

HUNGARIAN RESOURCE COLLECTIONS

A bibliographic survey

The purpose of this paper is to provide the student of Hungarian studies with a statistical, thematic and bibliographic summary of Hungarian book collections in Canadian libraries. The present paper is based on a more comprehensive study delivered to the second conference of Hungarian research librarians held in Budapest in 1985. The thematic outline of Hungarica collections in Canada in the first attempt to combine the literary output of scientific disciplines and publications is the humanities and the social sciences. The summary of conventional and computer-assisted information retrieval should help the scholar make the most of a highly advanced and automated system unique anywhere in the world.

I. Statistical survey

The first paper relating to Hungarian book collections in Canada was prepared by Rezső Dabas, published in *Kanadai Magyar Újság* in 1976.¹ The Dabas paper was based on a survey containing information received from seventeen Canadian public libraries. Dr. Dabas came to the conclusion that the 17 libraries held 15,876 Hungarian books, of which the Metropolitan Toronto Library held 10,054 copies, while the Vancouver Public Library's Hungarica collection was a modest 50 books or the Montreal city library's Hungarian holdings was registered at 87 titles.²

The main shortcomings of the Dabas-survey were manifested by the fact that it had disregarded the rich Hungarian collections held by the National Library of Canada, the major academic libraries throughout the nation, not to mention the Hungarian cultural centres and religious organizations. A recent survey conducted by the present author indicates the fact that the Multilingual Department of the National Library of Canada has a Hungarian collection of 14,000 copies of 4,000 titles, of which 12,000 copies had been circulated to recipient Canadian libraries in 1984. The Hungarica collection of the University of Toronto Library is more than 25,000 items, while the holdings of the Toronto-based Hungarian Cultural Centre are more than 32,000 books and monographic publications. My information received from the Canadian libraries indicates that the size of the Hungarica collections is about the same as that of a decade ago, the holdings of the Calgary, Vancouver and London public libraries have increased by tenfold, due to the request for publications by the local Hungarian community. This leads us to the conclusion that the size and nature of Hungarian book collections are determined by the multicultural policy of the local municipalities and by the intellectual and cultural activities of the local Hungarian readers.

II. Thematic survey

A careful study of our Hungarica collections indicates that there are two major types of publications held by Canadian libraries: books relating to the humanities and social sciences and publications in the scientific disciplines.³ The former includes books of creative writing, e.g. poetry, fiction and drama, as well as publications in history, sociography, anthropology, political science, religious studies, immigration, demography, literature and so on. The latter contains publications in the areas of biology, chemistry, biochemistry, biotechnology, medicine, animal health, agricultural sciences and the related subjects, fields that Hungarian researchers have distinguished themselves in throughout the decades.

Our Hungarica collections are quite rich in books and studies authored by Hungarian-born Canadian scholars including the sociologist John Kosa, the historian Martin Kovács, Nándor Dreisziger, Bennett Kovrig, Tibor Baráth, the literary historian and educator George Bisztray, Charles Wojatsek, to name but a few. Group one includes those who were born in Hungary and received their formal education in that country. The second group includes those who left Hungary at a tender age and spent their formative years in Canada. The former group, headed by Dr. Tibor Baráth, formerly a professor of the University of Kolozsvár, is devoted to the study of Hungarian history and historiography, concentrating on historical-political events of international origin that had adverse effects on the Hungarian people. Subjects such as the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary's relationships with her neighbours, the problem of Hungarian minorities in the successor states, the question of the origin of the Magyars and other sensitive topics considered taboo by their fellow historians in the old country are favoured by the older generation researchers. *Európa felszabadítása*, and *A jövő szolgálatában*, by József Berzy, *The Ethnic History of Transylvania*, and *Origin of Rumanians* by Endre Haraszi, as well as the studies of György Nagy relating to inter-ethnic problems and the fate of Magyars in Hungary and in the successor states form this "revisionist" school of history. The pioneering works of Professor Baráth, especially the three-volume, monumental history of the origin of the Hungarian people entitled *A magyar népek őstörténete*, and his *The Early Hungarians: In the Light of Recent Historical Research* are invaluable sources of Hungarian research.

The historians belonging to the second group tend to make a more relaxed approach to the study of Hungarian history, although some of the younger scholars, such as Professors N. F. Dreisziger and Bennett Kovrig have carried out research into Hungary's recent history and have arrived at striking conclusions. Their books on Hungary's involvement in the Second World War, *Hungary's Way to World War II* by N. F. Dreisziger, and Hungary's history following World War II: *Communism in Hungary from Kun to Kádár*, *The Hungarian People's Republic* and *The Myth of Liberation: East-Central Europe in U. S. Diplomacy and Politics since 1914* by Bennett Kovrig are an important part of our Hungarica collections. The majority of this group, however, appears to prefer concentrating on the more established aspects of Hungarian history, including the study of the Rákóczi War of Independence, Louis Kossuth and the Freedom Fight of

1848–1849, Hungary's role in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the revolutions of 1918–1919.

Those Hungarian scholars writing in English such as N. F. Dreisziger, M. L. Kovács, S. M. Papp, R. Blumstock and above all, the late John Kosa, are mainly interested in the investigation of the Hungarian experience in Canada, a subject sorely neglected until quite recently. These historians and sociologists have published extensively on such topics as alienation amongst Hungarian-Canadians. Authors of this group include M. L. Kovács: *Assimilation and alienation in Ethnic Groups*, and *Assimilation versus Integration*, Korányi, E. K. et al., *On Adaptive Difficulties of Some Hungarian Immigrants*, John Kosa, *Immigration and adjustments of the Hungarians in Canada*, his *Land of Choice: The Hungarians in Canada*, and Mészáros, A. F., *Adaptation to Life in Canada*. The last two decades have witnessed the publications of a number of important Hungarica works on early Hungarian immigration and settlement in Canada by Professors M. L. Kovács and N. F. Dreisziger. More recently, a trend in regional, sociographic studies has surfaced under the leadership of Professor Robert Blumstock. Published by the National Museum of Canada the work is entitled, *Békevár: Working Papers on a Canadian Prairie Community*. The importance of Canadian historical documents and archival material pertaining to Hungarians has been realized by several young Hungarian students including Susan M. Papp and Carmela Patrias.

The study of Hungarian literature is another significant body of the Hungarian–Canadian book collections. There are close to 500 entries listed by this author in his centennial bibliographic survey published by the Canadian Plains Research Center. Exhaustive studies of current Hungarian literary trends in Canada were scarce until recently. These gaps are being filled by Professor George Bisztray's published study entitled *Canadian Hungarian Literature: Values Lost and Found*, and his forthcoming book, as well as John Miska's series of papers including *Modern Hungarian Poetry in Canada* (A magyar irodalom két dimenziója), and his *Hungarian Fiction written in English*.

The above scholastic accomplishments have opened up a new era in Hungarian studies in Canada as shown by the ever increasing graduate theses authored by Canadian students and papers published by leading Canadian publishers, periodicals and trade magazines.⁴

III. Bibliographic access

The true value of a Hungarica collection depends on its bibliographic access. Judy Young has noted in one of her papers that the extensive collections in the Canadian non-official languages publications are accessible through more than fifty bibliographic works.⁵ The following is an outline of the various systems that can enhance the usefulness of our published resources. The Hungarologist will find that there are two basic types of retrieval systems, one being the conventional, or printed bibliographic sources, the other a computer-assisted service available through the National Library of Canada and the local information centres.

1. Conventional (Print) Sources

Bibliographies, catalogues

The most commonly used bibliographic sources include national bibliographies; *Canadiana*, *National Union Catalog*, *Canadian Theses/Thèses canadiennes*, trade journals and union lists such as *Books in Canada*, *Canadian Books in Print*, *Quill & Quire*, *Canadian Periodical Index*, and the individual library catalogues. The latter can be printed catalogues and accessions lists such as the 200-page Hungarian holdings put out by the Metropolitan Toronto Library, or the bibliographic series of the University of Toronto library's Hungarian collection compiled by Iván Halász de Béky and the comprehensive bibliographies prepared by József Telek on Hungarian historical sources.

The Hungarologist will also find useful information in the numerous subject compilations published periodically by the Canadian magazines such as the *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, *The University of Toronto Quarterly*, *Quill & Quire*, *Canadian Periodical Index*, *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, etc. Of the individual bibliographies the following titles are most informative: A. Gregorovich: *Canadian Ethnic Group Bibliography*, P. C. Briant: *Ethnic Groups in Canada: A Bibliography of Research 1959-1961*, D. McLaren: *Ontario Ethno-cultural Newspapers, 1834-1972*, and J. Miska: *Ethnic and Native Canadian Literature 1850-1979*. The most comprehensive source material on Hungarica collections in this country by the author of this paper was published under the title *Canadian Studies on Hungarians: An Annotated Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*. It includes 1,300 references to books, monographs, research papers, graduate theses, archival collections and a complete list of Canadian Hungarian literary publications.

Of the archival collections the valuable holdings of the Public Archives of Canada, the National Art Gallery and the Multicultural History Society of Ontario are invaluable for the student of Hungarian studies. Other printed material on Hungarians include the related government publications such as the three books of *The Canadian Family Tree*, the numerous parliamentary committee reports and a host of Canadian trade journals, i.e. *Foreign Trade*, *Financial Post*, *Canadian Forum*, *External Affairs*, *Canadian Commerce*. Several major literary journals are among the reliable sources of Hungarian data, including the prestigious *Maclean's*, *Saturday Night*, *Canadian Literature*, and *Hungarian Studies Review*. The works of Hungarian Canadian authors are represented in such anthologies as *Made in Canada*, *Volvox*, *Canadian Fiction Magazine*, *The Sound of Time* and the anthology series of the Hungarian Canadian Authors. Other Hungarian-language sources providing information on our literary heritage include the periodicals *Új Látóhatár*, *Katolikus Szemle*, *Arkánium*, *Krónika* and *Irodalmi Újság*.

2. Computer-assisted Systems

The traditional method of literature searching is supplemented, if not downright replaced, by new, computerized techniques. The Hungarologist will find most useful the

retrospective online system called CAN/OLE, Canadian-Online Enquiries, offered by the National Library of Canada. Bibliographic retrieval is based on search strategies prepared by the requester and the library staff. The resulting printouts contain complete bibliographic data on information available within the CAN/OLE system. Another automated system of interest is called UTLAS, a service offered by the University of Toronto Library, based on Input from that library and the member libraries from across the nation. There are a number of automated systems of information retrieval used by the individual libraries such as the powerful DOBIS and the equally effective Canadian-based GEAC, a minicomputer in public and major government libraries. The scientific disciplines are well endowed with print and nonprint services. A researcher interested in Hungarian scientific achievements in medicine, biochemistry or the life-sciences are able to utilize a current awareness service called CAN/SDI, Canadian/Selective Dissemination of Information, offered by the national science library: Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information, or by using any of the major government library collections in Agriculture Canada, Environment Canada, Energy Mines and Resources, and the university libraries.

The Canadian hungarologists are in a fortunate position to have a supportive government, whose generous grants and moral encouragement had contributed to the development of good research and library facilities. It is hoped that Hungarian research institute will help create a new climate of opinion by encouraging individual scholars, bibliographers and librarians to unearth the vast amount of information available to the public.

Notes

1. Dabas, Rezső "Magyar könyvtárolomány Kanadában. . ." [Hungarian Book Collections in Canada] KANADAI MAGYAR UJSÁG 1976 (April 30): 2, 6; (May 7): 3, 6.
2. According to R. Dabas, the distribution of Hungarian books in Canadian public libraries was as follows: Montreal 87 books, Ottawa 600, Oshawa 283, Toronto 10,054, Kitchener 230, Hamilton 1,235, Welland 330, London 600, Windsor 1,035, Winnipeg 550, Edmonton 270, Calgary 200, Lethbridge 100, Vancouver 50, Victoria 87. My own survey conducted in 1985 shows that the size of the Hungarian book collections in the public libraries, by and large, is the same, which can be attributed to the limited amount of shelving space available for library stacks. There are a few exceptions, such as the Calgary Public Library, whose collection has grown to over 1,000 Hungarian books and the Vancouver Public Library's to over 200.
3. My experience as a scientific librarian led me to believe that there is a great demand for Hungarian research papers and books in Canada. I have received several requests for translating into English a number of Hungarian scientific papers on health of animals, soil science, medicine and biotechnology. The libraries of Agriculture Canada, Environment Canada, Energy, Mines and Resources and, above all, the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information maintain extensive collections by Hungarian researchers in Hungarian or in translation.
4. An annotated compilation by this author: *Canadian University Studies on Hungarians*, includes 20 graduate theses. The chronological index of my *Canadian Studies on Hungarians* shows the following increase in Hungarian-related publications over the decades: 1885-1950: 39 citations listed, 1951-1960: 140 references, 1961-1970: 250, 1971-1980: 465 titles, and 1981 to 1985: 392 publications located. These figures do not include the valuable articles and papers published in

Hungarian newspapers. It is hoped that the Hungarian Studies Association will encourage its bibliographers to compile a comprehensive bibliography of articles of Hungarian newspapers in Canada.

5. Judy Young: "Some Thoughts about the Present State of Bibliography in the Area of Canadian Ethnic Studies." In: A. B. Piternick, ed. *Bibliography for Canadian Studies: Present Trends and Future Needs. . . Proceedings of a Conference. . .* (Willowdale, Ont.: Association for Canadian Studies, 1981) pp. 38-47.

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