

SIGNIFICANT HUNGARICA COLLECTIONS IN AMERICAN RESEARCH LIBRARIES

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We have witnessed in our lifetime one of history's greatest transfers of talent, the migration of scholars and scientists from Europe to America in the wake of wars and internal domestic strife. Over the last five decades Hungarian scientists and scholars, musicians and creative artists, architects and educators, brought to America and the academic world a breath of learning and a humanistic tradition that have enriched and enlarged the intellectual horizons of their colleagues as well as their students.

Needless to say that the growth of academic programs has had direct impact on the development of Hungarica collections in academic and research libraries. For years American scholars were dependent on European libraries for research. The major source of primary materials about historic Hungary will always remain in the archives and libraries of Hungary and Europe. But the acceptance of Hungarian studies as a legitimate academic subject signalled that libraries would be expected to acquire more scholarly materials about Hungary than they had in the past. It is the development and contents of some of these libraries which I will try to report on to you today.

I

An outgrowth of World War II, was a recognition that American library collection efforts had been primarily Western European in orientation. World War II revealed major gaps not only in the traditional areas of collecting but also in that vast area of Central Europe, and the Soviet Union. During the late 1940s and the 1950s, well established and new universities not only purchased large private collections but also entire bookstores. Furthermore, Europe was in ruins and countries were willing to part with the treasures of their libraries, many of which were confiscated from wealthy notables or from religious orders. In their zeal for building collections of material from hitherto neglected areas, American librarians roamed the globe so they could conclude purchases on the spot. The US dollar was strong and rebuilding the countries of Europe urgent.

It was during this twenty years of favorable world-wide acquisition climate that Indiana University purchased a significant part of Olmutz monastery collection. The University of Illinois bought a major private collection from Transylvania, and the

University of Michigan acquired a collection of undisclosed origin of considerable value.

If the acquisitions were great, so were the problems in processing the materials and making them accessible. For example, at the University of Michigan, I was permitted to visit in 1985 a remote storage location where the rare book collection just mentioned was still in piles of boxes and yet to be processed.

As funds for acquisition stabilized in the seventies, inflation took its heavy toll, and the devaluation of the US dollar halted this world-wide acquisition of rare books by US academic and research libraries. Yet until now no one took the time and personal financial investment to review this development with some systematic care. True, there had been successful attempts at evaluating Hungarica collections at several libraries, but without any attempt at comparative analysis.

II

Over the years I have been fortunate to visit nearly seventy academic, research, public and private libraries, and institutions in the United States and Canada. As the work progressed so did the level of comprehensiveness and skill in analyzing holdings with the use of the local card catalogue, the shelflist, bibliographies and the assistance of colleagues. With the technique which developed over the years I can now identify at least 95% of the pertinent Hungarica titles in the humanities and social sciences.

But there are other significant benefits of these personal visits to Hungarica collections. There are very few academically trained Hungarica experts in the United States who are directly responsible for the maintenance of these collections. The care of the Hungarica rare books and manuscripts, that is the pre-1850 imprints, are usually part of a rare book librarian's assignments who has some linguistic sophistication and general cultural orientation to the countries of Central Europe. These colleagues usually welcome the residency of an inquisitive expert who recognizes the intrinsic value of collections from a broader national and international perspective. This explains why such eminent scholars as Father Gabriel Astrik of Notre Dame, put at my disposal the good will of his cooperative staff.

And as the days pass by and the collegiate confidence grows, so does mutual acceptance. It is significant that I was able to recommend to many libraries, with success, the relocation of valuable materials from an open shelf area to a more controlled and secure location. For example, the Rare Book and Special Collections at the University of Illinois houses titles up to 1700. At the result of this policy, works that were published after that date were shelved in the open stack area where the temperature reached the 90s F during the summer months. Based on my selection and recommendation, over 300 volumes were removed from this scorching temperature and dust, to a climate-controlled, air-conditioned secure area. Other institutions, including the Huntington Library, also accepted my suggestion for the inclusion of the Hungarian collection into the preferential insurance package. During my examination of these

precious collections I also provide advice and consultation, free of charge, to scores of institutions, thus contributing to the preservation of thousands of titles across the country. For the future, this activity may well overshadow the compilation of reports, such as this, and the preparation of bibliographies, which you have before you.

III

So during the next few minutes I want to take you with me on an imaginary tour to a select few but significant Hungarica collections in the United States.

The general Hungarica collection at Indiana is close to the 25 000 volume mark, and growing. It is possibly the most balanced working collection and academically most comprehensive at any institution of higher education in the United States. The holdings include:

history, political science, economics and economic theory, language, comparative linguistics, literature, fine arts, the theatre, music, folk art, ethnography and folklore, biographies, bibliographies, and essential reference works. These are primarily in Hungarian but one can locate the best English and German works by American, British, and Continental writers as well. There is a strong representation of scholarly periodicals.

The initial development of university and private libraries is quite interesting. Among them, the first decades of the Newberry Library of Chicago must be mentioned since it is of special interest to us.

The Newberry Library was established in 1885 and the doors of the now standing facility opened in 1893. Collection development from the beginning emphasized subjects in the humanities, and the library acquired large and significant collections from the very beginning. It was among these collections that the library purchased the private library of the late Prince Louis-Lucien Napoleon (1813-1891), the nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte. It should be noted briefly that the younger Napoleon gained worldwide fame as a linguist while yet a young man, and books poured in from all quarters of the globe upon the relative of an Emperor who was known to value a rare work above all other treasures. His primary objective was the acquisition of every language and dialect represented in Europe; but in the course of years his ambition went further, and he hoped to assemble specimens of every known language which possessed even the most rudimentary literature. If a new language or dialect came to his knowledge, he had no peace of mind until he had secured a specimen for himself. He acquired works of the greatest bibliographical interest and rarity, many of which will be sought in vain in all the published records of the bibliographers. The Prince's library is one of extraordinary merit and value.

It was only three years after his death that a catalogue was prepared on the collection and published in 1894. I have the good fortune in possessing a copy of the complete volume. Subsequently, the entire collection was offered for sale, based on the catalog, when finally the Newberry Library purchased it in June, 1901. The collection constitutes 13 699 titles, and includes 18 914 volumes.

Under the "Finno-Tataric or Uralo-Altai" language groups 559 titles are listed. From among these, 151 titles refer to an "Ugric-Magyaric" subdivision. The earliest six titles were issued in the 1600s, 1612 being the oldest imprint. There are twenty-one works from the 1700s, and the balance of 124 were published during the 1800s. It was under these colorful circumstances that we can identify in the United States a small but significant collection of 151 titles dealing with Hungarian linguistics in 1901.

One must ask the question: How many Hungarians knew about the existence of this major acquisition in 1901, or even several years later in 1990? One can indicate with a high degree of confidence that in 1901 this was the most cohesive and significant collection on any given Hungarian subject in the United States.

Since the turn of the century the Newberry Library assembled a very noteworthy Hungarica collection. Today one can identify nearly 400 titles under philology alone. Most of the titles were published during the inter-war period. Among them are titles on language education, comparative linguistics, polyglot dictionaries, history of language and literature, dialectology, collections of folk literature and ballads, and a variety of Bible translations. For the linguist this collection is a veritable goldmine and should be explored systematically.

But the Newberry Library has other attractions for the serious researchers. Rare works on history, description and travel, historical maps dating to the 18th century. About 8 000 volumes contribute to Hungarica research, the earliest title being none other than the 1490 Augsburg edition of Thuroczky's *Chronica Hungarorum*.

IV

Just a few blocks from the New York Public Library is the lesser known but important Pierpont Morgan Library. Pierpont Morgan (1837-1913), one of America's most notable financiers, philanthropists and patrons of the arts, began his career as a collector in 1890. Soon his vast collection of books, manuscripts and drawings required its own building which was completed in 1906. Today it is one of the nation's most distinguished museums and centers for scholarly research.

Among the Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts, with over 1 000 volumes, dating from the 5th to the 16th centuries, one can identify some high spots for Hungarica research.

Naturally, you will first want to see the two Corvina incunabula, from the collection of the great Renaissance Hungarian King, Mátyás. So the staff brings to you first one then the other representation of the truly lavish works of the famed Corvina Library which the Pierpont Morgan Library acquired in 1912. The works are: Didymus Alexandrinus, *De spiritu sancto*, identified as Manuscript No. 496. The other is: an incunabula by Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Opera*, catalogued as Manuscript No. 497.

But there are two works that date back to the 14th century. The first is a bilingual Italo-Hungarian Bible. The other is a set of eighty-nine miniatures on vellum, illuminated in Hungary possibly around 1340.

Your attention is also drawn to two other works of great significance and value. Johannes Thwrocz, *Chronica Hungarorum*. Now the first edition of the Turóczy Krónika was published at Brunn on March 20, 1488, and the second at Augsburg on June 3, 1488. The Pierpont Morgan Library is the only library in the United States where both the first and the second editions can be identified. I was permitted to have on the table both editions at the same time, thus having a rare opportunity to examine the textual and bibliographic distinction of the two volumes.

We need to note two other items, both published in 1497. The first is by Michael de Hungaria, *Sermones*, issued in Paris. The second is by a Hermann Schedel, *Liber chronicarum*, which appeared in Augsburg. The last thirty leaves contain contemporary geographical descriptions about Hungary. There are three items from the 16th century dated in 1522, 1540, and 1581. This last one is by Antonio Bonfini, *Rerum Hungaricarum decades quatuor*, issued at Frankfurt. The twenty items in the library relating to Hungary are significant due to the nature of each and contain key titles for the right researcher.

V

The New York Public Library's Hungarica rare book collection is quite extensive and would require considerable discussion. What we must note here, however, is the third beautiful sample from the Corvina collection by Titus Livius Patavinus, *De secundo bello Punico*, which is part of the famous Spencer Collection.

A few examples from among the titles will give you some indication about the variety of subjects from the New York Public Library holdings:

1. Thuroczy, Janos, *Chronica Hungarorum*, Brunn, 1488.
2. Tarducci, Archille, *Il Turco vincibile in Ungaria*, Ferrara, 1597.
3. Joannis Sajnovics, *Demonstratio idioma Ungarorum et Lapporum edem esse*, Nagy-Szombat, 1770.
4. Istvan Csontos, *A szép-nem ügyvédje, az asszonyi becset sértegető vád-okok ellen*, Kassa, 1830.

The Beineke Rare Book and Manuscript Library on the Yale University campus is housed in a most magnificent and sumptuous modern building. The entire structure is wrapped around with see-through light pink marble panels which the sun penetrates and on a bright day creates within the interior an effervescent brightness throughout.

The fourth Corvina codex which is located in the United States is well secured in the vaults of the Beinecke Library. The copy of Publius Cornelius Tacitus, *Annalium libri XI-XIV*, and *Historiam libri I-V*, was purchased by Yale from a Robert Babcock in 1935. It is considered one of the price-possessions of Yale's 15th century collection.

The Hungarica rare material can be estimated at nearly 200 titles. It is particularly rich from the time of King Mátyás to about 1700. There is a title, published in 1514,

on the ill-fated crusade, and subsequent peasant revolt of Dózsa. The advancement of the Turks into Hungary and their eventual occupation of the land is dealt with in scores of contemporary German, Latin, Italian, French and English accounts. The period of the Counter-Reformation and the religious strife during the 17th century, the second great siege of Vienna in 1683, and the subsequent siege of Buda and the liberation of Hungary have major representations in the collection. No serious scholar can ignore the vast resources of this library in dealing with the Turkish occupation of Hungary.

By way of illustration let me list a few titles from among the Beinecke collection.

1. Thuroczy, Janos, *Chronica Hungarorum*, Brunn, 1488.
2. Bonfini, Antonio, *Rervm vngaricarvm*, Basiliae, 1543.
3. Bizari, Pietro, *Pannonicvm bellvm*, Basiliae, 1573.
4. Fumee, Martin, *The historie of the trovbles of Vngarie: containing the pitifvll losse and rvine of that kingdome, and the warres happened there ... between the Christians and Turks*, London, 1600.
5. Ahmed I, Sultan of the Turks, *Letter from the Great Turke lately sent vnto the Holy Father Pope and to Rodulphus, naming himself king of Hungarie, and to all the kings and princes of Christendome*. Tr. out of the Hebrew tongue into Italian, and out of the Italian into French, and now into English out of the French coppie, London, 1606, 11 p.
6. *A prospect of Hungary and Transylvania, with a catalogue of the kings of the one, and the princes of the other*. London, 1664, 54 p.
7. Széchenyi, István, *Lovakrul*, Pest, 1828.

One more item must be added for the literary historian. As we know, there was considerable interest in translating Jókai's works into English about a hundred years ago. Now the Yale general or Sterling Library has one of the finest and largest Jókai translations anywhere in this country. It would make an interesting M. A. thesis, for example, to investigate the English translators of Jókai.

VI

The Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington is our next stop. The Hungarica material is in the midst of one of the finest rare book collections which one can find on the East Coast. The nearly thirty Hungarica titles concentrate on the period between 1526 and 1686. In many ways the Folger Library complements the one at Yale in terms of historical coverage and emphasis.

Two titles deserve mention here:

1. Martin Luther, *Vom Kriege Widder die Turchen*, Wittenberg, 1529.
2. *The Hungarian rebellion: or, An historical relation of the late wicked practices of the three counts, Nadasdi, Serini, and Frangepani; tending to subvert the govern-*

ment of his present imperial majesty in Hungary, and introduce the Mahumetan, with their arraignment, condemnation, and manner of being executed for same. London, 1672.

The general collections of the Firestone Library at Princeton University may contain about 12 000 volumes about Hungary. Of these, about 120 fall into our pre-1850 period. The rare book collection includes a few titles from the 17th century. But it is the period extending from 1800 to about 1855 where the strength of the collection is. The Reform period and the 1848–49 War of Independence and its *dramatis personae* are dealt with in about sixty works.

1. LeClerc, Jean, *Memoirs of Emeric Count Teckely*, London, 1693.
2. Széchenyi, István, *Világ*, Pest, 1831.
3. Széchenyi, István, *Ein Blick auf den anonymen "Rückblick"*. London, 1859.

We need to make a brief stop in Philadelphia at the University of Pennsylvania. The development of the Hungarica rare book collection is an engaging one and worth telling. The library's annual reports and discussions with colleagues on the library staff revealed the initial development of a collection on the Habsburg Lands. During the 1950s an academically well-trained librarian from Vienna, Austria, Rudolph Hirsch, was active as the head of the acquisition department. Having European/Austrian training, Hirsch possessed the necessary languages to develop a handsome collection. He also had the financial resources and fully recognized the power of the U. S. dollar at a crucial time, and invested well. Among the Habsburg related materials he naturally came across titles which had references to Hungary, Turkey and Poland. There are thirteen titles from the 16th, seven from the 17th, thirteen from the 18th titles. Seventeen titles were published between 1800 and 1855. The subject focus of these titles is primary Hungarian history.

The University of Michigan Library's Hungarica collection should also be reported. Here some two hundred rare book titles are housed dating from about 1600 to 1855. Political history for the 18th century dominates but there is considerable depth for the early 19th century as well. There are valuable titles on description and travel also, particularly from 1830 on, mostly in English.

A few examples may be helpful again.

1. Howell, James, *Florvs hvngaricus: or the history of Hungaria and Transylvania deduced from the original of that nation ... to the present Turkish invasion, anno 1664.* London, 1664, 302 p.
2. Békeházi Incze, *A korszellemi által fejtegetve. Igaz-e hogy mindenben hátra vagyunk*, Pest, 1838.
3. Eötvös József, *Die Reform in Ungarn*, Leipzig, 1846.

The library at Duke University possesses twenty-five rare books on Hungary. Just to satisfy the music minded listener, I want to share with you one title from the music collection. It is: *Hungarian waltz, as danced by Mrs. H. Wallock in the admired ballet of "Love among the roses"*. Philadelphia, 1819

The University of Colorado at Boulder, Colorado, has about 4 000 titles on Hungary in its general collections. We may recall that Colorado was one of the four institutions, along with Columbia, Indiana, and Berkeley, where Hungarian studies programs were supported through the National Defense Education Act of 1958, and was one of the four Uralic and Altaic Centers. In the general collection, language and literature dominate, along with history and representative titles from the Reform period.

1. Széchenyi, István, *Világ*, Pest, 1831.

2. Széchenyi, István, *Javaslat a magyar közlekedés ügy rendezéséről*, Pozsony, 1848. This by the way is what is termed: an "Author's presentation copy".

The Hungarica collection at Rice University in Houston is not large but is the most significant in Texas. The existence of the collection can only be explained by the fact that for a very long tenure Dr. John Rath, the former editor of the *Austrian History Yearbook*, taught there. The 150 or so rare titles concentrate on the 19th century from about the french Revolution to 1848–49, and its aftermath. The collection is surprisingly good on the Reform period and includes works on statistics, description and travel, and constitutional developments.

Unfortunately, there is not much time left for explaining the two other libraries in the Chicago area, namely the University of Chicago Regenstein Rare Book Collection, and the Northwestern University Library and its holdings. Suffice it to state that the University of Chicago Library has possibly the most comprehensive collection on legislative materials, laws and statutes for the last 150 years.

We should add one brief comment about the University of Illinois Hungarica collection. As it was indicated at the beginning of this presentation, the library purchased a collection of real merit from Romania around 1972. It most likely belonged to a Transylvanian noble family of intellectual leanings. It is an excellent source on the constitution of Hungary, and includes titles addressing the exposition of Werbőczy's *Tripartitum*, as well as the legal relationship between the Hungarian Crown and the Principality of Transylvania. The collection is a treasure for those who are truly interested in the scholarly investigation of this subject. Latin, German Hungarian and French works abound in the collections.

Among the public libraries the Boston Public Library deserves attention. However, a discussion on the Hungarica collection at that institution will have to wait for another time. The Cleveland Public Library collection was analyzed and fully described by me in a publication issued in 1976.

VII

By way of conclusion let me offer a few observations.

All I have presented is a short summary concerning a few American libraries where Hungarica rare book collections were built up beginning with the early part of our century into the 1960s. But even these collections, both large and small, warrant a more comprehensive description in two ways. First, within the context of the general Hungarica holdings at a given institution, and secondly within the development and history of the home institution's library.

As you will have noticed, not mentioned in my remarks are several major collections about which neither other colleagues or I have reported since 1970. The collections at the Library of Congress, Columbia University, Harvard, the Hoover Institution, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Notre Dame Hungarica collections, among others, fall into this category.

During my visits to libraries, which usually extend from a few to seven working days, I take careful note of the entire Hungarica holdings, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, including publications into the 1980s. But in all cases the focus remains on the "high spots", that is on the pre-1850 imprints. This is a very convenient date from the historical, political point of view, and also from the literary and cultural as well as the publishing aspects of Hungarian life and development in historic Hungary and of Hungarians abroad.

There is much similarity, for example, among the Hungarica collections of a Dartmouth College, the one at Smith College, Amherst College, the University of Virginia, and the University of Rochester. When one compares the bulk of the titles, they are mostly in English, and include the reception of Kossuth and his entourage in the United States, and the titles that were issued about Hungarian subjects during the second half of the 19th century both in the United States and in Europe.

But 1850 is also a necessary benchmark for a non-resident travelling researcher. One must control a travel schedule and the time which is devoted to each library. I also need to be sensitive to the good will of local librarians who not only welcome a colleague, but are also quite helpful and accommodating.

There are about ten more institutions which I need to visit. A comprehensive evaluation of the Huntington Library should be undertaken. The Crerar collection within the University of Chicago library system, and the two major Canadian collections in Toronto and Montreal are among them.

Of course in a project such as this, the help and encouragement of colleagues like you are always welcome.