

HUNGARY

NATIONAL SZÉCHÉNYI LIBRARY

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ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL 2003 – 2004

It is a general “rule” that institutional reports on works of the previous year always start with a sentence summing up the essence and direction of the year’s events.

So: 2003 was the year when the National Széchényi Library took ever fuller possession of the AMICUS integrated library system, when it became increasingly integrated. Accordingly:

- we began retrospective conversion of the periodicals catalogue on the basis of the periodicals storage catalogue;
- the database of the Bibliography of Hungarian periodicals (IKB-national press bibliography) was migrated from the Micro ISIS system to AMICUS;
- the ISIS database of foreign periodicals (IKBK) was closed, and at the same time we began to standardise records figuring in both the NPA (National Periodicals Database – Foreign periodicals in Hungarian libraries) and the IKBK, entering the missing items in AMICUS;
- we carried out a trial processing in preparation for retrospective conversion of the catalogue of books;
- the ISBN Office took possession of the new number issuing /number control and publishing software, reformed the system of applications for and issuing of numbers, thereby providing a more reliable and easily handled support for monitoring the supply of deposit copies;
- we began to enter the data on distribution of deposit copies in AMICUS;
- we changed the order on the receiving and processing line for deposit copies and have now reached the stage where an authenticated item figures in the database within two weeks (10 working days) of arrival;
- we have entered the National Library’s thesaurus into AMICUS and elaborated the technology for modification;
- we have expanded the rules of processing in the Map Collection and the Music Collection to cover special cases arising in the course of application;
- the rules for computer processing of certain special document types have been drawn up for the Theatre History Collection, the Collection of Small Prints and the Collection of Early Books, and we have created the conditions for their connection to the integrated system;
- the digitised catalogues of the Manuscript Collection have been made available on the Internet;

- work to connect the Central Library of the Hungarian National Museum to the AMICUS system has speeded up, the staff are already practising in a trial database and they will join in the live operation after the change of version;
- in the last quarter we prepared for the change of AMICUS version from 3.2.7 to 3.5.1;
- we launched a new version of the Hungarian Electronic Library (MEK), the 1.0 MEK files on the NIIF server were closed, the MEK version 2.1 was opened on our server in the National Library and the old files are being steadily migrated;
- with the support of the Ministry for Informatics and Telecommunications (IHM) we have developed a surface recommended for the blind and sight impaired, an audio server has been set up jointly with the Szabály BT private company, making it possible to have some of the publications in the Hungarian Electronic Library read aloud (introduction: 1st quarter, 2004);
- work has begun on the design, development and execution of the Electronic Periodicals Archive and Database (EPA);
- our mirror server operated in Šamorín/Somorja in Slovakia at <http://www.mek.sk> in co-operation with the Forum Minority Research Institute;
- together with our partner operating the MEK server in Transylvania, the Transylvanian Hungarian Scientific Society, we have won a grant and have begun to equip a Transylvanian digitising workshop at the Technical University of Cluj/Kolozsvár;
- our priority IT task was to create security and within this frame we have completed the installation of a firewall, central control of the network, operation of the servers within a uniform frame, established a stricter save system for the databases and drawn up the National Library's IT Security Rules;
- in December 2003 we received a non-refundable support of 360,000,000 HUF from the Ministry of Informatics and Telecommunications from the budget earmarked for informatics, telecommunications and frequency allocation tasks, to be used for the first phase of retrospective conversion of the catalogue of books, for a digital store, for professional work stations for readers and for the digitisation of the Hungarology reference library. The money will be spent in 2004.

In September we signed the preliminary contract for the "EUROPA HUMANISTICA – Bibliotheca Corviniana Digitalis" EU project. The aim of the project is to recreate the former library of King Matthias, the Bibliotheca Corviniana (known in its time as Bibliotheca Augusta) in virtual form using digital means. The program begins in 2004, but in 2003 we continued digitisation of the Corvinas preserved in Hungarian collections with the digitisation of Corvinas in the University Library and the Esztergom Cathedral Library.

The most important of our exhibitions in Hungary and abroad was The Ten Bamboo Studio exhibition on Chinese book and printing history in which a hundred volumes from the 12th to 19th centuries (the majority in original copies) from the Rare Books and Special Collections Department of the National Library of China were shown for the first time in Europe.

In September we held the fourth Italian-Hungarian gathering of librarians and the preliminary contract for the Bibliotheca Corviniana Digitalis project mentioned above was signed within the frame of the event.

In our publishing policy we successfully continued the practice of publishing joint editions with respected, quality publishing houses (Osiris, Gondolat, Kossuth, Helikon, Argumentum). In addition to the scholarly and bibliographical publications, the big publishing successes of the year were the albums presenting treasures of our collections (Old Hungary on postcards, Europe on maps 1520-2001), and the facsimile editions of rare and interesting 18th century books that appeared in the Amor Librorum series (A' Magyar Szent Koronának és az ahoz tartozó tárgyak históriája 1792 [The History of the Hungarian Holy Crown and the related objects, 1792], Magyar bábamesterség 1777 [Hungarian Midwifery, 1777], etc.).

Parallel with all this, the library acquired new books, processed them, served its users and lived its everyday life with all the attendant joys and problems.

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