

# Fact Sheets

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on Hungary

# Fact Sheets on Hungary

FOR KIDS



## BUSÓJÁRÁS: THE BUSÓ FESTIVITIES AT MOHÁCS



The Mohács *busójárás* is an end-of-winter procession and ritual masquerade ball at the end of the Carnival season, which the UNESCO included in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009. The six-day mummery developed into a public celebration of national fame, accompanied by dance and music, where the participants are the inhabitants of the town, groups of *busó*, the accompanying musicians and dancers, and the artisans mak-

ing the masks. This widely known festivity of the Šokci of Mohács was held from the morning of Shrove Sunday to the evening of Shrove Tuesday. The *busójárás* belongs to the family of festivities, also found among the beliefs of other peoples, which bid farewell to winter, welcome spring, secure protection and practice magic for fertility. It is akin to the Rio and Venice Carnivals as well as to African folk customs. The *busójárás* still starts on the last Sunday of the Carni-

val season in Mohács, the centre of the old folk habit, in Kóló tér, a place where the disguised *busós* gather. As the old *Busó* cannon goes off, various groups march along the main street as far as the main square to celebrate Carnival by making a tremendous noise on the banks of the Danube and in neighbouring streets. At dusk they return to the main square to dance and play pranks on people around a huge burning bonfire where they symbolically incinerate winter.

## Do you know where the Hungarians living in the middle of Europe came from?

The Hungarian nation emerged as a mixture of several peoples during its history. The map shows that the Hungarians probably had their original homeland outside Europe, somewhere east of the Ural Mountains.

At about 4000 B.C., they probably lived by fishing and hunting between the Ural Mountains and the River Ob. They gradually moved westwards and merged with other peoples living in tribal confederations. At that time, the Moravian Empire collapsed in the Carpathian Basin, so the

Hungarians, who already practiced equestrian tactics, easily subjugated the peoples in the region. The majority of present-day Hungarians are descendants of the 500,000 “conquering Hungarians” who moved in the Carpathian Basin in 895. The previous settlers of the Carpathian Basin mixed

with these peoples. King Saint Stephen (997–1038), who founded the state by making Western Christianity the official religion, referred to the mixed composition of the nation in his *Admonitions* written to his son, Prince Emery: “A country with one language and one custom is weak and fallible.”





## What is the meaning of “magyar” and “hungarus”, two names of the Hungarian people?

The Magyars, who appeared in Europe in the 800s, had an unknown origin, so the historians who wrote in different languages referred to the Hungarians by various names in addition to their own. The name *onogur* → *ungar* → *hungarus* comes from *onogur* ‘ten riders’, i.e. a people of ten tribes, and refers to the Hungarians’ tribal organ-

isation. The ethnonym *Magyar* as the nation’s own name appeared relatively late in written records. It means men of Hungarian nationality. According to another tradition, *Magyar* goes back to the name of the Megyer tribe, which gave a prince to the Hungarian tribal confederation at the time of the Hungarian Conquest

(895). The drawing shows a 9<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian male outfit as imagined creatively by a famous Hungarian archaeologist based on metal ornaments found in graves and in written sources. A reason why it is hard to remember the past is that the graves preserved only metal and bone objects.



## Do you know how someone could become king in Hungary?

As a unique Hungarian tradition, any person who wanted to be king of the country had to be crowned with the crown of Saint Stephen, the first Hungarian king, by the country’s first prelate, the Archbishop of Esztergom, in the then capital Székesfehérvár.

The Holy Crown consists of two parts. The upper one is called Latin and the lower one is called the Greek hoop crown. The lower part shows Géza I (1074–1077), king of Hungary, who received the crown as a gift together with his enamel portrait after an eastern campaign. The upper crown could have originally been an ornament on the Bible of King Béla III, later re-

moved and bent to fit the other crown. Probably, this copy was Saint Stephen’s Bible and secured a link with the heritage of the State Founder. Since the main proof of inheritance was that someone declared himself the successor of Saint Stephen, it is hard to imagine that any element of the crown was unrelated to Hungary’s first king. The coronation insignia which survived in-

clude the crown, the orb, the sceptre, the sword and the robe. The crown, the sceptre and the robe were made in the first century of the Kingdom of Hungary. Nowadays, the coronation insignia are kept in the Parliament building. The Fundamental Law, which was adopted in 2011, declares that the crown is one of the Hungarian national symbols.



## What is the Hungarian flag like?

The Hungarian flag consists of three bands of equal width in red, white and green. These colours became so popular in the 1848 revolution that they were made the Hungarian nation’s symbol by a law in April 1848. These colours were first used in the flags of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary and in the Hungarian royal family’s red and white coat of arms. The colours of the Hungarian flag are the same as the Italian tricolour, only their order and arrangement are different. When the Italian air force flies in the right angle at parades, they paint the sky with the Hungarian colours.



## Do you know whom the Hungarians call the State Founder and why?

Prince Árpád realised that he should establish a state to survive in the long run. In about 893, he founded a principality to rule a tribal confederation in the territory of present-day Hungary, and he is credited for the Hungarian Conquest, i.e. the settlement of his people in the Carpathian Basin. His successors, Prince Géza and his son, Saint Stephen, adopted Christianity and consolidated Hungary as a state in Christian Europe. The descendants of Árpád were the members of the Hungarian royal family known as the Árpád Dynasty, which ruled until



1301. In other words, while the Hungarian state was founded by Árpád, the name State Founder usually refers to King Saint Stephen. Succeeding his father as a prince in 997, he turned the principality which emerged from the Hungarian tribal confederation into the united Christian Kingdom of Hungary in 1000. To symbolise this, he asked for a crown from the Pope. In the depictions, the dual cross in Saint Stephen’s hand is a symbol of the founder of the Christian state and 10 bishoprics. The sword shows that it took a lot of struggles to establish a united kingdom.





Do you know that anthropological and linguistic origin can be different?

The closest relatives of Hungarian are the Ob-Ugric languages, Ostyak and Vogul. While the Finns and the Hungarians do not understand each other, their ancestral words reveal the affinity. Just like Finnish, the Hungarian language is also agglutinating. Every word stem receives a suffix. The similarity between the two languages was more apparent in prehistoric times. The Finno-Ugric affinity of the Hungarian language is like a former cathedral which an archaeologist must reconstruct out of a few stones (*käsi* = *kéz* 'hand', *kala* = *hal* 'fish'). In anthropological terms, the Hungarians come from the east, which is confirmed by early grave findings. It re-



Hungarian has been the official language of Hungary since 1844. It is the mother tongue of roughly 15 million people and as such the 62<sup>nd</sup> language in the world. Hungarian is thought to be related with the Finno-Ugric branch of the Uralic language family.



mains uncertain what the anthropological history of the Hungarians has to do with their language. The drawings of Gyula László represent a group of eastern type bald Hungarians and the features of an armed equestrian nomadic people showing western influence.

What Hungarian loan words do you think there are in world languages?

Hungarian vocabulary includes an estimated 60–100 thousand words but the number of all word forms may easily amount to one million. As with other languages, an educated speaker uses no more than 25–30,000 words. Some vocabulary items found their way to world languages via other languages. For example, the words *gulyás*, *kocsi*, *huszár*, *paprika*, *puszta* come from Hungarian and are still shared by several languages. Despite its Slavic origin, the word *huszár* became famous and spread across Europe as the Hungarian army's equestrian unit achieved military successes.



What animals do Hungarian myths trace the people's descent from?

Hungarian origin myths and legends have recurring motifs, including the world tree, the magic stag, the saker falcon and the white mare. The world tree links the sky and the earth as a passage for heroes to get from one to the other. The story of the magic stag is a legendary explanation of the common origin of the Hungarians and the Huns. One day two brothers, Hunor and Magor, decided to go out hunting without their father. In the *puszta*, they caught sight of a young stag and chased it all the way to a swampy area. Once there, they completely lost sight

of the animal and couldn't kill it despite a long quest. While chasing the stag, they wandered over the Maeotian marshes (Sea of Azov) until they found a suitable pasture for their animals and settled down there. At some point, they discovered the wives and children of an unknown people, who lived in tents without their men and were holding a feast. The two brothers quickly abducted them together with their livestock and took them to the Maeotian marshes. Two of the kidnapped young women happened to be the daughters of the Alan Prince. One married Hunor and the other one Magor. Later, these women gave birth to the Hun and Magyar nations. In other legends, the Hungarian kings descend from the saker falcon or *turul*. According to yet another myth, the

Hungarians sent a white horse, a gilded saddle and a halter to the Moravian Prince, who was reigning alongside the Danube, and asked for soil, grass and water in return. "Take as much as you want for this gift", the unsuspecting prince answered. Árpád occupied Pannonia (Hungary) and drove away the prince on the grounds of this cunning gift and answer. It is generally held that the myth is based on an old legal custom of acquiring land, which the Hungarians practiced against strangers who did not suspect a thing. This way of symbolic acquisition of property was also used by the Persians. The custom is based on the belief that soil or any object removed from a country, village or house passes the country or region to the recipient of the donation.

Do you know of any Hungarian cartoons?

Hungarian cartoon director Marcell Jankovics created graphic works which unite various tales and mythology, zodiac signs and the veneration of animals. These include *Son of the White Mare* (1982), which received the award "Best Cartoon of All Time" in Los Angeles in 1984.



*The Mészáros Family* was a Hungarian animated TV series in the 1970s and 1980s which has remained popular ever since. It was also broadcasted and became a success in Germany, Bulgaria, Italy, France, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The protagonist is 12-year-old Aladár, a child prodigy who makes a device to



take his family for space trips. However, his family members can rarely cope with his inventions and get entangled in sticky situations, which is why Aladár must always get them out of the fix. The funny lines were written by József Romhányi, a word magician, who was also famous for other tale scripts.



## Why do bells toll at noon worldwide?



The Siege of Nándorfehérvár, today's Belgrade was a major event of the Hungarian-Turkish wars, where Christians, Hungarians and Serbs, led by János Hunyadi, heroically defended the castle of Nándorfehérvár between 4–21 July 1456 against Sultan Mehmed II's Ottoman army, ten times superior in numbers.

On 22 July, the Turks were defeated in the battle next to the castle. Hungarian military history considers the event as one of the most significant Hungarian victories in terms of long-term consequences and international significance.

The noon bell ritual commemorates the Belgrade victory all over the Christian world. The Pope ordered the bells to toll at noon to remind the peoples of Europe to thank Hungary, "the bastion of Europe", for saving them from the Turks.

## Do you know who János Hunyadi and King Mathias were?

John Hunyadi was an outstanding hero of the battles against the Turks and the father of the later king Mathias.

Legend has it that the Hunyadis' coat of arms displays a raven with a ring in the bill because the father of John Hunyadi was allegedly King Sigismund, who had donated a ring to a young peasant girl with whom he fell in love. The girl gave birth to a boy and let the king know about the good news by sending him a raven with a ring.



King Mathias (1458–1490) was an outstanding figure in Renaissance Hungary. His flourishing court gathered several famous poets, historians and artists. They included Italian polymath Galeotto Marzio, who wrote his famous medical work in Buda, and historian Antonio Bonfini, who was hired by Mathias to study Hungarian

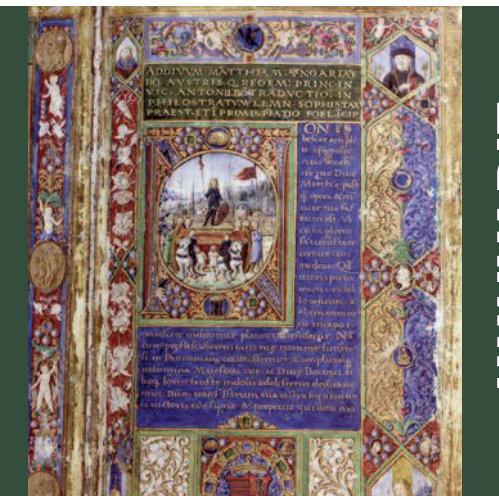
history. During King Mathias' reign, the castle of Buda was rebuilt in the Renaissance style and remained one of the most wonderful palaces in Europe until the Turkish period. It also housed the famous library of King Mathias. Mathias Hunyadi led several successful campaigns against the Turks. He defended his country and tried to build a Central European empire which could efficiently repel the increasingly powerful Turkish attacks. To this end, he obtained the title King of Bohemia and occupied Vienna in 1485. He centralised royal power with a military basis, Hungary's first permanent mercenary army, the Black Army.



## Do you know that one of the largest libraries in Renaissance Europe was located in Hungary?

King Mathias had a famous library called Bibliotheca Corviniana, which contained codices called corvinæ. The word *corvus* means 'raven' in Latin and is the name of the heraldic animal of the Hunyadi family. There is not only a story about his father John Hunyadi and the raven but also an anecdote about Mathias and the heraldic animal. When young Mathias was kept prisoner in Prague, he used a raven to exchange letters with his mother. The bird flew unnoticed as it carried the letters between them.

Mathias' fondness of books gave rise to the second largest library in the world at that time after the Vatican Library, with approximately 2,000 volumes. By today a total of 212 volumes have survived, of which 53 are found in Hungary. Ten years ago, the European Union gave support to a digitisation program called Bibliotheca Corviniana to virtually restore the former library of King Mathias with digital means, collecting and making the existing volumes available to everybody.





## Do you know who is called The Greatest Hungarian?

One of the most influential figures in the history of 19<sup>th</sup> century Hungary, Count István Széchenyi was the founder of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. From 1809 he fought in the Napoleonic wars, where he repeatedly proved his aptitude with his courage and heroism as a lieutenant of the imperial troops against the French.



He performed several dangerous courier services: on one occasion, he carried important news from one unit to another rowing along the Danube; in the battle of Leipzig he lost his horse shot dead under him.

István Széchenyi worked hard to improve Hungary's scientific life and technology. In 1825, he offered the annual income of his estates for the cultivation of the Hungarian language by (what is now called) the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which has remained the central institution for scientific research ever since. He proposed and supported a series of plans to control the two biggest rivers in Hungary, the Danube and the Tisza, and became a leading figure of the movement to build Chain Bridge be-



tween Buda and Pest. Inaugurated in 1849, the 380 m long 14.5 m wide bridge was long considered as the largest sus-

pension bridge in the world. Széchenyi is also credited for ship building in Hungary, launching steamship services on Lake Balaton and for the plans to build the Tunnel in Buda. He worked hard to promote horse breeding in Hungary and supported the spread of horse racing in the country. Also, he is credited for introducing silkworm breeding, modernising viticulture and building steam mills. His practical activity went hand in hand with theoretical work, a number of books where he systematically set out tasks for society and the country to develop a middle class. He was called The Greatest Hungarian by his political opponents in recognition of his achievements in the modernisation of public life and culture in Hungary.

## Do you know where the first nursery school in Central Europe was opened?

The first nursery school in Central Europe was established in 1828 by Countess Teréz Brunszvik in her own home in Buda for children aged 2 to 6. Today, Hungarian children go to nursery school between the ages of 3 and 6. Before that, they may go to crèche if their parents so decide. Education is compulsory in Hungary from age 6 to 16.



The Hungarians have attached key importance to education since the Middle Ages as culture was only mediated by schools in certain critical periods in the storms of history, such as the 150-year Turkish domination. The history of Hungarian education boasts of a

number of unique initiatives. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Hungary became the first country in the world to train mining engineers in Selmechánya. The institution's experimental instruments were so excellent that they came to be a model for the basic principles of student ex-

periments in the 1790 deed of foundation of the later world famous Paris-based École Polytechnique. Also, Hungary was the first country to train agricultural engineers by founding the Georgikon (a school of economics) in Keszthely.



## Do you know of the school traditions of grading and graduation in Hungary?

In Hungary, a five-point scale is used for academic grading. Grade 1 means fail and the repetition of the year. Grade 5 means excellent: the student fully mastered the curriculum. "Honours" mean an excellent grade, or grade 5, in each subject.

Nursery, primary and secondary school are each finished with a farewell ceremony: students wearing their Sunday best carry bouquets of flowers and a satchel on their shoulders and sing goodbye to their school building and teachers. The event is also attended by relatives who give presents to the students. On the eve of the high school farewell ceremony, graduating students visit their popular teachers in their homes to sing them a serenade and receive an informal treat.





## Do you know that 90% of nuclear plants in the world are operated according to a model devised by Hungarian scientists?

Nuclear physics received major contributions from a number of Hungarian scientists. Curiously, the reactor's

design was not based on experiences or experiments but on a theory. It was like someone planning the first train while planning the first wheel at a time when people do not know the wheel.

Three Hungarian scientists, Leo Szilárd, Edward Teller and Eugene Wigner, demonstrated excellence in this field. Eugene Wigner was the theoretical calculator and designer of the world's first nuclear reactor. He built the first water cooled nuclear reactors. Today, 90% of the world's nuclear plants are operated according to the principles developed by him. His achievements earned him the Nobel Prize in 1963.

## Do you know that a high number of Hungarian scientists contributed to the advancement of medicine?

A high number of Hungarian scientists contributed to the scientific development of the world. In the field of medicine, Ignác Semmelweis, Róbert Bárány and Albert Szent-Györgyi excelled in understanding the world and healing.

The Hungarian physician Ignác Semmelweis reduced the mortality of childbed fever to less than 1% at his maternity ward in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by obliging his doctors to wash their hands in an antiseptic solution between two examinations. He realised that several instances of childbed fever were caused by doctors and medical students who had failed to sterilise their hands before examining pregnant women.

One of the greatest polymaths of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was Albert Szent-Györgyi, to whom the UN dedicated a memorial year in 2012. Albert Szent-Györgyi made his mark as a scholar in two fields. In addition to gen-

erating vitamin C and discovering its role, he studied the background of muscle movement in terms of protein chemistry. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for



the former activity in 1937. He discovered that the Szeged ground paprika contained a much higher amount of vitamin C than citrus fruits, so he used it to produce a large quantity. Instead of merely a gram (0.035 oz), he now had a kilo (2.2 pounds) at his disposal. His achievements improved the treatment of scurvy, which was previously believed to be an incurable disease.

It was a simple everyday experience which drew the attention of Róbert Bárány to the system of balance within the inner ears. As he irrigated the ears of his patients, many of them became dizzy. He discovered a physiological reflex which is now called the Bárány caloric reaction and is linked to the phenomenon of sea sickness. György Békésy continued the work of his compatriot. In 1961 he received the Nobel Prize in physiology for discovering the physical mechanisms of stimuli generated in the cochlea.

Can you name any invention which is the result of Hungarian creativity?

In the past hundred years alone 220,000 Hungarian inventions have been registered.

A number of inventions and discoveries have become an organic part of our everyday life.



One of them was a novel means of transport equipped with springs, made in the village of Kocs in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the coach. The match was invented by the 19<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian chemist János Irinyi. Lead peroxide as a component of the phosphorous match head had the novelty of igniting in silence and not like an explosion. Another Hungarian invention is the



dynamo developed by Ányos Jedlik (1861). The use of the telephone was revolutionised by the telephone exchange, developed by the Hungarian engineer Tivadar Puskás. The ball point pen (1931) was created by the journalist László Bíró, whose invention is known as Biro pen around the world. The logical design of electronic computers received outstanding contributions from the mathematician John von Neumann (1903–1957). The

basic elements of his principle include the application of the binary numeral system, memory, program storage and the command system. He acted as an advisor for planning the first computer which stored the program in its memory. This machine was operated from 1952. In designing it, he developed the theory of the internal organisation of electronic computers (Neumann Principle), which came to be a model for modern computers.





## Have you heard that motoring by road and air is linked to Hungarian inventors?

Hungary has witnessed important inventions besides the coach. In 1894 Donát Bánki invented the internal combustion engine, which was more efficient than previous ones. Car designers Bánki and János Csonka jointly invented the petrol engine and the carburettor.

The first electric car was developed by Hungarian born Dezső Korda, who also designed the lifts of the Eiffel Tower. As a member of the expert team at Ford Motor Company, József Galamb had designed the world famous Model T, which became one of the most popular cars in the world, selling 25 million units. First deployed in 1877, the torpedo was invented by the Hungarian János Luppis, one of the most renowned figures of modern naval tactics.



Hungarian scientists have played a key role in the development of aviation. The helicopter was invented by Oszkár Asbóth: he designed the first vertical takeoff rotorcraft which completed its first flight in 1928. The designer team of the first military helicopter included Theodore von Kármán, who was also a pioneer in rocket research.

## Can you solve Rubik's Cube?

Rubik's Cube, also known as the Magic Cube, is an invention of Ernő Rubik patented in 1976. The inventor first wanted to use it as an illustration of space movement and then he developed his idea into a popular toy. The first international speedcubing competition was held in Budapest in 1982, and annual competitions have followed suit ever since. The world record of the classic (3x3x3 sticker) Rubik's Cube was broken at the Melbourne Winter Open 2011 in Australia. The new record was set by an Australian student of Lithuanian descent with 6.24 seconds.



Albert Fonó created the jet engine (1928–1932), and József Gera made the US lunar module which was first used at the 1969 moon landing. He brought back the Apollo 13 spaceship when the Moon expedition failed, saving the lives of astronauts, and had a key role in developing the Grumman F-14 "TomCat" fighter aircraft.

Do you know where Hungary is situated and what its capital is?

Hungary lies in the middle of Europe. Its capital changed several times in history. During the Turkish domination, it was Pressburg (now Bratislava), a town near the Austrian territories. At other times, it was Fehérvár, the centre of the western counties, as well as the towns of Esztergom and Visegrád, both beside the Danube. The current capital and largest city of Hungary is Budapest, located along the banks of the Danube.



Established in 1873 by the merger of several towns, Budapest is now inhabited by nearly two million people. While Budapest is often called a city of spas, the entire country is rich in thermal waters. Located next to Gellért Hill in the centre of the capital, Rudas Spa was built in the Turkish period and its 10 m diameter Turkish dome is still intact. With a nearly 80°C water temperature, Széchenyi Spa is one of the hottest springs and largest bathing facilities in Europe.







## Where is Europe's largest alkaline plain and what special birds is it home to?

Hortobágy is Hungary's first national park (1973), the largest grassy and alkaline plain in Europe. This is where flocks of cranes land for a rest as they migrate from the north. On one occasion, 55 thousand individuals were counted.

Hortobágy is home to the largest osprey population in Europe and the bustard. The latter one is a cautious, hiding, rare bird which takes shelter in wheat and corn strips and grassy plains. The number of individuals now living in Europe is estimated at 15,000. The bustard is roughly the size of a turkey but is capable of a steady flight and its strong cursorial feet make it a typical terrestrial bird in open areas. The main characteristic of its appearance is a greyish-brown plumage with an off-white breast. Hungary has ten national parks, including three World Heritage sites and two Biosphere Reserves. In order to present the diversity of the ecological system and the balanced coexistence of man and nature, the reserves include areas of the terrestrial, waterside



and sea ecosystems. Hortobágy is both a national park and a reserve. This is the location of the longest stone bridge in Hungary, the Nine-Hole Bridge, where an open market of handmade products has been held every year since 1832.



## How big do you think Hungary's largest lake, the "Hungarian Sea" is?

Located in the middle of Hungary, Balaton or the "Hungarian Sea" is the largest lake in Central Europe (592 km<sup>2</sup>). Its average depth is 3-5 meters. Hungarian lore includes various legends about the emergence of Balaton. According to one of them, the area was once inhabited by two giant families, whose heads clashed so fiercely one day that both were killed. Allegedly, the lake was made of the tears of their wives. From a scholarly perspective, the area was filled with water from the late Ice Age, some 15,000 years ago, and Balaton took its original form approximately 5,000 years ago.

Five million years earlier, the location of the lake was occupied by the Pannonian Sea as a habitat for masses of a shell species, some pieces of which are still washed out of clay by water. It is called goat claw due to its shape. Legend has it that the son of the King of the Lake fell in love with a beautiful princess who tended a flock of gold-blond goats, but she only promised to return his love and then rejected him. The King of the Lake cast a curse on her for her arrogance, upon which her flock was drowned in the water: that's the origin of the goat claws. The princess is kept prisoner in a cave forever and because she had abused

## Do you know what Bakonydraco and Hungarosaurus, Iharkutosuchus and Ajkaceratops are?

In the late 1990s, a 17-year-old Hungarian secondary school student wrote a letter to the renowned US palaeontologist Michael Novacek, saying that he also wanted to study dinosaurs in the Gobi Desert. They ended up meeting seven years later in New York. By that time, the former enthusiastic student, Attila Ősi, had become a well-known palaeontologist specialised in dinosaurs. With his research team, the Hungarian Dinosaur Research Expedition, he discovered several fossils at the site called Iharkút, located in Hungary's Bakony Hills. The project in Iharkút revealed a set of findings which turned out to be unique by international standards. The number of bones and teeth, which were mostly

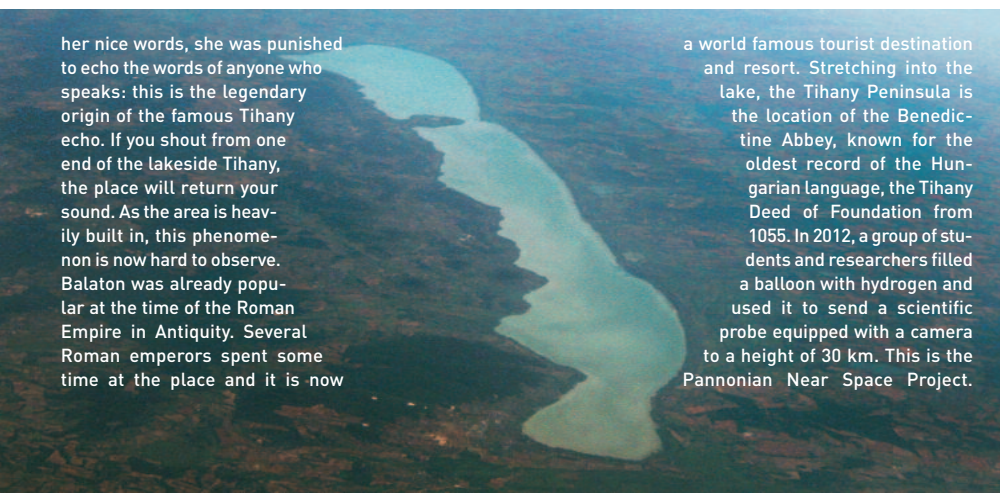
isolated, and the coherent skeletons, of which there were fewer, has by now exceeded 10,000. The findings helped researchers identify more than 30 different species, including vertebrates, from fish through amphibians, turtles, lizards, crocodiles and dinosaurs to birds. A number of species, such as the Hungarosaurus, Bakonydraco, Ajkaceratops and Iharkutosuchus, are only known from the Iharkút site. One of the best known animals from Iharkút is a small-stature, one meter long omnivorous crocodile: the Iharkutosuchus. A detailed examination of what remained of the skull, jaws and teeth revealed that this



species, unlike other crocodiles, was capable of moving its jaws sideways and hence chewing food with its plain conic molars. Fossils of more than 50 individuals of the Bakonydraco, a flying reptile discovered in Iharkút, suggest that this species was very numerous in this flood plain crisscrossed by river branches and forests. Today, we have a description of the latest flying reptile finding, considerably contributing to information about this group, which has been documented on the basis of rare and fragmentary findings. The Iharkút explorations helped describe the Hungarosaurus, a hard-shell dinosaur, and the Iharkutosuchus, an ancestor of modern crocodiles, 30 and nearly 40 million years younger than their closest relatives, respectively. The skull findings of the recently discovered Ajkaceratops are the first fossils in Europe which certainly belonged to Ceratopsia dinosaurs. This disproved the former hypothesis that this group of horned and collared dinosaurs had lived only in Asia and North America.

her nice words, she was punished to echo the words of anyone who speaks: this is the legendary origin of the famous Tihany echo. If you shout from one end of the lakeside Tihany, the place will return your sound. As the area is heavily built in, this phenomenon is now hard to observe. Balaton was already popular at the time of the Roman Empire in Antiquity. Several Roman emperors spent some time at the place and it is now

a world famous tourist destination and resort. Stretching into the lake, the Tihany Peninsula is the location of the Benedictine Abbey, known for the oldest record of the Hungarian language, the Tihany Deed of Foundation from 1055. In 2012, a group of students and researchers filled a balloon with hydrogen and used it to send a scientific probe equipped with a camera to a height of 30 km. This is the Pannonian Near Space Project.







## What do you think the Hungarians mean by “sitting” a celebration?

A characteristic of Hungarian eating and cultural habits is that the Hungarians “sit” their celebrations and not “dance” them as the Spaniards do.

Every Hungarian celebration is built around a meal, to which you must sit at a table. The picture was taken of a dinner served to Ministers of Finance in 2011, when Hungary was holding

the Presidency of the European Union. The group of European Ministers of Finance and Economy had goose liver, soup of young green peas, catfish stew, noodles with cottage cheese, roast man-

galica and a selection of excellent wines and brandies in an equestrian park. Before the dinner started, they watched a dance show which offered them a glimpse of Hungarian folk dances.

## Do you know where the word *paprika* in most European languages comes from?

Ground red pepper is one of the most typical ingredients of the flavourful and rich Hungarian cuisine. The most famous paprika is made in three Hungarian towns: Makó, Kalocsa and Szeged. A number of dishes are made by first browning onions in fat and seasoning them with paprika. While the plant comes from America, paprika became such a typical ingredient of Hungarian cuisine that its name found its way to several languages.



## Why do you think goulash and fish soup are so popular dishes in Hungary?

A typical Hungarian starter, soup is made of vegetables in a wide range of ways, but cold fruit soups are also popular. Other well-known Hungarian soups include goulash and fish soup. Goulash is a dish made of small cubes of beef or pork (sometimes mutton) and potato cooked together in a stew with paprika and onions. Hungary has two big rivers, so there are two schools of making the “real” fish soup. The one

by the Tisza first has a base to which fish is added, whereas the one by the Danube incorporates everything at the same time by rubbing through a sieve. In the region of Baja, it is made with noodles.



## Have you ever eaten a flame cake?

Flame cake, or *lángos*, is made of soft yeast dough and is usually rubbed with garlic, sour cream and grated cheese. Its name comes from the word *láng* ‘flame’: previously, it was baked in ovens on hot coals, now it is fried in oil. Hot, filling and easy to eat, it is a much-loved dish on beaches.

## Have you heard about the most successful racehorse of all times?

Sports achievements reflect an intimate relationship between Hungarian horses and their riders, which existed for millennia. Kincsem (“My Treasure”) was the most successful “miraculous mare” of all times.

During her life, from age 2 to 5, she entered 54 races in Europe throughout four entire seasons until 1879 and won each against the world’s best horses. This made her a legendary figure in

the history of full blood breeding. Her performance was never matched by any racehorse, by which she made Hungarian racehorse breeding world famous.



## Have you heard about the Hungarian grey cattle, horse herders or Hungarian sheepdogs?



The tactics of the Hungarian light cavalry, which kept Europe frightened with its speed and logistic feats, became famous in the 9th and 10th centuries. Hungarian warriors covered nearly 2,000 kilometres by exchanging horses but without reserves all the way to the ocean. The stratagem of escaping and shooting arrows backwards, and the high number of powerful hits of the rebounding bows, which were so precise even from horseback that they were able to penetrate armour from 200 meters, could not have brought about successes for the marauding Hungarian troops

without the herds of disciplined horses which accompanied them. By today, horses, herds and herders have become an integral part of Hungary’s romantic landscape, the plains, also for tourists. Since the 19th century, the plains have been home to herds of grey cattle and innumerable flocks of racka sheep together with their shepherds and dogs. This cliché appears in the famous film *Sissy* (starring Romy Schneider), where Queen Elisabeth drives past herds and flocks in the plains en route from Vienna to Budapest, when in fact the road does not cross the Hungarian plains between the two capitals. While its origin remains unclear, Hungarian grey cattle certainly descends from a species which was do-



mesticated in the Carpathian Basin at some point in history. In the 1960s they nearly became extinct but have now regained their popularity. The highland racka comes from Asia Minor and found its way to the Carpathian Basin via the Balkans in the Middle Ages. This variety spread over the entire Carpathian Basin from the territory of Transylvania. Its wool is highly suitable for making sweaters, socks and stockings but it is primarily used for making carpets and blankets these days. The meat of racka lambs is also popular abroad and their highly nutritious milk is made into cheese.

The mangalica is a lard pig which evolved in the Carpathian Basin in the 19th century. Until the 1950s, it was the most common swine variety in Hungary. Its fat, bacon and the salami made from them were also much sought after in European markets. A six-month fattening period can result in up to 300 kg of weight. Among Hungarian dog breeds, special mention must be made of the Hungarian setter, the Hungarian greyhound, the puli and the komondor. Best known of all worldwide, the puli probably found its way to the Carpathian Basin with the herdsman forebears, just like the komondor and the kuvasz.



# Do you know how many countries made the Hungarian novel *The Paul Street Boys* available to children in their mother tongues?

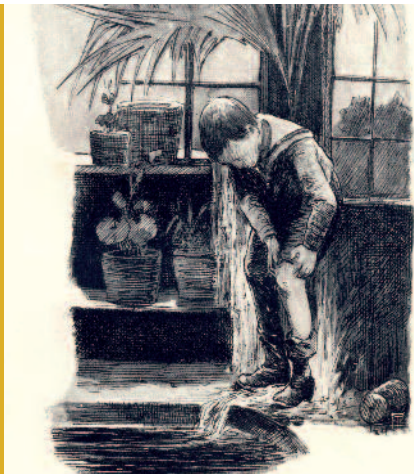
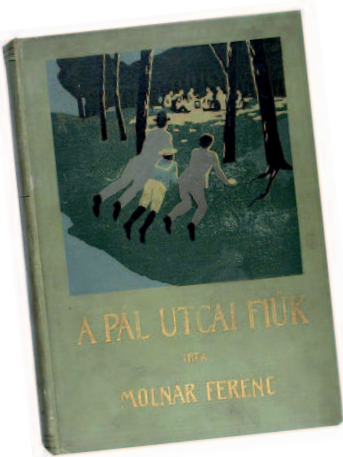


The youth novel came out in instalments from 1905, in the columns of a Budapest student magazine. It was written by the author at age 27, quite some time after but still close enough to his childhood to identify with

the fate of his heroes, who lose their protective childhood as they come of age. *The Paul Street Boys* is one of the most read and popular novels in Hungary, a set reading for fifth graders in primary

The famous Hungarian playwright Ferenc Molnár wrote the novel *The Paul Street Boys* at the request of his former teacher and considered it his favourite work until the end of his life.

school. This Hungarian novel has been translated into more than 30 languages and is taught as a required or recommended reading in several countries, including Finland, Russia, Poland and Japan.



## Which character of the novel would you choose as a friend?

Set in Budapest in March 1889, the novel describes a series of wars between the troops of the Paul Street boys and the "redshirts", where secondary school students defend their playground with the help of the little Ernő Nemecek, who sacrifices his life for the "grund" (a vacant plot between tenements) in the fight against the redshirts. Nemecek boldly challenges a group of older and stronger boys for his troop.

Nemecek is a symbol of the selfless and heroic courage of the average man who assumes responsibility for his homeland; his companions never understand him and he only gets satisfaction at the end of the story. The book has remained an international success, which demonstrates that readers can identify with its heroes and appreciate this set of stories about eternal situations in life, which can occur at any place or time. The protagonists, including Ernő Nemecek (the bravest boy), Boka (the leader of the Paul Street boys), Geréb (the traitor), Feri Áts (the leader of the botanical garden troop), show such characteristic patterns of human behaviour which can be evoked by simply mentioning any of these names.

# Do you know who "the lads of Pest" were and for what goals they shed their blood?

In 1945, Soviet troops liberated Hungarian territories from German invasion. Afterwards, however, a Soviet type dictatorship evolved just like in other communist countries. On 23 October 1956, the Hungarian nation took arms against this regime, demolishing a symbol of the period, the Stalin Statue, and Imre Nagy, a politician, who looked for new ways, formed a government under the pressure of the revolution. The Soviet army started to withdraw from the country. For some days, the union of forces and the hope of freedom forged the population, violently atomised in the 1950s, into a nation again. Imre Nagy, who became Prime Minister by means of the popular uprising, announced the withdrawal from the Warsaw

Treaty (a military organisation of communist states) and declared that Hungary would be like Austria, a country independent from the political blocks. On 4 November 1956, the Soviet Red Army abused the international attention taken up by the Suez crisis and again invaded the country with tanks. Afterwards, a new puppet government ruthlessly ordered the execution and incarceration of all people who had participated in the revolution and war of independence. The young generations of 1956, which had been socialised after the communist takeover, were more ready to take arms than the older generations, according to several remembrances. They became symbols of the revolution, "the lads of Pest". In his memoirs, a military commander

of the insurgents wrote about the lads of Pest along the following lines: "Maléter (commander in chief of the people fighting against the uprising) also saw weapons in the hands of children. They had not received military training. It was dangerous so he asked us to disarm them. I said that more than eighty per cent of the Corvinists (people fighting in Corvin köz) were under age twenty. These children fought for the victory of the revolution and became the heroes of the nation, and we will not take weapons out of the hands of children".



## Do you know how many years Soviet soldiers were stationed "temporarily" in Hungary after the revolution had been repressed?

The Third Republic of Hungary was only proclaimed in 1989, when communism collapsed. 23 October, the day when the revolution and uprising broke out, has been a national holiday ever since. Finally, the last Soviet soldier left Hungary on 30 June 1991.

## Have you ever heard what symbolises for the Hungarians the national flag with a hole in the middle?

In 1956, the Hungarian state flag displayed a coat of arms which symbolised the dictatorship. As the revolutionists cut out the coat of arms, the holed flag became the main symbol of the 1956 Hungarian revolution. The revolution started with a demonstration of university students in Budapest, to which an increasingly populous mass joined in the streets. It was the first time someone had cut out the communist state coat of arms of the Hungarian tricolour. Later,



as the events unfolded, the holed flag came to be a symbol of sympathy with the demonstrators, insurgents and freedom fighters. At the 23 October 1989 ceremony outside the Parliament building, where the Republic of Hungary was proclaimed, a number of holed flags were flown to symbolise that the democratic tradition of the republic was rooted in the 1956 revolution.





# Do you know any branch of sport in which Hungarian athletes excel?

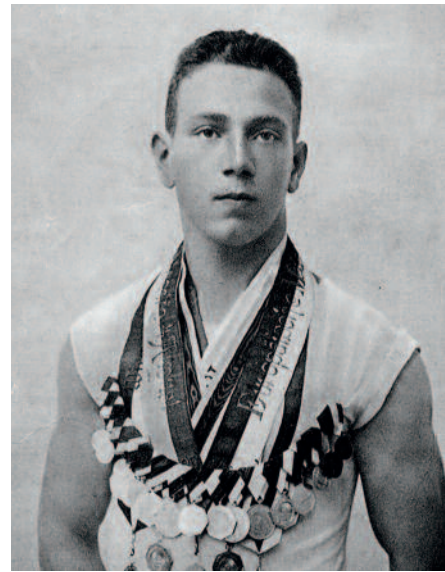
The youngest Hungarian female Olympic champion is Krisztina Egerszegi. She holds five Olympic gold medals. No other woman in the world has won more individual Olympic swimming championships than she did. She became champion on the 200 m back stroke at age 14 at the 1988 Seoul Olympics. Her 1991 world record was only broken in 2008.



in which Hungarian athletes excel

Swimming in Hungary is still a successful sport. At the 2012 European Swimming Championship held in Debrecen, Hungary became first in the medal table with 9 gold, 10 silver and 7 bronze medals, the best ever performance. At the 2012 London Olympics, Dániel Gyurta became an individual Olympic champion in the 200 m breast stroke with a world record.

Hungarian competitors can also boast of extraordinary achievements in other branches of sport. Péter Lékó, the youngest ever chess grand master, became a master at age 14. He is a permanent participant of super tournaments. The best female player in chess history is Judit Polgár, the only woman among super grand masters. She became an international grand master at age 15. In 2002, she managed to de-



feat the world famous chess player Kasparov. In addition to modern pentathlon and flat water kayaking & canoeing, water polo has been one of the most success-

ful national team sports for roughly a century. The first European championship held in 1926 was won by the Hungarian water polo team. The most famous match in water polo history, the “Melbourne Bloodbath” was held between the national teams of Hungary and the Soviet Union at the Melbourne Olympics, barely a month after the repression of the 1956 revolution. Spectators all over the world viewed the Hungarian team as the heroes of a repressed war of independence, especially when a Hungarian player was injured in the swimming pool because of the movement of a Soviet water polo player. This gave rise to the expression “bloodbath”. At the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the Hungarian team won its third-in-a-row championship in men’s water polo.



A member of the Hungarian water polo team which won the gold medal at the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics is worth special mention. You can only notice at a second glance that 23-year-old Olivér Halassy, standing at the end of the row, has no left leg below the knee. He was a two-time Olympic champion, a three-time European champion Hungarian water polo player, a European champion speed swimmer, and a multiple national champion in both branches of sport. There were no Paralympic Games at the time, yet he was among the first disabled Olympic champions in the world. At age 8, as he was trying to jump on a moving tram, he slid off the steps. His left leg had to be amputated.



One year later, he already participated at swimming and polo training sessions. Initially, it was hard for him but he surprised everyone by winning the river swimming championship at age 17. The tradition of excellence by achievements of athletes with disabilities represented by Olivér Halassy has survived in Hungary as part of the Paralympics. Young Tamás Sors, a world record holder and multiple world and European champion, won his second gold medal in the butterfly stroke at the 2012 London Paralympic Games. The world’s oldest living Olympic champion is Hungarian water polo player Sándor Tarics, who celebrated his 99th birthday in 2012 and was a member of



## Do you know who the best known Hungarian in the world is?

One of the most famous Hungarians in the world is Ferenc Puskás, who is called “Puskás, the Kid” by his nickname in his native country. He is the best ever Hungarian forward, a Hungarian Olympic champion and a world championship silver medallist football player and coach, captain of the Golden Team. As a member of the Hungarian national team, he scored 84 goals at 85 matches. Between 1950 and 1954, the Hungarian national team remained undefeated at 32 matches in a row. The Golden Team won the 1952 Helsinki Olympics and beat England 6-3 at Wembley Stadium in 1953. In 1956, after the revolution was repressed, Puskás became a forward of Real Madrid and played there until 1966. At Real Madrid, he was three-

time winner of the European Champion Clubs’ Cup and scored four goals at the 1960 Eintracht versus Frankfurt ECCC final (7-3), which was not achieved by anyone else before or after. Subsequently, he worked as a coach in several countries. His unique play style consisted of extraordinary explosiveness, perfect ball control, impenetrable feints, witty solutions, passes precise almost to the centimetre, an unusual evaluation of situations and a brilliant shooting skill. His name was included in the FIFA’s list of the world’s best football players and he is rightly considered to be one of the best players in the world. As well as the now largest stadium in Budapest, the locations of a number of sports and musical events were named after him.







## Do you know that Hungarians have achieved much greater sports successes than expected in terms of population number?

In the history of modern summer and winter Olympic Games from 1896, including the 2012 London Games, Hungary won a total of 481 medals, of which 167 are gold, 146 silver and 168 bronze.



## Have you ever heard about the sport of horse driving?

Chariot racing was an Olympic event in ancient Greece. The first professional account of a race is found in the works of Homer. At the same time, modern horse driving has a history of barely more than 100 years. It became an official branch of sport in 1970 and the first European Four-in-Hand Driving Championship was held in Budapest in 1971. It was the Hungarian horse drivers who made the breastplate (a piece of

A nation's self esteem receives just as much contribution from sports successes as from outstanding economic, cultural or scientific achievements. The number of Hungary's gold medals largely exceeds the average number of gold medals calculated by the number of inhabitants. Hungary ranks 84th in Wikipedia's list in terms of global population. At the 2012 London Olympics, Hungary won 8 gold, 4 silver and 5 bronze medals and secured the elegant 9th place in the official medal table.

horse tack which fixes the harness lower than the earlier collar and hames design) and cross-country, which is now conducted in many other countries, world famous. The key to successful horse driving is training from a very young age. Horse driving has been successful in Hungary since 1930. The country boasts of a number of talented and successful drivers, including Tibor Pettkő-Szandtner, the author of a primer of horse driving, Imre Abonyi, the "King of Horse Driving", who was continuously the world's best driver between 1966 and 1976, and Zoltán Lázár, one of the most successful competitors of the sport, who won four two-in-hand and two four-in-hand world championships.

## Have you heard about the Kalocsa motif, a typical decoration of a Hungarian region?

Located near the Danube south of Budapest, Kalocsa is famous for its paprika and embroidery.

The Kalocsa motif is increasingly popular. At the 2011 Brazilian Grand Prix, Formula One driver Jenson Button wore overalls with the Kalocsa motif, but also Hungarian athletes like wearing such outfits. The actress Nicole Kidman wore a dress with the Kalocsa

motif during an air trip. Hungarian folk costumes have a renaissance with the spread of dresses which combine the features of rock and Transdanubian folk costumes, skirts made by folk art sewing techniques, and collections which revive folk motifs by a mod-

ern cut. Katti Zoób is a world famous Hungarian fashion designer whose creations harmonically merge elements of world fashion and Hungarian motifs.



## Do you know any Hungarian composer?

One of the best known figures of classical music is Franz Liszt (1811–1886), whose 200th birth anniversary was celebrated worldwide. He was one of the greatest pianists, composers, conductors and music teachers of all times. In 1875 he became the founder and president of the Academy of Music in Budapest, which was later named after him. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the science of Hungarian folk music was founded by two excellent composers, Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály. In collecting folk songs, they were greatly assisted by the sound recording device of their age, the phonograph. The researchers recognised that folk music, just like language, preserved a number of ancestral elements. Some of them link Hungarian tradition to distant Asian peoples and others to the Finno-Ugric language family. Many of the oldest Hungarian folk songs use the five-note scale without half tones. Béla Bartók (1881–1945) was one of the most signifi-

cant composers and pianists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As a collector of folk music, he studied the folk music of both the Hungarians and neighbouring peoples. In addition to orchestral, chamber music and stage works, he composed a number of piano pieces. He used Hungarian and Slovakian folk tunes to compose the piano series *For Children* especially for young people and *Mikrokosmos*, where the pieces progress from beginner etudes to the most advanced level. Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967) was a folk music researcher who revealed the roots of related peoples and history. He composed in a variety of genres but his choral works are particularly important. A music teaching method which is used in several countries was named after him. The basic principles of the "Kodály method" include teaching valuable music to children from the earliest age: first folk songs then the treasures of international music; musical education is based on singing.







## Do you know that a number of world famous film stars and directors are of Hungarian descent?



Mihály Kertész, the later Oscar awardee director, escaped with a circus at age 17 and started to work as an actor. He graduated in 1906 and made his first film in 1912. He left Hungary for the US in 1926 and adopted the name Michael Curtiz. During his long career he directed more than 100 films. He was nominated several times until he won the Oscar for his 1944 film Casablanca.

Tony Curtis was born in New York, but his family was from the Hungarian town of Mátészalka. He mainly acted in comedies, such as Some Like It Hot

and The Persuaders!, but he also demonstrated his talent in serious roles (Spartacus). The two-time Golden Globe film legend answered the questions of Hungarian journalists in Hungarian as he was fluent in the language. He was proud of his Hungarian origin. Until his death in 2010, he visited Hungary several times and supported culture. One of his daughters, Jamie Lee Curtis, also became a renowned actress.

A number of other world famous actors are also of Hungarian origin. Tarzan was played by former Olympic champion swimmer Johnny Weis-

müller, and lieutenant Colombo by Peter Falk, and the film industry received major contributions from such talented professionals as director of photography Zsigmond Vilmos and producer Andy Vajna.

In the world of business, special mention must be made of Estée Lauder, famous for her self-made cosmetic products, and Charles Simonyi, a former leading developer of Microsoft Word and Excel, and also famous as the only civilian to have made two space trips.

## What do you think the best known Hungarian dance is?

As with folk songs, Hungarian dances have an old and a new style. The ancestral dances include line, round, pastoral and jumping dances. Among them, the most special are the Haiduk's dance, a popular dance in the 16th and 17th centuries named after the foot soldiers of the time, the recruitment dance, and the lads' dance. The most representative new dances which appeared approximately in the 19th century included the recruiting dance and the czardas. The recruiting dance was inspired by the



Haiduk's dance, peasant traditions and written music. The latest type of paired dances was the czardas, or csárdás, from the latter half of the 19th century. It started from peasant culture to spread and become a national dance of romanticism and a symbol of ambitions of nationhood and independence by 1848. The basic steps of the czardas are easy to learn but it takes a lot of practice to do well the dance. Today, the czardas is the most popular Hungarian dance worldwide.

## Have you ever been to a dance house?

In addition to (Hungarian and ethnic) folk dances, the dance house movement greatly contributed to the renaissance of folk music and folk instruments in Hungary. The first dance house was organised in 1972 in Budapest. It became a form of entertainment for the urban youth, assisted by renowned folk dance and folk music researchers. Dance houses set out not only to teach dances with the help of bands playing authentic folk music and by popularising live music but offer to teach folk songs as well. Tourists are well advised to visit a dance house in Hungary. The joint learning and practicing of music, folk dresses and traditional dances make for an unforgettable experience. In 2011, the UNESCO Best Practices List came to include the Hungarian dance house method in recognition of the movement.



In 2005 Dániel Rátai won six first prizes at the "Olympics" of scientists under 21 in Phoenix, Arizona, US. His invention is capable of turning a simple personal computer to a 3D device to facilitate the work of cartoon makers, applied artists, industrial designers and physicians. The mechanism which offers the experience of spatiality was used to develop a device and program called Leonar3Do under the direction of the young inventor.

Sources of images: Cantemus, Cartographia, Árpád Fákó, Klára Kaposi, András Kovács, successors of Gyula László, Kecskemétfilm, Vilmos Lázár, Madarchív, Hungarian Museum of Natural Science, Hungarian Institute for Science History, Hungarian Water Polo Association, MANDA, Hungarian National Bank, Hungarian National Museum, Hungarian Olympic Committee, Hungarian Telegraphic Bureau, Hungarian Television Archives, orszagalbum.hu, National Széchenyi Library, Paks Nuclear Plant, Pannonian Near Space Project, Puskás Academy, University of Szeged, Antal Széll, Mihály Tímár, Csaba Tökölyi, tunderkonyha.blog.hu, Wikipedia  
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