

CONFERENCE IN MEMORY OF TIBOR MELCZER (1945–2001)



Under the title of “*If everything is broken...*” on 2nd November 2011, a conference was organised jointly by NSZL, the Institute for Literary Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Hungarology Center of the Rome-based La Sapienza University in order to remember that Tibor Melczer, former colleague in the Information Department died ten years earlier. On the part of the Széchényi Library, Director of Research László Boka paid reverence to Melczer’s fantastic knowledge, deep culture and excellent memory. On the part of the Illyés Archive, Béla Pomogáts evaluated his contribution to literary history. It transpired from his words, that similarly to a number of other scholars, Melczer is seen as “one of the non-canonized literary historians,” whose insights and research findings are so important that in some cases they serve as guiding stars up to the present day. Academician György Szabad’s letter was also read out, whereby he expressed his great appreciation of his former student and personal friend.

The ten conference presentations were organized around the themes that Tibor Melczer himself was concerned with. In the area of old Hungarian cultural and literary history, academician András Vizkelety talked about Brother Julianus’s journey in search of Hungarian groups in the ancient homeland; Judit P. Vásárhelyi analysed Melczer’s research of Attila József, related to the translations of Psalms by Albert Szenci Molnár; Judit V. Ecsedy gave an overview of

the 18th century editions of Miklós Zrínyi’s works; related to Melczer’s observations concerning book illustrations, László Szörényi introduced the most recent findings of the Zrínyi scholarship.

It is inevitable, however, that our colleague’s main research area was the 20th century, the *Nyugat* period and the activity of the two great poets Mihály Babits and Miklós Radnóti. Tibor was active in producing the critical edition of Mihály Babits’s works. The excellent presentations given by Lajos Sipos, Ágnes Kelevéz and Gábor Albert dealt with this main theme. Béla Pomogáts assessed Melczer’s philological-based investigations of Radnóti, the research area that could only be issued in a comprehensive volume after our colleagues’ death. Péter Sárközi evoked the influential politician, editor and literary man Miksa Fenyő, who was Melczer’s uncle and passed on his love for Italy to his nephew.

On the occasion of this conference, the former close colleague and roommate Erzsébet Tokaji Nagy compiled and introduced the bibliography of Tibor Melczer’s academic publications, which also gives us information about his rich oeuvre in journalism, as well as his book, music and television reviews.

We hope that in line with the organizing institutions’ plans, the invaluable conference papers will soon be published in a separate volume.

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