As recently as November 1991, the President of Hungary, Árpád Göncz, toured the Library during a private visit to Cambridge. He expressed his delight and surprise at finding on display books relating to

Hungary ranging from the 15th century *Chronica Hungarorum* to modern Hungarian editions of his own works and those of his contemporaries. President Göncz, by his lively interest and appreciation, forged a personal link during his visit with the Hungarian section as with other departments of our Library. Let it be hoped that the closing decade of the 20th century, coinciding as it does with Hungary's new and courageously won political freedoms, will witness a corresponding and continuing investment of enthusiasm and vitality in the creative building up of this Library's Magyar collections which has up until now been apparent and at work.

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DID MIKLÓS RADNÓTI KNOW THE WORK OF J. M. LEVET?

Marginal notes

In a recent issue of *Common Knowledge*, Vyacheslav Ivanov stressed the importance of the legacy of international symbolism in the poetry of Henry J. M. Levet (1847–1906)¹

Influenced by the new vision of poetry, the young Levet seemingly shaped his first works on the themes and inspirations of Baudelaire and Mallarmé. But in addition to these two—who had profoundly contributed to the change in European and American letters of the past two centuries—Levet's verse was also indebted to his readings of Jules Laforgue (1860–1887), a poet who made a great impact on T. S. Eliot and Boris Pasternak as well.

Ivanov, quoting Bakhtin, convincingly argues that Laforgue was a rare example of a lyric poet for whom dialogue and the speech of the "Other" was as important as for prose writers.²

Reading into the work of these poets, I was suddenly struck by their choice of topics and discourse familiar to me from the oeuvre of Miklós Radnóti. While Levet has not been mentioned by Emery George, the scholar who had investigated the influences upon Radnóti's poetry in greatest detail to date