

Manuscripts





[1]Manuscripts of National Széchényi Library make up the largest manuscript collection of Hungary. Since the very beginnings, NSZL has been collecting all the manuscript documents written by private persons, with the exception of the history of modern science and technology, which have a source value for any branch of Hungarian literature and history sciences or for Hungarian cultural history. The number of documents stored in National Széchényi Library's Manuscripts Archive totals approximately 1,400,000.

Medieval manuscripts

The number of surviving medieval manuscripts of Hungarian origin is relatively low. During Hungary's history, the majority of one-time volumes perished, so the value of entire manuscripts is rather high and so is that value of manuscript fragments. With its collection of nearly 700 codices and 1,000 codex fragments, NSZL's Manuscripts Archive is an outstanding collection of the kind. Out of its Hungary-related materials, the best-known are language relics and corvinas, as well as codices of our most famous historical resources. In addition to the Hungarian relics, NSZL's Manuscripts Archive includes first-rate codices which deserve international attention as well.

New-age manuscript volumes

This part of the Archive comprises as many as 30,000 volumes grouped according to the various languages they had been written in. Timeframe ranges between mid-16th century and present-day. The richness and value of the collection is priceless. It contains historical notes from the 16th century as well as huge source compilations and letter collections from the 18th-19th centuries, together with theological works, writings of apologists, collections of poems and speeches, study notes, peregrination albums and catalogues of one-time libraries.

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Letter Collection

This collection of at least 30,000 items contains private letters which had arrived in National Széchényi Library not as parts of a compact heritage. Timeframe ranges between mid-16th century and the end of the 20th century, serving as a first-rate source for researchers of 19th-20th century Hungarian history, literary and cultural history.

Analecta

NSZL's Analecta Collection comprises a group of small-volume, non-book format manuscripts which had arrived in National Széchényi Library not as parts of a certain heritage and, as regards their genre, cannot be defined as items belonging to the Letter Collection. Analecta is a rather colorful collection including manuscripts of poems, dedicated photographs, short biographies and also treasures of the cultural history of "weekdays" such as hand-written invitation cards, dance cards, financial notes, etc.

Personal fonds

The Manuscripts Archive of National Széchényi Library holds 650 personal bequests or so-called fond units. Manuscripts kept here comprise the majority of the stock of NSZL's Manuscripts Archive. This part of the Archive was established in the second half of the 20th century. Prior to that, personal bequests received by NSZL in one package had been divided according to aspects such as genre or form. Similarly to the Letter Collection, fond units also serve as first-rate sources for research in 19th-20th century Hungarian history, literature and cultural history.

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