

# Editor's preface

Áron Orbán\*

Tokaj University, Sárospatak, Hungary

## INTRODUCTION

© 2022 Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest



The scholarship of Early Modern literature and intellectual history in Hungary has been flourishing in the recent decades. In view of such growing interest in the period both in Hungary and abroad, *Hungarian Studies* has launched a series of Special Issues on Early Modern Hungary, creating a new forum for scholars who wish to publish their results in internationally accessible languages. I am grateful to Tokaj University, Sárospatak, for financing these Special Issues. The initiative came from the Speculum Research Group of that university, headed by István Monok, Director of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. This first Special Issue comprises eight peer-reviewed articles addressing various issues within the literature and culture of Early Modern Hungary.

In a review of literature in Hungary in the age of the Jagiellonian kings (1490–1526), Farkas Gábor Kiss offers a complete reappraisal of the literary production of the period; refuting the earlier view of a cultural decline, he convincingly argues for an expansion of humanist literature and the blossoming of a growing number of genres. Dávid Molnár's study also fills a gap in the study of humanism in Hungary: it presents an overview of the entire oeuvre of Ferenc Hunyadi (ca. 1550–1600), a prolific, but barely known Transylvanian humanist author and physician. István Monok, while overviewing emblematic works of travel literature written by travellers from Hungary, focuses on how they used libraries in various European cities. Áron Orbán addresses a completely neglected issue in the scholarship of Carolus Clusius, one of Europe's most famous naturalists in the sixteenth century; he explores the surprisingly great role that various non-botanical *naturalia* (metals and gems, stones, fossils and medicinal earth) played in Clusius's correspondence. Judit Kelemen provides insight into fifteenth-century music education based on the Szalkai Codex, an outstanding source of the history of education in medieval Hungary. Imre Majorossy analyses in depth an engraving at the beginning of the *Aenigma theologicum* of Álvaro de Cienfuegos (1657–1739): the decoding of the iconography is essential for understanding this seminal theological work by the bishop of Pécs. Two studies concern themselves with the history of Unitarianism, a denomination receiving growing scholarly attention in the international literature. Mihály Etlinger and Áron Szatmári offer new solutions

---

\* Corresponding author. E-mail: orban.aron@unithe.hu

to debated questions concerning the origin and spread of translations of the Book of Psalms by Miklós Bogáti Fazakas and János Thordai. In Ádám Szabó's paper, Unitarianism appears in an unusual perspective: he analyses the way in which Antonio Possevino (1534–1611), a highly influential figure of the Catholic Reformation, saw this denomination and its history in Poland and Transylvania.

As the above overview demonstrates, this Special Issue focuses on literary and intellectual historical issues mostly from the sixteenth century. The papers explore works and activities of both the Hungarian elite and of members of the European *res publica litteraria* who had close ties to Hungary. I owe gratitude to all of the authors, peer-reviewers, proofreaders and assistants of the Akadémiai Publishing House who contributed to this Special Issue.

