

A Historical Reflection on Chinese Culture

Promoted in Hungary

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*Zi Gong asked, saying, "Is there one word which may serve as a rule of practice for all one's life?" The Master said, "Is not reciprocity such a word? What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others."*¹

Five years ago at the invitation of the International Confucian Association (ICA) I also had the honor to attend this prestigious conference. I was talking about translation². I discussed the topic that in such a small country, like Hungary, with less than ten million of population we have three different versions of the book consisting of Confucius's wisdom and sayings – *Lun Yu* or *The Analects of Confucius*. These three excellent translations made by Béla Hamvas, Ferenc Tőkei, Sándor Őri in different times (40's, 60's and 2012), from different point of views and approaches (that of a philosopher, philologist and poet) make the Hungarian readers acquainted with this eternal wisdom. But all three are common at least in one respect, that they have aroused high interest among the Hungarian intellectuals, which can be proved by the fact that Tőkei's translation has several reprints and revised editions. (First print: 1962; 1980, 1986, 1995, 2001, 2005)³

Of course I do not wish to repeat myself. That time I was speaking mainly in the "name of" the literary translator, while now I would like to share a few insights much more as the chair of the oldest civil and nonprofit association of Hungary, whose aim is to promote friendly relationship and cultural exchanges between the two countries: Hungary and China.

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¹ All the inserted quotations printed in italics in front of the chapters are from *Lun Yu*, and they are from the webpage of the Chinese Text Project (<https://ctext.org/>) in the translation of James Legge.

² Klára Zombory: *Footsteps of Confucius in Hungary – The Hungarian Interpretations of Lun Yu*, In: The International Conference in Commemorating 2565th Anniversary and the 5th Congress of the International Confucian Association, Beijing 2014.09, pp. 1824-1822; Also In: 儒学: 世界和平与发展---纪念孔子诞辰 2565 周年国际学术研讨会论文集(卷四), 九州出版社, pp. 609-619.

³ *Kínai bibliográfia (Chinese Bibliography)*, Compiled by Attila Földi; Source: <https://mek.oszk.hu/00800/00885/00885.htm>

Despite the great differences of our countries in population, area, culture etc. the connections between Hungary and China are based on mutual and long-lasting friendship and respect. It is very similar to the Confucian term *shu* 恕, which by now has resulted a more fruitful and positive cultural, educational and political relationship than ever. This positive tendency and result, of course, has very complex historical, sociological, economic and other causes and backgrounds, which I do not wish to discuss in detail, but it can be stated with sureness, that besides the “high politics” or “official politics” level, or as the supplementary of that, the cultural and civil diplomacy, along with the voluntary NGOs, which are independent from political parties and official institutions has a very important role. These are the associations and projects which are based on seeking people-to-people interactions in order to find connection points and interfaces, also do a great contribution to the deeper and more thorough recognition of each other. This cognition might be the very basic, and also the catalyst of multicultural and cross-border interactions and exchanges.

Si Ma Niu, full of anxiety, said, "Other men all have their brothers, I only have not." Zi Xia said to him, "There is the following saying which I have heard - 'Death and life have their determined appointment; riches and honors depend upon Heaven.' Let the superior man never fail reverentially to order his own conduct, and let him be respectful to others and observant of propriety - then all within the four seas will be his brothers. What has the superior man to do with being distressed because he has no brothers?"

Definition and roles of cultural and civil diplomacy⁴

In today's international relations tighter and tighter juncture, interlinkage of the foreign policy and culture can be traced. The expansion and increase of the means and repertoire of diplomacy, the “democratization” of the decision making process, and the rapid growth of media publicity, culture has resulted that culture has rather crucial role in the foreign affairs' decisions. As the consequence of the realization to the fact that one of the best “channels” to influence the decision makers leads through culture strengthened the necessity of the demand that the countries and nations need to define their strategic position according to their relationship with each other's culture.⁵

⁴ For the definition of the cultural and civil diplomacy this paper was used as a reference: dr. Bradean-Ebinger Nelu – Kulcs ár Szabina: *A kultur ális diplom ácia vil ága magyar és k ánai szem íveggel vizsg áva*; Source: http://www.grotius.hu/doc/pub/OLTFDP/kulcs%C3%A1r_nehlu_kultur%C3%A1lis_diplom%C3%A1cia.pdf

⁵ Pröhle Gergely: *A magyar kult úra szerepe Magyarors zág nemzetk özi politikai és gazdas ági kapcsolatainak fejleszt és ében*, 2007; Source:

In the cultural diplomacy the society and the media is involved as well, so it has several common points and similarities with that of the civil diplomacy. Civil diplomacy is carried out by the involvement of the “society”, more precisely the average citizens. The civil sphere is extremely important, since it can represent a country independently from party policies and governments. In order to have a good country image the state is interested in fostering a good relationship with the civil sphere, due to the so called “civil diplomats” who are representing their countries abroad, or receiving citizens of foreign countries. These connections and exchanges are based on personal relations, and thus they are able to shift the “picture” of a country to a positive direction.

The civil sphere’s forging ahead in the foreign relations is a relatively new phenomenon. Its cause is laying in the cross-border lobbying strength of the NGOs, and that they are representing the different strata of the civil sphere. Their number is increasing significantly, since they are rather reliable and independent in the public opinion, and for this reason they are capable to gain more information and able to influence the governments with pieces of information. Their opinion is useful not to be neglected in political and economic decisions.

The philosopher Zeng said, "The superior man on grounds of culture meets with his friends, and by friendship helps his virtue."

Among the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic of China

Hungary was among the first countries that only after a few days of the declaration of the People’s Republic of China already acknowledged the New China on the 4 October 1949, and after two days Hungary has started diplomatic relations with this huge East-Asian country. Our relations started to improve in different aspects, this act was followed by several high-level mutual visits, and besides the economic and political ties, the number of the cultural, sport and educational co-operations’ has increased as well. So it was not only the starting point of political and economic cooperation between the two countries, but it also contributed to a great extent to cultural, educational, scientific etc. exchanges, and also to civil diplomatic relations. So in 2019 we are not only celebrating the 70th anniversary of the New China, but also the 70th anniversary of our diplomatic relations. During these seven decades there were successful and active, and less determinant times as well. All in all it can be stated that our excellent relationship of today is rooted in the connections of the 50’s, and later the 80’s and the beginning of 2000 – these might be enumerated as

the most important decades in the strengthening of the bilateral ties.

The Master said, "A youth, when at home, should be filial, and, abroad, respectful to his elders. He should be earnest and truthful. He should overflow in love to all, and cultivate the friendship of the good. When he has time and opportunity, after the performance of these things, he should employ them in polite studies."

The early scholarship students and other Sinologists in the cultivation of Chinese culture in Hungary, and also in the role of civil diplomacy

In laying down the foundations of the civil diplomacy, and also establishing the “workshop” of Sinology and literary translation from original Chinese, along with making the Chinese Department at the Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) prosper, the scholarship students have played a very important role together with a few Sinologists, who had graduated in Hungary. The first group of the Hungarian scholarship students arrived to in Beijing in 1950, two professors of mine at the university were among them – Sándor Józsa (尤山度) and Endre Galla (高恩德), who was also the Secretary-General of the HCFA after the renewal in 1984 –, and also Barna Tólas (戴伯纳), economist and researcher of political science, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the ex-chairman of the HCFA for more than a decade after the renewal, and the honorary chairman of it up till his death this year at the age of 94.

Between 1950 and 1966 almost thirty Hungarian students studied in China. I would mention only a few names from the early scholarship students, most of them were also my professors, so I am very grateful and lucky to have such noble predecessors and received very high-level education and attitude along with serious standards towards Sinology and life. The above mentioned Endre Galla was a literary historian, an excellent researcher and translator of Lu Xun and his works, and also explored the traces of the Hungarian literature in China. Vilma Mészáros (梅维佳) was a literary historian and aesthete. Sándor Józsa, who was also mentioned before, a historian, whose research field is the modern and contemporary history of China, and who translated the last emperor’s *Pu Yi’s Biography*. He was 90 year old last year, and his autobiography, of which majority is about China, will be published this year. Pál Miklós (米白) was an art historian, a literary translator, who published several studies on Chinese art and cultural history, one of his major works is about the Dunhuang Thousand Buddha Caves. Péter Polonyi (鲍洛尼.彼得), renowned literary translator, is also a researcher of political science. Éva Kalmár (姑兰) is also a renowned literary translator and an editor of one of the most prestigious publishing

houses Európa Publishing for over 15 years. Ottó Juhász (叶桐) is a literary historian, former Ambassador of Hungary in China and the ex-chairman of HCFA. Mária Ferenczy (范凌思) is a culture historian, and so on.

Of course several great Sinologists were cultivated in Hungary as well, such as Ferenc Tőkei, Barnabás Csongor, Ildikó Ecsedy. Ferenc Tőkei (杜克义) was an internationally acknowledged literary and philosophy historian, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, one of the best and most fruitful literary translators, whose major work is the Chinese Philosophy: Antiquity in three volumes, in which Confucius' *Lun Yu* was published for the first time. Barnabás Csongor (陈国) is also a great literary translator, my professor and supervisor, who translated the classical novels *Journey to the West* and *Water Margins* from Chinese. Ildikó Ecsedy (艾之迪) is historian and philologist.

I am always mentioning these people, my professors and predecessors, since they are the “outposts” or “pioneers” of the bilateral cultural and civil diplomatic relations. They are not only great Sinologists, excellent literary translators, great teachers, scientists etc. who taught knowledge with preciseness and humbleness towards Chinese language and culture to the later generations, but they are/were also open-minded people, who helped with full efforts and kindness when the first Chinese people arrived to Hungary and needed help in the “acclimatization” to live in Hungary, or to arrange an exhibition etc.

The Master said, "Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is perilous."

China related educational and cultural institutions in Hungary in the service of the mutual understanding in different fields and aspects in Hungary

Despite the increasing interest towards China, the Chinese culture and language, there used to be only one higher educational institution for decades, where one could study Chinese or Sinology, my alma mater, by name the Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE). The predecessor of the East Asian Department of ELTE (that time called Pázmány Péter Catholic University, but now they are two separate universities) specializing in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Mongol and Tibetan language and culture was founded in 1924 with the leadership of Vilmos Pröhle (Head of Department: 1924-42) Orientalist professor. He was followed by Lajos Ligeti for twenty years (1942-1962), a linguist, philologist, who specialized in Mongolian and Turkic languages, he spent three years as a scholarship post-doctoral researcher in Paris, where he studied from Henri Maspero, Jacques Bacot and Paul Pelliot. Between 1963-83 Barnabás Csongor, 1983-1995 Endre Galla hold the post – both were

mentioned already –and at present Imre Hamar (郝清新), whose research field is the Huayan sect of Buddhism, is the Head of the Department, also the Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Humanities of the University, the Director of the Far Eastern Institute, and the Director of the ELTE Confucius Institute since its foundation. At the Chinese Department one can study modern and classical Chinese language, the literature, history and culture of China. On the Master courses the fields of classical sinology have priority such as philology, linguistics etc.

Besides ELTE a “new” Chinese department was established in 2012 at the Pázmány Péter Catholic University (PPKE) and during a few years it became a very important center of Orientalism, China studies and Sinology with active scientific life and widespread international relations’ network. One can apply for Chinese language major or minor, Chinese translator and interpreter, and East-Asian Studies MA jointly with the Budapest Corvinus University. The head of the department is the renowned Sinologist Gergely Salát.

Chinese language courses and introductory courses about the economy and society of China are offered at the Budapest Corvinus University (BCE) China Administration-, Economics and Sociology Research Center. It does not give a separate degree, but all the students enrolled to the university could attend the courses. In 2018 a trilateral agreement was signed (BCU, Hungarian National Bank and Fudan University) about a joint MBA program.

There are three other higher educational institutions in Hungary where one can study Chinese, that is 1.) the National University of Public Service (NKE), Center of Chinese Public Administration, Economics and Social Research: Chinese language courses and other China related courses; 2.) Budapest Business School (BGE), Faculty of Foreign Trade, Eastern Languages Department, Chinese: special commercial and business Chinese language courses and other China related courses; 3.) Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary.

In Hungary we have a few special educational institutions which are related to China as well: 1.) The Dharma Gate Buddhist College, Chinese language and culture specialization, an independent Buddhist college; 2.) In 2004 according to the agreement of the Chinese and Hungarian government and relevant ministries, a unique school in Europe, the so called Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Elementary School was opened in the 15th district of Budapest, where a great number of Chinese people are living. The main motivation and aim of the school was to provide high quality education to the children of the Chinese residents, but nowadays more Hungarian than Chinese children are studying there. From 2016 it was extended to a bilingual Grammar School.

Nowadays one can take high-school graduation and/or official language exam from the relative universities where there are authorized agencies for this service. HSK exams are also arranged by the Confucius Institutes for quite a long time, and from this year BCT is offered as well.

If we compare the present day situation to that of the 80’s and 90’s when I pursued high school and university studies there are such a great difference, and the

bilateral scholarship programs have widened to a great extent as well.

Since different historical and geopolitical reasons “Sinology” and Chinese language education is concentrated in Budapest, but the growing-number Confucius Institutes (Budapest 2006, Szeged 2012, Miskolc 2013, Pécs 2015) work hard in order to make it possible in other places of Hungary as well to study Chinese. The Confucius Institute native and Hungarian teachers are conducting classes and arranging different China related cultural and interactive programs not only in Budapest but also in several different towns, in high schools (in Miskolc, Eger, Győr, Pécs, Szolnok, Tokaj etc.) and other platforms. The Confucius Institute at Pécs is specialized to TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine). The fifth Confucius Institute is just about to be opened very soon in Debrecen, at the 2nd largest city of Hungary.

I will not go through one by one all the cultural institutions dealing with Chinese cultural affairs, I would only mention only one, by name the Hopp Ferenc Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts, which has been opened to the public in 1923. 100 years ago, in 1919 Ferenc Hopp (1833-1919) – the manufacturer and distributor of optical instruments and cameras, whose fund made him possible to travel around the world, also to the Far East (he visited China three times) and to collect art pieces –, in his testament he donated his villa along with his art collection to the Hungarian state. It was around 4000 pieces which were completed with other “Eastern” pieces from different state museum’s collections such as the Museum of Applied Arts, Museum of Fine Arts, Ethnographic Museum and National Museum. The total collection now counts around 23.000 of Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Southeast-Asian, Nepalese, Tibetan, Mongolian, Korean pieces etc. In the Hopp Ferenc Museum thematic temporary exhibitions can be visited, along with several programs and guided tours, while in the Museum called Ráth György (a neighboring villa also that of a former art collector) the Far East related permanent exhibitions are to be displayed. A new beautiful exhibition venue at the Buda side of the Danube, the so called Ybl Buda Creative House is also opened to the Chinese artists, and since its opening several China related exhibitions were carried out with several accompanying programs (lectures, introductions, etc.), and even now, contemporary artists’ works are exhibited.

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The Hungarian-Chinese Friendship Association (HCFA), the oldest

NGO in the service of civil diplomacy

There are several non-profit organizations whose mission is to enhance the common understanding between Hungary and China, to popularize China and the Chinese culture in Hungary, some of them are very active and innovative. One of the

oldest ones is the Hungarian-Chinese Friendship Association, established in 1959, its main aim is to introduce the history, culture and also the modernization of China in Hungary, and also to popularize the Hungarian culture in China through “civil diplomacy”. Being the chair of this association, I will introduce its mission and work in detail. The Kőrösi Csoma Association, also a very “old” one, established in 1920, is dealing not only with China, but also with Oriental studies and the connections of my nation and the “East” mainly on academic, but also on popularization level.

Chinese and Hungarian relations and also the Hungarian-Chinese Friendship Association already have a long road behind them, although in the past few years in our changing and globalized world, and also among the increasing number of NGOs and state financed organizations it is very crucial to find its place, role, task and mission.

“Friendship can be a fragile thing, especially when divided by a thousand miles. However, in a small country in the heart of Europe, a tiny but enthusiastic group of people managed to overreach the decades and create a community where like-minded people and cultures meet.”⁶ This is the essence of the Hungarian-Chinese Friendship Association, of which I am honored to be the chair from October 2014 and by now I have been holding it for five years.

Our mission is to build a spiritual and intellectual community which is beyond the limits of generations and institutions. The joining point and center is China, we are tending to convey the picture of a modern, ever-changing China with old and rich traditions. It is also our mission to bring the Chinese and Hungarian culture and thinking closer to each other in order to make an interface between the Hungarian and Chinese community living in Hungary, and it will be enhanced in broader sense between Chinese and Hungarian people, whenever they live.

This is a non-political, non-governmental and non-profit oriented voluntary association.

Having been established in 1959, 10 years after the establishment of diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic of China, the Association has a long history, and it is the oldest civil organization in my country dealing with cross-cultural relationship building between Hungary and China. During those years, similar associations were established to nurture relations with other Socialist countries, however, the majority of them became completely abandoned with the changes of time. Few remained active or have been totally reorganized, such as the Hungarian-Chinese Friendship Association in 1988, which fortunately survived historical changes by maintaining a tiny, but engaged community of people somehow connected to China, mostly by having studied or worked there. The members and the supporters are Hungarian Sinologists, experts, scientists, diplomats, journalists, artists, students and other personages interested in China, along with Chinese people resided in Hungary.

The main objectives of the Association: to popularize the history, the culture, the

⁶ Using the introductory material *Building Bridges from the Heart of Europe – Introducing the Hungarian-Chinese Friendship Association (HCFA)*

civilization and modernization results of China to the Hungarian people, and vice versa. To attain our objectives we arrange friendly meetings, initiate and organize mutual visits; to serve as main- or co-organizer of cultural activities (exhibitions, concerts etc.); to publish books and arrange book launches; to attend and co-organize professional meetings and scientific conferences; to popularize different cultural activities of other associations in connection with China. We also celebrate the Chinese Lunar New Year every year with our members. Every year we are eager to arrange at least one monthly gathering to our members and everyone interested in the discussed topic, therefore it is not only a platform of friendship between Chinese and Hungarian people but also a place that gives an opportunity for developing new connections between younger and older generations within Hungary. Our Association is a meeting point for those who share their experience of having impressions of China and for those who have a strong interest in its culture.

Our Association foster very good connection with the Hungarian China related educational and cultural institutions, the media, as well as the prominent members and nonprofit associations of the Chinese residents living in Hungary. The Embassy of the P.R. C. in Hungary is always very supportive with our work and efforts, they help us a lot by different means, and our cooperation is very fruitful. We have also very good connection with Chinese partner associations, such as the *Beijing People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries*, *Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries*, *Zhejiang Friendship Association*, *Guangdong People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries* etc.

Being the chair of the Hungarian-Chinese Association and also a Sinologist-literary translator I am very proud to take part in the popularization of Chinese culture and literature in Hungary, and also took part in several grand scale literary events from which the most important ones are: The 1st China-CEE Literary Forum arranged by the Ministry of Human Capacities of Hungary and the House of Nations in co-operation with the HCFA held in Balatonfüred and Budapest in 2016 May. The book launches of the Hungarian publication of the *Collection of the Shandong Han Dynasty Stone Reliefs* and the poetry collection of the famous Chinese poet Jidi Majia, both of them took place at the National Széchenyi Library, initiated by my very good friend Yu Zemin – who himself is a writer and one of the best literary translators, a Pro-Cultural Hungarian laureate, resided in Hungary, and on the invitation of our Association and other cooperation institutions these events attracted a big audience. We also arranged several smaller book launches in our headquarters, such as the *Chinese New Year's Picture Collection*, the pre-book launch of my professors, Sándor Józsa autobiography mainly about his experience in China as a student, a diplomat and a Hungarian language lecturer etc.

HCFA also published a book last year (*Beautiful Arched Bridges – Remembrance of Chinese Personalities to Hungary*) which is the continuation of a former book of our Association (*Beijing Hungarian Rhapsody – Memories from the 65 Years of the Hungarian-Chinese Relations*) published in 2014, both with the support of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Hungary. The former

book collected stories, memories and essays about China from 11 Hungarian authors, including renowned sinologists, diplomats etc., and this one, which is to be published this year, will consist of 23 writings about Hungary from Chinese personalities (ambassadors, diplomats, professors, correspondences, artists etc.) who had spent longer or shorter period of time in Hungary, and who have contributed to a great extent to the cultural relationship between China and Hungary. Both books are bilingual (Hungarian and Chinese) and besides the essays they include photos and biographical notes about the authors. These people are all civil diplomats, who have done a great contribution to the bilateral connections. HE. Jielong Duan, the Ambassador of the P.R.C. in Budapest also attended the book launch and addressed a speech in March 2018.

It is always a great pleasure if a Chinese writer arrives to Hungary, either officially or privately, since I believe in the “power” of books, and in their usage in intercultural dialogues. Yu Hua, Ma Yuan, Long Dong and Zhao Lanzhen (*October* literary periodical), Su Tong, Zhang Kangkang, Ning Ken, Yang Ge, who arrived in Hungary to the “Budapest Transfer International Festival”; Xiong Yuqun, Zhang Chu etc., who were the members of the official delegation to the “1st CEE Countries–China Literary Forum”; Chen Dongjie and Zhao Xueqin also from the famous *October* literary periodical, and several Chinese publishers’ (China Publishing Group, Phoenix Publishing & Media Group, Yilin Press, Shandong Publishing Group, Zhejiang Publishing Group etc.) delegations.

Finally I would only highlight one more project referring to our association, an interview-series which title is *Door openers – Talking with the masters of Sinology*. These are 1-2 hour long interviews with renowned Sinologists which were made by Centrum TV with the financial support of Szeged University Confucius Institute.

The Master said, "Let the will be set on the path of duty. Let every attainment in what is good be firmly grasped. Let perfect virtue be accorded with. Let relaxation and enjoyment be found in the polite arts."

Cultural diplomacy and China related cultural programs and events in Hungary in 2019 focusing on the 70’s anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between our countries

Over the last decade people living in Hungary could select from a very wild range and variety of colorful programs in order to receive information and get to know this “far away” country and its culture better. The visual and performing arts, martial arts etc. of China are “demanding” more and more space to themselves, and these cultural and leisure activities attract more and more people. In the past few years there were several grand scale and outstanding China specific programs, rising huge

public and media interest. These programs are arranged either by the Chinese community living in Hungary, or by Hungarian official organizations according to bilateral high level cultural agreements, or by theaters, music halls and galleries according to individual agreements between institutions, or the Confucius Institutes throughout the country, or by NGOs or smaller groups, troupes, or the programs and activities are the “results” of the enthusiasm of people who have ardent feelings towards China. The total list of these cultural programs would be very long, and in 2014, on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of our diplomatic relations, and in 2019, at the 70th anniversary would be even much longer per year. Most of the events took place in the capital city, Budapest, but also in several big cities and even small towns and villages. One has to select from modern and classical, small and big art exhibitions; several photo exhibitions; movie festivals; professional and educational programs; traditional, ethnic minorities’ and experimental dances; Beijing and other operas, acrobatic and *wushu* performances etc. The places of the events also vary from the most prestigious venues such as the Academy of Sciences, the National Museum, the National Széchenyi Library, the MŰPA (Palace of Arts) Concert Hall etc. to smaller and alternative places, from universities to libraries. The HCFA has a very active Social Media site which tries its best to share all these China related cultural programs, and we have never experienced this frequency of the programs like in 2019.

Without tending to make an overall list, I have collected a few of them:

The events that probably have reached the greatest number of people and the most diversified groups of people were the *Lunar New Year Festivals*. The festival, that is said to “bring the Far East and mainly China to Hungary for one day”, was arranged by the Subjective Value Foundation and China Art Center in 2013 for the first time, and in 2014 for the second time, and in the past 3 years the organization was overtaken by a Chinese organization which has taken the lead in the arrangement of the event, and by then it is called “*Chinese Spring*” festival. The specialty and uniqueness of this event – which were taking place at Budapest’s very frequented community space, Millennium Park, and two times in a shopping mall called China Mart – gathered together almost all of the educational institutions, civil associations, sport and martial art clubs, the best restaurants, Chinese doctors and pharmacists etc. whose mission or daily activity is somehow in connection mainly with China or the Far East. With this kind of “overall cooperation”, support and enthusiasm of the participants a grand scale cultural “happening” was realized. On the big stage and in different venues several programs were arranged in parallel, it was a huge and colorful “cultural cavalcade”. The Chinese residency living in Hungary takes more and more important part in this event series.

With the invitation of excellent orchestras from China, MŰPA (Palace of Arts) has now arranging *The Grandiose Chinese New Year Concerts* for several years, it has already become a tradition and the tickets are sold out months earlier before the concert takes place

The large Chinese residency has been celebrating the Lunar New Year with

different performing art galas for quite a long time in very good venues, such as the Honvél or MOM Cultural Center, the Festival Theatre at MÜPA etc., the Confucius Institutes or the Asia Center shopping mall also arrange some programs, performances or receptions. These are all very interesting and prestigious events, but the target groups and the visitor numbers are much limited in comparison with the above mentioned *Lunar New Year Festival*, or nowadays called *Chinese Spring*.

In the past few years several grandiose, more often state (Chinese and/or Hungarian Government) sponsored China related exhibitions and performances were organized. Only a selection from the bigger events will be listed.

The most spectacular ones were: the *Red Cliff* presented by the Beijing National Theater at the Hungarian State Opera (2012) *Li Yaxian* – Sichuan opera at the National Theatre (2016) and the *Opera Warriors* (2019) this year at the Erkel Theatre. Several minority shows and performances were presented from Guizhou, Zhejiang, Yunnan, Inner-Mongolia, Gansu etc. Modern, classical and “fusional” music concerts are held as well.

The most important exhibitions of the past few years were: *Tradition and Renewal – Chinese Art on the Millennium* – Chinese art exhibition on 2000 square meters in the Museum of Fine Arts (2012); *Spectacle Reconstruction– Contemporary Fine Arts* – a selection of the works of Chinese avant-garde artists in Debrecen, Modern and Contemporary Art Center (MODEM) (2014); *The Spirit of Mountains – The Fragrance of Flowers. Traditional Chinese ink painting in the 19th and 20th Century* – a traditional Chinese ink painting exhibition, a selection from the collection of the Three Gorge Museum, Chongqing (2013-14) in Budapest, Kogart; *Heart of Beauty* – Selection of the Chinese collection of almost 8000 pieces of the Ferenc Hopp Museum of Asiatic Arts to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Hungary and China. (2014-15); *Treasures of Ancient China* – a display of over 150 works of art including two life-sized terracotta soldiers from the 3rd century BC. From the Shanxi History Museum, the Nanjing Municipal Museum, and the Chengde Palace Museum exhibited in the Museum of Applied Arts (2015); *Fascination of Nature* – some 110 paintings from Qi Baishi’s paintings from the Collection of the Beijing Fine Art Academy exhibited in the Hungarian National Gallery in 2015 which is declared as the biggest exhibition from original masterpieces of Qi Baishi. There were two very impressive exhibitions about Hungarian personages who did great contribution either to China or in the recognition of China, one is called the *Hungarians on the Silk Road* (2018-19) which was arranged by the co-operation of the Eastern Collection of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Chinese Dunhuang Academy about Aurél Stein, the world-famous archeologist and explorer, and also about Bárány Széchenyi – the son of the “greatest Hungarian”, István Széchenyi – who has laid down the foundations of the Hungarian Silk Road exploration. In 2018 this exhibition was moved to Szeged, and in 2019 to Miskolc University Confucius Institute. The other important exhibition *Finding Hudec – Architectural Heritage in Today’s Shanghai* (2018) is a co-operation of the Hungarian Hudec Cultural Foundation and East China

Normal University School of Design about László Hudec's (1893–1958) architectural activity contributed immensely to Shanghai's transformation into today's modern metropolis. He designed many important milestones in the city's modernization: Shanghai's first air-conditioned hospital, the Country Hospital (1925), the first Asian skyscraper, Park Hotel (1934), the city's most spacious theater, the Grand Theater (1933), and its first private villa with an elevator, the Green House (1937). In 2019 the Stein exhibition was moved to Miskolc and the Hudec one to Debrecen. In these days one can find a very comprehensive and interesting exhibition at the Ferenc Hopp Museum of Asiatic Art, the title of the exhibition is *Made in Asia*, it is the centenary exhibition of the museum, and for a full year the best pieces of the collection (Chinese, Japanese, Korean etc.) of the hundred-year-old Hopp Museum will be displayed, and the museum offer several. The Opening at the end of June, the show will portray the great periods in the museum's history, spanning from the interwar period linked to the institution's first director, art historian Zoltán Felvinczi Takács, to the period of Buddhist exhibitions, linked to Mária Ferenczy, a renowned sinologist, who passed away in 2017.

Of course I cannot leave out the bigger movie projections and film festivals, since movies might be one of the best “tools” towards the younger generations. As early as in 2012 with the title *China Close Up – Chinese film days* a huge two-day festival was arranged in the most beautiful movie theatre in Hungary, and almost every year a similar activity is arranged, this year (2019) for example one could see *The Wandering Earth*, the *Dragon Blade* and the *Beijing Love Story*. The highlight from all referring to movies of course was in 2017, when Jacky Chan has opened the festival in person, and 4 movies were presented, the *Operation Mekong* blockbuster, the *Book of Love* romantic comedy, the *Xuan Zhang* and the *Mountains May Depart*. Sometimes famous directors are visiting Hungary and not only their films are shown, but they also attend talks with the audience, such as Zheng Dasheng (2019) and the Berlin Golden Bear laureate in 1993, Xie Fei (2017), and both directors visited Szeged University Confucius Institute as well. Interview series to local televisions were shot in the cooperation of the Hungarian-Chinese Friendship Association, the Centrum TV and the Szeged University Confucius Institute with the title of *Door Openers – Interviews with the Master Scholars of Sinology* and the other was made in the cooperation of two local Chinese media experts' Company, the H-Forest Media and Chinese Headline New Media with the participation of a couple of Hungarian and Chinese diplomats, politicians, artists, professors and businessmen etc., its title is *Witnesses of Friendship* and will be released in the Hungarian state-TV in these days. I would like to mention here the kind of book-version predecessors of these TV-series, both compiled by the Hungarian-Chinese Friendship Association, the above mentioned *Beautiful Arched Bridges – Remembrance of Chinese Personalities to Hungary* and the *Beijing Hungarian Rhapsody – Memories from the 65 Years of the Hungarian-Chinese Relations*.

And nowadays China cannot be “missing” from the biggest happenings and festivals, the events that became “brands” already in Hungary, or even in Europe,

such as the *Museums' Nights*, *Island Festival*, *Language Parade*, *Scientists' Day*, *National Gallop*, *World of Women*, *Fish Parade* (Szeged), *International Spring* (Pécs) etc.

In terms of cultural activities one should not miss to mention the big Chinese residency living in Hungary whose members are also taking a very significant and active part in the organization and popularization. They either introduce their own art abilities in different genres such as photography, calligraphy or painting, or taking active part in organizing exhibitions to artists living in China. An example to the previous one was *The Walk – Retrospective Exhibition of Wei Xiang*. Wei Xiang is a very successful businessman, a center figure of the overseas Chinese living in Hungary. He arrived to Hungary with his wife at the beginning of the 90's, together with the first generation of Chinese people later resided in Hungary, arranged his first exhibition in 1992, but later turned to business for living. In the past decade he has supported and arranged several sport and cultural activities, one of the most important events is the initiation of the photo exhibition series called *The Silk Road Reflection Photography Exhibition* about several parts of China with the aim to introduce Chinese cultural and traditions to European audience from European and Chinese photographer's eyes in parallel. Several Chinese associations, such as the Sino-European Foundation of Chinese Culture and Education, the Hungarian-Chinese Art Association, the Hungarian Huaxing Art Troupe, the Chinese Women's Association etc. takes a very active part in different cultural and educational projects.

This paper is not about literature, but being a literary translator of modern Chinese literature, I cannot resist writing at least a couple of paragraphs about the most crucial points and events about literature. The *15th Jubilee Book Festival* in 2008 – where China was the guest of honor has affected a kind of “breakthrough” in comparison with the previous decade, since almost all the important publishers came out with their own “China-book”, thus several Chinese literary, art educational and other China related books were published for the event, such as Lu Xun's essays, *Soul Mountain*, *Wolf Totem*, *February Flowers* by Fan Wu – the latest two is my translation – and a 20th century Chinese short story collection edited by Éva Kalmár, only to mention the most important ones. The Nobel-prize of Mo Yan in 2012, of course, has given another impulse to the process of the recognition of Chinese contemporary literature in Hungary, the media was interested in his works, life, and Chinese contemporary literature and literary translation in general, so I was invited to interviews at that time. In 2016 the already referred to *1st China-CEE Literary Forum* was held in Balatonfüred and Budapest in 2016 May, in 2017 *The Power of Poetry – The Literary Meeting of Lu Xun and Petőfi* was arranged at the Petőfi Literary Museum, and in 2017 a Hungarian editorship was established by the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press and Kossuth Publishing, and there are very fruitful cooperation with the Publishing House called Geopen about Chinese books. So Chinese books and contemporary writers are present at the Hungarian book market, and although not in an extremely great number of titles, but they are published by

very renowned Publishing Houses (Kossuth, Geopen, Magvető, Noran Libro, Libri, Európa etc.).

Chinese culture and art, music, film and literature have been integrated into the present daily lives of the Hungarian people, but due to length limit I do not continue the introduction of these events. Finally I would just highlight a few unique moments. Stamps series are issued by the Hungarian Post every lunar new year for several years, but this year's event is about the 70th anniversary of the P.R.C. *Chinatown Street Festival* has been arranged for years in the summer at the 10th district of Budapest, in the so called "Chinatown", Monori Center, which also attracts a great number of visitors. The 16th *World Congress of Chinese Medicine* (WCCM) will be held in Hungary as well in November 2019.

Fan Chi asked about benevolence. The Master said, "It is to love all men." He asked about knowledge. The Master said, "It is to know all men."

Short conclusion

One proof of the efficacy to the positive outcomes and results of the civil and cultural diplomacy can be traced in the peaceful and fruitful coexistence of the Hungarian and Chinese nationality residents living in Hungary. In the positive opinion of the Hungarians about the Chinese people according to a survey⁷, seeing them as "diligent, cheerful, good workers, hospitable and friendly", which means that despite the fact that more and more Chinese people – nowadays not only businessman, workers, but students as well – living in Hungary, the average Hungarian people are not against the growth of the Chinese residency, rather we show welcoming attitude towards the Chinese people, we accept them and find the common language. I firmly believe that the countless efforts have been made in the sake of mutual understanding, and the huge amount of cultural and people-to-people activities in a smaller or greater extent will also contribute to this kind of harmonious relationship.

⁷ *The characterization of Chinese people (Diagram No.6.)* In: dr. Bradean-Ebinger Nelu – Kulcsár Szabina: *A kulturális diplomácia világa magyar és kínai szemüveggel vizsgálva.*