

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



International relations, cooperation, memberships

It is of utmost importance for NSZL to be a member of international organizations, and be actively present in them. International cooperation helps us in our everyday work with databases, continuous exchange of information and experience, and the possibility to participate in workshops and conferences. The events organized among others by CERL (Consortium of European Research Libraries) and CENL (Conference of European National Libraries) and their annual regular meetings offer excellent occasion to build and maintain work relationships with partner institutions abroad.

We received guests from international organizations: in October 2015, the head of the International ISSN office Gaelle Béquet held talks with NSZL deputy director János Káldos in our library. After getting acquainted with NSZL, Ms Béquet met Hungarian ISSN coordinators to share experience.

Our neighbors...

Our relations with the neighboring countries cover several specific areas.

Within the framework of cooperation agreements, we regularly exchange researchers with the national libraries of Kolozsvár (Cluj), Praha and Turócszentmárton (Martin) among others. The co-operation is facilitated by mutual visits and conferences.

On 10 November 2015, a conference on Hussitism was held in National Széchényi Library with ELTE University and the Budapest Czech Centre as co-organizers. The international conference on the influence of Hussitism in Hungary was accompanied by an exhibition of posters provided by the Budapest Czech Centre.

National Széchényi Library loans documents on a regular basis to libraries and museum institutions abroad. In the course of 2015 and 2016, the treasures of our collections could be seen in the exhibitions of partner institutions in Eisenstadt, Betlér, Berlin and Münster.

Farther away...

Apart from its relations with the institutions in the nearest countries, National Széchényi Library also seeks to present the heritage of countries and nations farther away, and transmit the values of less known cultures to the Hungarian audience. In these terms, several exhibitions and events were organized during 2015-16 in the Hungarian National Library.

In April 2015, Turkish craftsman Ahmet Sacit Açıkgozöglü presented the Ottoman tradition of book bindery and decoration. The master started his studies of calligraphy in 1995, and took up Ebru painting in 1998. At present, he is a teacher at the Art History Faculty of Marmara University and the Traditional Turkish Art Faculty at Mimar Sinan University. He had several classical Ebru exhibitions in Turkey, UK, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. His lecture in Budapest was jointly organized by the Yunus Emre Institute and National Széchényi Library.

The main topic of master Açıkgozöglü's presentation was the difference of the techniques of Ottoman and European book bindery and decoration. We could learn how the Kubur, a special cylindrical box is made.



The Kubur is covered by *ebru* and leather, and is mainly used to the storage of writing tools. Master Açıkgozöglü also presented the *Murakka*, a special form of book decoration made of ribbon strips cut of *zemin* and *battal* type *ebrus* and inserted between calligraphy patterns or miniatures. We also had a look at the *ebru*

akkase technique which creates a calligraphic, miniature or flower pattern by the repeated soaking of the same piece of paper.

In the first half of 2016, and within the framework of the April Budapest Art Week Festival, the *Jewish Manuscripts and Ceremonial Objects* exhibition was inaugurated in National Széchényi Library. The ex-



hibition emphasized the importance of the common language and literature that makes a link between Jewish communities throughout the world with the mission of passing on the knowledge of Jewish traditions and history. The traveling exhibition of the selected material of the Jerusalem Israel Museum was opened by the director of the Hungarian Jewish Museum and Archive, Zsuzsanna Toronyi. Words of greeting were delivered by NSZL director-general László Tüske and the ambassador of Israel State in Hungary, Ilan Mor.

In June 2016, NSZL received the delegation of the Chinese National Library, and an agreement of cooperation was signed by the two institutions. Our Chinese colleagues visited partner libraries in Budapest and the towns of Visegrád and Esztergom. At the end of the program, NSZL director-general László Tüske had dinner with the guests and the director-general of the Library of the Hungarian Parliament Szilárd Markója, deputy director of Ervin Szabó Library, Péter Dippold, and the president of the National Library Curatorium, Géza Szőcs.

In the autumn of 2016, the cooperation with colleagues at foreign libraries took a new momentum, as National Széchényi Library received several official requests for visits and librarian study tours.

Copyright issues of orphan works is a current topic both in domestic and international field. Conse-

quently, we had several experts from abroad who arrived to Hungary to consult with their colleagues in this matter.

In August 2016 a grand delegation from the Estonian National Library arrived. After they presented their institution, a lecture and a dialogue followed with the participation of NSZL colleagues.

In October, two staff members of the Lithuanian National Library were received by the e-service director at NSZL, Szabolcs Lendvai. Rita Pikūnaitė and Ringailė Bakienė are chief librarians at the information technology department of the Lithuanian partner library, and their specialty is the elaboration of orphan works.

Apart from consultations and study tours, we received also visits of the highest rank in the autumn of 2016 that laid the foundations for later exchanges of experience and joint projects.

In November, the director of the Bulgarian National Library Krasimira Stoycheva Aleksandrova and her deputy Marchela Mihaylova Borisova visited NSZL. The program of the guests was organized jointly by the Budapest Bulgarian Cultural Institute and National Széchényi Library. On the occasion of the visit, a cooperation agreement between the two libraries was signed on a ceremony attended by the director of the Bulgarian Cultural Institute Olga Popova and the ambassador of the Bulgarian Republic in Hungary, Biserka Benisheva.

In December 2016, NSZL received delegations from Kazakhstan and Belarus.

The two colleagues of the Kazakh National Library in Astana brought a rich donation of books that was added to the collection of NSZL's International Book Corner.

The deputy director of the Belarus National Library Alena Dalhapolova donated a fine Francysk Skaryna series to our library, and presented the life-work of Skaryna and the history of Belarus typography in a lecture of great interest. We also learnt about the past and present of the Belarus National Library that now makes the Skaryna facsimile series available for several European libraries and holds international conferences and exhibitions to mark the 500th anniversary of the beginning of Belarusian typography.

National Széchényi Library facilitates individual research projects, too. This year, we welcomed two British researchers of Hungary-related topics.

BBC contributor Stephen Coates worked at the Sophie Török archive of NSZL during the summer of 2016. As the head of the X-Ray Audio project, he studies the audio material recorded on X-ray plates during the Cold War, and carried out research at the Manuscript Collection of NSZL for the new edition of his book on the topic. Together with photographer Paul Heartfield, he documented the early items of this peculiar sort of audio recording in the Babits and Sophie Török legacy.

Another British researcher to pay visit to NSZL during the autumn of 2016 was Shakespeare-expert prof. Ewan Fernie from the Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-upon-Avon. As the topic of his current research and book being written is the relation between Kossuth and Shakespeare, he arrived at our library to see Kossuth's unique book-case of the shape of Shakespeare's house. The British Shakespeare-expert was amazed by the story of this piece of artwork that would then featured in his book published in 2017 by Cambridge University Press.

International exhibitions at NSZL

As the guest of honor of the 2016 Budapest International Book Festival was Slovakia, an exhibition was

set up in NSZL with the title *On the Two Sides of River Danube – Slovak-Hungarian and Hungarian-Slovak Dialogs in Translation Literature*. This event of the Bratislava University Library included also a book show of the Slovak-Hungarian translation literature.

In the autumn of 2016 an exhibition of paper and book history was brought to NSZL by the National Library of Taiwan, preceded by mutual visits and a cooperation agreement. In April 2015, the director of the National Library of Taiwan, Shu-Hsien Tseng, arrived to Budapest to sign the interlibrary agreement, and in 2016, as the guest of honor of the Taiwan International Book Exhibition (TIBE) was Hungary, the director-general of NSZL, László Tüske paid visit to the Taiwan National Central Library.

After these encounters, on 15 October 2016, the exhibition *The Imprint of Civilization – The Amazing Journey of Books* of the National Library of Taiwan was opened in National Széchényi Library. The exhibition of paper and book history, with plenty of interactive elements, presented a special segment of the oriental culture, telling the story of “books” before the invention of paper in the language of the 21st century. The process of paper preparation and the techniques of binding and imprinting were also featured.

After the inauguration ceremony, a thematic Taiwanese evening was opened by the Head of Depart-



Ewan Fernie (Shakespeare Institute) with the Kossuth book-case exhibited at National Széchényi Library.

ment of Cultural Diplomacy of the Ministry of External Affairs, László Vizi, and the Head of the Taipei Representative Office in Budapest, Wen-Lung Tao. We were glad to have with us prof. Max K. W. Huang, researcher of modern history at Academia Sinica, who held a lecture on Sinology in Taiwan. Then we

enjoyed traditional Taiwan tunes performed by Taiwanese musicians living in Hungary, and tasted the flavors of a gastronomy tour together with our guests.

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