

Levéltári Szemle / Archival Review

Résumé of the 2nd issue:

This issue covers summarised writings from several archival areas. The first publication is an inspectorial report about control activities and experience in Hungarian archives in 2018, by Gergő Bendegúz Cseh. It follows an introduction of digitisation work in the ecclesiastical archives, an overview by Andor Lakatos. Csaba Katona's ingenious monograph deals with depictions of archivists in novels and movies, in an interesting and edifying way. The next article by József Kis presents not only the oral history project of the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County Archives of the National Archives of Hungary, but also its edifications of a general scope. The reader can gain information on a new research, following an accession of archival records, by Csaba Györgyi. After that, the 2nd issue includes report on a study tour by Vivien Rapali, book reviews by András Forgó and Péter Kis as well as a short release about archival news of the first half of 2019 and one more presentation about the Archival Publication of the year 2018.

Andor Lakatos: Mass-scale digitisation in ecclesiastical archives – observations on the basis of a questionnaire-based survey

Mass-scale digitisation dates back ten years in the Hungarian ecclesiastical archives. Above the reason of conservation, it was started in order to respond to the researchers' needs. At the beginning, only a few institutes were dealing with that field, but after 2014, many more ecclesiastical archives joined those who installed a digitisation workshop within their walls and who gave access to the digitised data thereby created, on the Internet. In the last 10 years more than 6,3 million recording was created and about three quarters of this amount are recordings of vital records (birth, marriage and death certificates). Andor Lakatos' study summarizes and disseminates the experience gained by a questionnaire-based survey, made in autumn 2018. It contains not only a reflection to the past period, but indicates progresses of the present and the foreseeable future. Just to mention two examples of them: further expected increase in the role of digitised content, and efforts to implement digitisation and content provision projects within the context of a broader framework of cooperation.

Csaba Katona: In the shackles of clichés: depictions of archivists in novels and movies

It is certainly true, that to the general public the least well-known field from the public collections' world belongs to the archives. Despite of this fact, many archives and archivists appear in literature or in movies. From the work of Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann to Dan Brown, or to the Star Wars universe, most of these clichés show our profession in not a very flattering way. The archives are often shown as a mysterious place, where the prying's life would be threatened and where the professional workers'

or other persons' main aim is to hide records containing highly important data. Regarding the figure of the archivist, he is at best a singular man living only for his profession, or, worse, a person with a derailed life. Csaba Katona's compilation examines these clichés with suggestive literary and cinematographic examples.

József Kis: Witnesses living among us – role and opportunities of oral history in the archives

Historians use the instruments of oral history for a long time to uncover historical topics in more detail. However, this collecting method was only barely used by the Hungarian archives, so far. A newly launched series called *Witnesses among us – archival conversations* (*Köztünk élő emlékezők – levéltári beszélgetések*), started by the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County Archives of the National Archives of Hungary in 2018, tries to break with that approach. The series aims to create interviews with the elder generation of Miskolc city and the county. Initially, these events were organised as public talks, but as it turned out, such events cannot provide enough time for exploring all life-stages of the interviewees. So the following interviews were pre-recorded and were released after film editing. Some of the interviewees shared not only their personal stories but historical records and photos in relation to the said events, which provided a greater understanding. In the framework of the series, six interviews were made so far, and more is expected in the future. The main topic of the series deals with the Kádár Era and the end of communism in Hungary, but tries to show not only one or two special historical event – like the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 – but a whole lifetime.

Csaba Györgyi: Watchmen, minstrels, wandering magicians (*garabonciások*): the Watchmen groups and the Pioneer Band – alternatives of youth movements in the era of state socialism

The Budapest City Archives increased its holdings with archival records relating to the past of the Hungarian Pioneer Movement, nearly 100 running meters of documents from the former Csillebérc pioneer camp. During the exhibition of these records, new details were identified regarding watchmen groups and the Pioneer Band, with particular interest. The slow fall of the Pioneer Movement became apparent as far back as the 1950s, because of its inadequate perception of kids and youth. The Hungarian revolution in 1956 gave the opportunity to rethink the future plans of the movement. That was the point, when the idea of watchmen groups was formed: renewing the Pioneer Movement with the methods and outcomes of the Scout Movement. Even though watchmen groups were abolished according to the decision of János Kádár, in 1957, its innovative methods became part of the *modus operandi* of the resurgent Pioneer Movement. During that time, a new and particular group appeared within the movement with a special role, the Pioneer Band. The ensemble focused on artistic training and education and involved a dance group, a choir, a literary group and an accordion band as well, within its frames. This special form of training has proved to be successful soon, and except for a short

period of decline, it remained till 1988 when a new restructuring of youth education put an end to the concept. In the meantime, from the mid-1980s, István Váradi, leader of the Pioneer Band joined the work of the Garabonciás Band, which aimed to research and disperse historical dances and games. The Garabonciás Band survived the change of regime in 1989 and they are still operating. In tribute to their work, the band members received FORD European Cultural Heritage Award in 2001.

Vivien Rapali: Archival research trip in the USA

The author made her two-month long research trip to the United States of America in autumn of 2018. During that time, she visited the New York Public Library and several university archives. According to the experiences of this research tour, the Hungarica research in the USA still offers great untapped potential. The New York Public Library keeps certain archival collections too, in a form of personal heritages of Hungarian immigrants. The situation is almost the same in the university archives, persons of Hungarian origin appear in personal records many a time. They are often not well known in Hungary, even though their life was significant enough to merit further attention. As a first step, a systematic exploration and cataloguing of the Hungarica records in the USA would be highly desirable, as domestic researchers could greatly benefit from that work.