

The Next City for Taiwan's Cultural Diplomacy: The NCL Holds an Exhibition, "The Imprint of Civilization: The Amazing Journey of Books," at Hungary's National Széchenyi Library

On October 15, 2016, the opening ceremony was held for an exhibition hosted by Taiwan's National Central Library (NCL), entitled "The Imprint of Civilization: The Amazing Journey of Books." The exhibition ran from October 18 to December 15, 2016, and was jointly hosted with Hungary's National Széchenyi Library. It featured treasured collections of oracle bone inscriptions, full-surface rubbings of bronzes and their inscriptions, and stone inscription rubbings. Themes included "From Seals to Woodblocks," "Hand-copied Books," "The Evolution of Printing Techniques," "The Formation of a Book," "Ancient Facsimile," "The Best of the National Central Library's Collection," and "The Evolution of Ancient Bookbinding." Many of the exhibits are rarely on public display.

One of the main focuses of the exhibition was printing, one of the four great inventions of traditional China. It focused on the creation and evolution of printing in the course of traditional China's long history. Related exhibits included oracle bones and stone inscriptions dating from antiquity; hand-copied books, which became mainstream after paper and ink were invented and popularized; carved woodblock and moveable type, which were adopted after the invention of printing; and also modern facsimile and bookshop edition printing techniques in use today. In order to help promote this exhibition more widely, the NCL held a Taiwan Lecture on Chinese Studies to mark the opening of the exhibition, and invited Prof. Max. K. W. Huang of the Institute of Modern History at the Academia Sinica to deliver a lecture. His lecture was entitled "Admired by Scholars and Laymen Alike: Introducing Some Classics in Chinese Society."

The lecture and exhibition opened to music played by three Taiwanese students. Mr. Tao Wen-lung, Head of the Taipei Representative Office in Hungary, and Mr. László Vizi, Head of the Department of Cultural Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs and Trade), Hungary, kindly accepted invitations to attend and give introductory speeches. In his remarks, Mr. Tao thanked the National Széchényi Library for its assistance with the exhibition. He emphasized the significance of the cultural exchange between the two countries, and spoke highly of the dedicated effort put into it on both sides. Director-General of the National Széchényi Library Dr. László Tüske and Director-General of the NCL Ms. Tseng Shu-hsien also made speeches. They thanked those attending the lecture and exhibition for their support, and expressed the hope that the cultural exchange between the two countries would continue, and that they would collaborate more closely in the future. Ms. Tseng also presented Dr. Tüske with 31 volumes of the NCL's publications, and together the two director-generals cut the ribbon to formally declare the exhibition open.

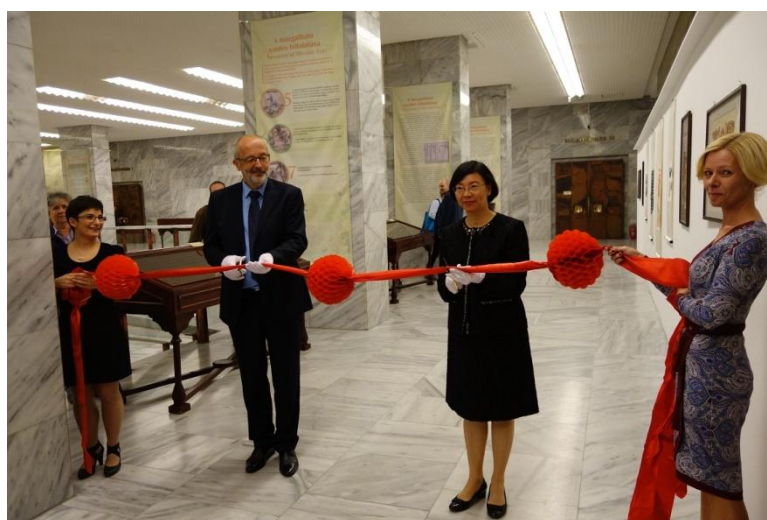
The lecture and opening ceremony attracted an audience of almost 200. The Hungarian public were captivated by the exhibition's impressive design and exhibits. The hands-on printing experience and tea-tasting also proved to be popular with visitors, many of whom were also eager to have their picture taken in the traditional scholar's study specially recreated for the exhibition. To add some interactive interest to the exhibition, the NCL set up an interactive digital postcard maker, allowing visitors to take their picture against a choice of backgrounds. After taking a souvenir photograph against one of the traditional Chinese literary-themed backgrounds and filling in the back of the postcard, visitors were able to send their digital postcard directly to their inbox. On the day of the opening ceremony, quite a number of those attending wanted to try this interesting and unique experience of creating their own personalized digital postcard.

Ms. Tseng Shu-hsien remarked that by means of the exhibition, lecture, and exchange of books, the NCL and National Széchényi Library exhibition aimed to improve the two countries' knowledge and understanding of each other's cultures. The exhibition displays were assembled with mass appeal in mind, clarifying and simplifying the subject matter in a lively way, and the National Széchényi Library was permeated with an authentic atmosphere of Chinese culture. The attendance and

response to the exhibition was enthusiastic and seldom seen at the library. Ms. Tseng remarked that this event clearly highlighted Taiwan's cultural 'soft power,' and extremely successful cultural diplomacy. Dr. Tüske repeatedly congratulated the NCL for its successful event, expressing his gratitude while reminding the audience that today was Budapest's Taiwan Day.



Director-General Ms. Tseng Shu-hsien of Taiwan's National Central Library and Director-General Dr. László Tüske of Hungary's National Széchényi Library exchange gifts



Director-General Ms. Tseng Shu-hsien of Taiwan's National Central Library and Director-General Dr. László Tüske of Hungary's National Széchényi Library open the two institutions jointly-held exhibition, "The Imprint of Civilization: The Amazing Journey of Books."



Mr. Lin Neng-shan of the NCL explains an exhibit to exhibition visitors



Visitors experience ancient printing techniques for themselves



The NCL and National Széchényi Library jointly hold a Taiwan Lecture on Chinese Studies. Prof. Max K. W. Huang of the Academia Sinica Institute of Modern History delivers his lecture on the Chinese classics.



Mr. Tao Wen-lung, Head of the Taipei Representative Office in Hungary, (2nd left) and Mr. László Vizi, Head of the Department of Cultural Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Hungary (2nd right), kindly accepted invitations to attend and give introductory speeches.