

Conference report "The Philosopher's Stone or Salt over Gold... (natural sciences – science and technology in book culture and history)", Prešov, September 21 – 22nd, 2022

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On 21 – 22 September 2022, an interdisciplinary scientific conference with international participation was held in Prešov under the title "*The Philosopher's Stone or Salt over Gold... (natural sciences – science and technology in book culture and history)*". The event was organised by the State Scientific Library in Prešov in cooperation with the Association of Slovak Librarians and Libraries, the Slovak Association of Libraries and the Slovak Technical Museum – Solivar Museum. The conference was organised during the European Cultural Heritage Days 2022 event and was held on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the State Scientific Library in Prešov and the 450th anniversary of the beginning of rock salt mining in Solivar (Saltern).

Following the title of the conference, experts could present papers on natural sciences in old prints; history of science and technology; personalities of science and technology in the Kingdom of Hungary or in the territory of today's Slovakia; history of mining; economic history; salt mining; inventions, experiments and discoveries in sources or old prints; book culture; unique works, manuscripts or collections; educational and popular literature on science, technology and natural phenomena; or museums and technical monuments.

In a paper "*Mariano di Jacopo (Taccola) and his Liber tertius de ingeneis for King Sigismund*", PhDr. Martin Štefánik, PhD. presented the life of the Tuscan technician and mathematician and his work, which included texts and drawings concerning, for example, measurements and excavations of tunnels, pumping and lifting machines, but also equipment for divers. A pleasant contribution to the event was a presentation by PaedDr. Jana Frajkorová on Salt mine lace. As part of her presentation, other conference participants could see hats decorated with bobbin lace or other creations made from it.

The Institute of Social Sciences of the Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences of the Slovak Academy of Sciences was represented at the conference by Mgr. Miroslava Gallová, PhD. and Mgr. Mária Ďurkovská, PhD. who prepared a lecture entitled "*The place of women in technical education in Košice*". They presented the education of girls and also the position of women as secondary school teachers at the Secondary Industrial School of Engineering in Košice between 1918 and 1989.

Over two days, more than two dozen papers were presented, divided into seven conference blocks. During the first day of the conference, the programme included an excursion to the Slovak Technical Museum – Solivar Museum.

The conference was attended by experts from Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Poland. The range of topics presented at the conference by individual participants was wide and varied, mainly papers on science and technology, natural sciences, and the history of book culture. A number of interesting papers sparked a stimulating discussion after each conference session, which enabled the experts to exchange further findings, and recommendations, as well as ideas for future research. The whole conference was held in a very pleasant atmosphere and at a high professional level. The organisers of the conference plan to publish a peer-reviewed proceeding of the papers.