

# The French Lesson. Studies.

## Abstract

It is particularly important to have accurate information about cultural contacts in recent or previous centuries between different ethno linguistic, social or ideological-oriented groups. The author's thematically grouped and chronologically sequenced studies, based on original research, offer a broad perspective of such information: interpretations of literary works and plays from an either comparative perspective or approached as translations or imitative creations. Works by renowned authors such as François Villon, Pierre Corneille, Jean Racine, Voltaire, Helvétius, Denis Diderot, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Victor Hugo, János Arany, Miklós Bánffy are analysed. But lesser-known authors who had cultural merits, such as Count János Fekete who initiated a literary correspondence with Voltaire or the Transylvanian lawyer György Aranka, who translated a play by Fenouillot de Falbaire on religious tolerance are also present in the volume. Studies look for the reason some plays from French classicism were translated, published and put on stage in the 1950s. The ideas of learning, adapting, updating represent a complex process of communication between fields of expression, human creations and groups of people or individuals. The title of the volume, „The French Lesson” suggests the prestige of French culture as such, but also as a model for the creations of others. Attention is paid to some French literary and cultural writings and phenomena (for example the conception of performance art and science in Diderot and Voltaire following some recent philological attributions), but also to the attempts of Hungarian writers to start a dialogue with high cultural achievements, works and, why not, with characters of French culture. The impact of the studies some Transylvanian nobles did in Paris and the analysis some French works translations along with the study of the reception Hungarian works translated into French had, show the author's long term dedication to promote the value and continuity of European intercultural dialogue.

The author of the volume is a literary and theatre history scholar, professor at the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj.