

# HUNGARY

NATIONAL SZÉCHÉNYI LIBRARY

DR ISTVÁN MONOK — DIRECTOR GENERAL

## ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL 2001 – 2002

### ANNIVERSARY INTRODUCTION

The Hungarian National Library, the Bibliotheca Regnicolaris was established on November 25, 1802.

Ferenc Széchenyi laid the foundations of the central collections of the Carpathian Basin – the former Kingdom of Hungary – and in doing so gave impetus to the process of the establishment of central collections for the other nationalities and the different geographical units. This deed also created the symbolic foundations for the embourgeoisement of the Hungarian nation.

As the motto of our anniversary year, we have taken a thought from a letter written by Ferenc Széchenyi on his deathbed (May 17, 1817), to his son István Széchenyi:

*"Be conscious of your values"  
National institutions for Hungarian and universal culture*

The anniversary events have been grouped around four dates and we have chosen four different mottoes for these focal points:

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|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>TRADITION AND NATIONAL AWARENESS –</b>      | the Day of Hungarian Culture (January 22)                                                                                                                 |
| <b>INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, SOCIETY –</b>           | the birthday of Ferenc Széchenyi who followed the example of the family and set an example for future generations, and World Museum Day (April 29–May 18) |
| <b>THE UNIVERSALITY OF CULTURE –</b>           | series of events presenting the international relations of the two national institutions celebrating their anniversary (September 23–October 1)           |
| <b>NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS – CIVIL CULTURE –</b> | date of the establishment of Ferenc Széchenyi's institution (November 25)                                                                                 |

Celebration of our 200th anniversary is the salient feature of our plan for 2002. We are celebrating together with the Hungarian National Museum and have presented an outline of the anniversary events and programme in a separate booklet.

At the same time, 2002 will be a special year in other respects too. We have drawn up the library's Strategic and Action Plan for the period 2002–2004 and this plan has also been approved by the National Library Board of Trustees and the Ministry. According to this plan, even in the new information age the national library must continue to locate, register and preserve all Hungarian and Hungarian-related documents. However, the tools used for this work must be fundamentally changed to take full advantage of the solutions provided by electronics and to create qualitatively new library and scholarly services.

This means that while organising the collection and developing information technology are the priority strategic element, we must at the same time also maintain or develop the standard of operation of all areas of the library.

Expansion of the integrated system (AMICUS) is continuing; integrated processing must be achieved within the library starting from the arrival of deposit copies. Keeping a record of the distribution of the six deposit copies is at the same time also a way of contributing to the operation of the National Document Supply System. Among the special collections, the rules for the description of documents (and description practice) in the Collection of Early Books, the Manuscript Collection and the Collection of Theatre History must be brought into line with the rules and possibilities of the integrated system. In the interest of making the Hungarian Electronic Library an integral part of the national library, we are drawing up rules on the scope of collection of electronic documents and the provision policy.

The national library became the centre of the MIT–HOL (WHAT-WHERE) system, the Hungarian equivalent of the international library movement "Ask the Librarian"; in 2002 we will create the national co-operation network so that this service can spread widely in Hungary too.

In 2002 the Hungarian National Joint Cataloguing Programme will become an organisational unit of the National Széchényi Library. We hope that by the end of the year we will be able to place a functioning system in the service of the international library and users' community.

The Financial Directorate will continue introduction of the uniform national accounting and financial management system which is placing an excessive burden on the employees. We hope that once the new system is functioning it will, in fact, facilitate their work. National organisation of the further training for librarians provides an opportunity for cultivating good relations with the body maintaining libraries.

There will be an unfavourable change in the financial conditions for acquisitions activity, but we must find possibilities of applying for funds which will bring additional resources to this area.

The Library Institute is playing a growing role in national library affairs. New regulations affecting the system of library supervision are expected to appear next year. Providing information on these and co-ordinating the work of the library profession and drawing up impact studies for the maintaining body will represent a substantial amount of work for the staff of the institution.

The series of anniversary events provides a good opportunity to cultivate international relations. In 2002 our library will host the conference of director generals of European national libraries and we will have the opportunity to meet the heads of the major libraries in the Carpathian Basin again.

In 2002 Hungarian culture will be the guest of Italy. We will make our contribution to strengthening the traditionally good Italian-Hungarian library co-operation with three big exhibitions and conferences in Italy.

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