

# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS 2018



The most significant event of 2018 from the perspective of library profession was the union established between China and East-Central European countries. During the prestigious event held on 22 September, many East-Central European countries, including Hungary's national library and the Library of the HAS (Hungarian Academy of Sciences), signed the cooperation agreement with China. More than 300 guests participated in the event, including the leaders of Hangzhou. This cooperation had been initiated by the Hangzhou Public Library, to which 36 libraries from 10 countries joined. The event was realised as part of the third forum of the cultural cooperation between China and East-Central Europe. After his return from China, Director-General of the NSZL, László Tüske, greeted the participants in a letter and expressed his support of this newly established cooperation. According to the plans, in spring of 2019, the director of Hangzhou Public Library will visit Budapest with the aim of discussing future mutual objectives. In addition, another cooperation agreement was set up: the cooperation agreement with the National Library of Iran was signed in May, at the Tehran International Book Fair. In December, the Director-General of the NSZL visited Jordan where he inaugurated a Hungarian Cultural Corner in the Library of Amman University together with rector Abdel-Karim Al Quadah and ambassador Csaba Czibere. The event was made possible by the cooperation of Embassy of Hungary in Jordan and University of Jordan.



Professional conciliation with the delegation of the Bulgarian National Library

Within the framework of cooperation agreements signed by the National Széchényi Library, we received a Bulgarian delegation in spring and a Moroccan in autumn, 2018. The aim of the Director of SS. Cyril and Methodius National Library of Bulgaria was first and foremost to explore the remains of early book printing in Bulgaria. The pieces kept in our library carry a significant importance for them as during the Ottoman rule, their books had been printed on the territory of Hungary. In September, a visit was paid by the Director of the National Library of the Kingdom of Morocco, Abdelilah Tahani, and the institution's head of cultural affairs, Saadia Boulhane. Their visit included not only our institution, but the libraries of the HAS and the Parliament. Afterwards, the Moroccan director expressed his gratitude and his hope for further cooperation in a letter.



Director-General László Tüske with the Director of the National Library of the Kingdom of Morocco, Abdelilah Tahani

Apart from the cooperation agreements and their preparation, the National Széchényi Library represented itself at numerous international professional conferences and meetings. At the World Reading Congress in Astana, conveying the analysis of the role of writers, 'mediators' and critics in our present reading culture, Director-General László Tüske delivered a lecture on our national digital literacy.

A tender made the attendance possible for Director of Research László Boka and Eszter Déri from the Collection of Early Printed Books at the seminar *Book Exhibitions and Their Audience* held in May at the National Library in Latvia. Many library and museum employees and independent artists have gathered here in order to discuss problems libraries and book museums have to face today. The first day was dedicated to seminars, and the second day opened up opportunities for discussing some questions in detail in the form of workshop debates.

In August, László Boka attended the annual conference of IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) held at Kuala Lumpur. The almost one-week long series of programmes centred around the topic *Transform Libraries, Transform Societies*.

The annual CERL (Consortium of European Research Libraries) seminar was held in Venice in October, with the theme *Printing Revolution and Society 1450–1500*. The Hungarian representatives were László Boka and Róbert Oláh, CERL representative of EKE (Association of the Ecclesiastical Libraries). Following the conciliation with the CERL leadership, it was made possible for our institution to transform its individual membership into group membership starting from 2019, therefore both LIC HAS (Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) and EKE will become full members.

At the end of 2018, the National Széchényi Library was invited to the conference *The Culture of Donation* organized by the SS. Cyril and Methodius National Library of Bulgaria for the occasion of the institution's 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The NSZL was represented by Péter Antalffy, Director of the Department of International and Cultural Relations with his lecture entitled *Business Unusual: Repositioning a Traditional Institution in the Global Era*.

Plenty of foreign visitors were received by the library in 2018. Apart from the neighbouring countries, librarians and curators from the USA, United Kingdom and Italy visited us. It was a special pleasure that the participants of the MELCom conference visited us owing to the organization of LIC HAS.

Many local representatives of foreign countries also visited the National Széchényi Library: in April, the Ambassador of Iran to Hungary, Mohammad Reza Morshedzadeh and two Iranian guests, moreover, in July, ambassadors such as the newly appointed Anunciada Fernández de Córdova of Spain, Ana Piedad Jaramillo of Colombia and María del Carmen González Cabal of Ecuador paid visit to our institution. During their visit they first met the Director-General of the institution, then the colleagues of

Special Collections have presented them with manuscripts of markedly high value, early prints and maps, among them the Quito manuscript discovered at the NSZL at the end of 2017.



Her Excellency the Ambassador of Spain to Hungary, Anunciada Fernández de Córdova's visit in the NSZL

A special gift was provided to the NSZL by Indonesian Ambassador Wening Esthyprobo Fatandari, who had a popular children's book *Hoppla meséi – Kirándulás Pécs városában* [Hoppla Tales – Trip to Pécs City] by Erika Bartos translated into Indonesian and published. The National Széchényi Library recognized the ambassador's dedicated work regarding the propagation of Hungarian books and literature by awarding her with a diploma of merit.



Her Excellency the Ambassador of Ecuador to Hungary viewing the NSZL's Spanish and South American manuscripts with Miklós Janszó (Manuscript Collection) and Péter Antalffy (Directorate of International and Cultural Relations)

The treasures of the National Széchényi Library have been part of prestigious exhibitions in 2018 as well, therefore a wider international audience could discover them. The only surviving version of the engraving *Ibrahim Pasha, Ottoman Envoy's Entry into Vienna*, kept in the Collection of Old Prints, was on display at the exhibition *Peace: from Antiquity to the*

*Present Day* of the Museum for Art and Culture in Münster. Our Collection of Posters and Small Prints is the keeper of the album containing 15 *Peer Gynt* lithographies by Oszkár Ember (Oszkár Spitzer, 1892–1931), lesser known painter and graphic artist. The pieces were displayed at the *Oskár Ember* exhibition of the Bratislava City Gallery. The curiosity of this series of lithographies lies in the fact that it is the only known work of the artist who created his oeuvre in modern style and became later renowned in New York, which was made in Košice, by the press Hermész. Six posters by Sándor Bortnyik were also lent by the Collection of Posters and Small Prints to the Olomouc Museum of Art for their exhibition called *Years of Disarray – Between Anxiety and Delight: The Birth of the Modern Central European Citizen 1908–1928*, realized with the cooperation of International Cultural Centre in Kraków, Bratislava City Gallery and Janus Pannonius Museum in Pécs. In 2019–2020, the exhibition will be staged in the cities above and it will be accompanied by a four-language monograph authored by Easter-European art historian experts of the given period.

In 2018, two of our colleagues won the Kuno Klebelsberg grant and could carry out research abroad. Zsófia Bárány, member of the HAS–NSZL Res Libraria Hungariae Research Group spent two months in Austria. Her research had a double aim. First, she wanted to discover the Hungarian, religious, primary catholic journalism and literature of the period 1850–67 – with special regard to the history of politics and diplomacy – second, she wanted to examine the Hungarian relevance of inter- and transconfessionalism of the same period in the governmental sources of Vienna. Academic Secretary Franciska Dede also received a two-month long grant that she spent in Paris, where she studied Austrian countess of Hungarian origin Paulina Metternich, wife of the Austrian ambassador to Paris of the second empire, her role played in the courtly and social life and her network.

## 2019

In January 2019, our institution received the visitation of Alicia Elvira Corredera Morales, Ambassador of Cuba to Hungary, who expressed her hope for a collaboration and positive relations between the national libraries of the two cities. Director-General László Tüske and the Director-General of the National Library of Montenegro Bogić Rakočević met in October 2018, at the Chinese Congress, after which the

opportunity of institutional and professional cooperation emerged. We welcomed the delegation of the National Library of Montenegro on 25 February 2019, where the main directions of librarial cooperation were discussed, primarily the ongoing digitisation project. At the end of the meeting, László Tüske and Bogić Rakočević signed a cooperation agreement for four years. During their stay in Budapest, the guests could visit the Parliament, and the collection of the Library of the Hungarian Parliament, where Szilárd Markója, Director of the library received the delegation.



Signing the cooperation agreement with the National Library of Montenegro

In April, together with the delegation from Kuwait, Kamel Abduldzsalíl, the Director-General of the National Library of Kuwait arrived at Budapest. During this short visit of only a couple of days, the Director-Generals of the two institutions signed a cooperation agreement, as a result of which our library's collection was enriched with many books received as gifts. The day after signing the agreement, László Tüske and Kamel Abduldzsalíl both attended the Arabian Cultural Day organized for the third time. The event was organized by H. E. Hamad Burhamah, the Ambassador of Kuwait to Hungary, the president of the Council of the Arabian Ambassadors, and the Embassies of Arabian countries and with the sponsorship of László Kövér, Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary, and took place at the Faculty of Humanities of Eötvös Loránd Science University. Fourteen Arabian countries attended this special event. In his speech, László Kövér underlined that this event plays a significant role in the strengthening of Hungarian and Arabic relationships. Many lectures and discussions were held during the event, the attendants could listen to the lecture by László Tüske entitled *Future Perspectives of Hungarian Oriental Studies* among others.



László Tüske's presentation at the Arabian Cultural Day organized at the Eötvös Loránd University

On 31 May 2019, an international seminar entitled *Digital Technologies in the Investigation of Handwritten and Printed Heritage* was organized by the National Széchényi Library and the EKE (Association of the Ecclesiastical Libraries). The aim of the programme was first and foremost to advance the cooperation of the Hungarian Libraries and librarians with CERL. The lecturers invited have been closely working with CERL for years. The event was opened by László Boka, Director of Research and Academic Affairs and Marian Lefferts, CEO of CERL, followed by 10 lectures in English presented by expert colleagues from 6 different Hungarian and foreign institutions.



Anna Boreczky's lecture at the CERL Seminar



László Boka and Marian Lefferts at the CERL Seminar held in Budapest

In 2019, the yearly assembly of IFLA was held in Athens, between 24–30 August. The 85<sup>th</sup> congress centred around the topic 'Libraries: Dialogue for Change'. Our institution was represented at this especially rich and almost one-week-long event by László Boka, Szabolcs Dancs and Ágnes Hajdúné Baráth.

In 2019, many foreign institutions aimed at enriching their temporary exhibitions with art objects from the collection of the National Széchényi Library in 2019 as well. The Gömör-Kishonti Museum of Rimavská Sobota organized an exhibition between 17 April and 31 August 2019 focusing on the baths of Gömör in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to where numerous documents were lent from the General Collection and Collection of Posters and Small Prints. Between 20 October and 2 May 2019, the National and University Library of Strasbourg organized an exhibition entitled *Hors du monde: la carte et l'imaginaire* (Beyond the World: Map and Imagination), where, among many others, the atlas *Germania Inferior* by Petrus Kaerius in 1622 kept in the Map Collection was also displayed. The Leopold Mozart autograph sheet music from the Music Collection was displayed between 3 December 2019 and 9 February 2020, as the 'closing piece' of the exhibition *Leopold Mozart – Manager, Musician, Man* of the Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum of Salzburg which opened in the spring of 2019.

A cooperation agreement of researcher exchange programme has been ensured for years now with the Czech and Slovak National Libraries, and within this framework our institution welcomed six researchers altogether for several years. The staff members the Collection of Early Printed Books and Department of Research in Book and Cultural History of the NSZL have also took part in this exchange programme: they attended a conference in Turócszentmárton (Martin) and carried out hungarika research. With the help of the Klebelsberg Grant, one colleague from both the Music Collection and HAS–NSZL Res Libraria Research Group could carry out research abroad in 2019. Boglárka Illés examined the French sources of the Hungarian–French cultural and musical relations of Dual Monarchy, and she also compiled a guide about the correspondence between De Gerando Antonina and Alfred Dumesnil kept in the Bibliothèque historique de la Ville de Paris. Within the framework of the future mutual project of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (ÖNB) and the NSZL, Edina Zsupán meticulously processed all the corvinas kept there. The researcher started this processing work during her one-month-long grant in Vienna.

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