

Confucius Institute in Belgrade Work Report for the Year 2014

I. General Conditions in the Period January-October 2014

Following the principles of the agreement signed between the University of Belgrade and HANBAN, the *Agreement on the joint founding of the Confucius Institute in Belgrade* (hereafter CI), in 2014 CI greatly contributed to the dissemination of Chinese culture, as well the promotion of the Chinese language. All 14 project proposals were approved by HANBAN, namely: Global CI Day, the Grand Annual CI Conference, teaching activities, Cultural exchange between China and Serbia and research of the Chinese and Serbian languages, promoting Chinese language, project in cooperation with the Communication University of China in PR China (calligraphy and Chinese language summer school), CI Almanac, office expenses, CI Managing Board, Spring Festival activities, National Day of PR China activities, renovating CI's language laboratory, developing CI's website, and seminar for training local Chinese language teachers.

Up to September 2014, most of the projects were successfully realized, and several were being realized at the time. The development of the new CI website should be especially noted, as it greatly contributed to expanding and complementing the available information on CI's work, especially in the field of disseminating Chinese culture and language.

1. General Teaching and Educational Activities

- In the first half of the year, all CI teachers managed to raise their Chinese language proficiency to the highest level and obtain HSK 6 certificates, as well as to master the highest level of oral Chinese. In 2014 (March-June) participants enrolled in the 16th cycle of Chinese language courses. Covering all language levels, CI had 9 classes for the general public, 4 classes for high school students, and 1 class for preschool children, with a total of 180 participants, 50% of which took and passed the final exam (this year many participants of the general public classes quit their courses). Up to the end of September 2014, CI successfully enrolled the participants of the 17th cycle of language courses. A total of 9 general public classes were enrolled, 5 high school student classes, 6 elementary school classes, and 2 preschool children

classes. A total of 392 participants registered, which is 2.15 times more than the previous period.

- In cooperation with the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia, from January 28th to 30th CI organized the first seminar for the training of local Chinese language teachers. This seminar was strongly supported and aided by HANBAN and the Communication University of China. The seminar was successfully completed and it greatly contributed to the raising of the Chinese language proficiency level of local teachers. The seminar was attended by 20 teachers working at universities, high schools and elementary schools. A special guest of the seminar was prof. Zhang Jing from the Communication University of China.
- This year CI continued the popularization of Chinese language in the Back to Nature kindergarten. In September 2014, 20 new participants were enrolled, so now the kindergarten has two CI classes with 36 children aged 4 to 6. CI helped the kindergarten specially equip a classroom for Chinese language learning (CI donated: desks, chairs, a blackboard, shelves, a projector). In addition, the children were given “Chinese Paradise” textbooks.
- In Belgrade, CI opened new Chinese language classes for students in two elementary schools, Janko Veselinovic and Vuk Karadzic. Based on the number of registered students, 4 classes were formed at the Janko Veselinovic elementary school, with a total of 130 students from the first to the eighth grade, while at the Vuk Karadzic elementary school the registered third grade students, a total of 40, were divided into two classes. Chinese language teaching is done by Serbian teachers with the help of Chinese volunteers. In order to engage the students, CI organized various cultural activities at these schools (paper cutting, exhibitions, calligraphy, film screenings).
- In April 2014, CI organized the third student competition entitled “Through Knowledge to China”, with over 30 participants. The best contestants participated in the Beijing “International Summer Youth Camp”. The participants were thus given the chance to get to know China and improve their Chinese language proficiency.
- During July and August 2014, in cooperation with the Communication University of China, a one month long Chinese language summer camp was organized, with 20 of the best CI students as participants.

2. Cultural Activities

In 2014 CI, in cooperation with the Embassy of PR China in Serbia, relevant Serbian ministries and cultural institutions, organized numerous cultural activities, which contributed to the deepening of the public's knowledge of Chinese culture, as well as of CI's activities.

- Celebration of the Chinese Spring Festival. On February 8th, 2014, CI organized at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts a celebration of the Chinese Spring Festival. CI students prepared cultural-artistic performances, enriched by an exhibition of photographs "Towards the New Year" (over 60 photographs of Chinese New Year celebrations). The celebration was attended by Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs and former ambassador of Serbia to PR China, Miomir Udovicki, president of the Serbia-China Friendship Association, prof. Unkovic, Chinese embassy cultural adviser, Mr. Xiu, educational adviser, Mr. Sun, embassy staff, representatives of CI's cooperating institutions, Chinese students, and over 500 guests.
- Chinese Film Week. During the Chinese Spring Festival, CI organized at the Ethnographic Museum the "Chinese Film Week Dedicated to the Chinese Spring Festival" and an exhibition entitled "Shanghai in the 1930s". This events were accompanied by lectures on topics related to Chinese customs, film, and culture. The events were exceptionally well visited, with over 500 visitors attending the film screenings and lectures.
- Chinese Book Month. CI in cooperation with the Belgrade City Library organized from February 20th to March 30th, for all fans of Chinese culture in Serbia, the "Chinese Book Month". Books on Chinese history, ethnology, architecture, medicine, cooking, philosophy, literature, etc. were exhibited. All those interested in learning Chinese could familiarize themselves with Chinese language textbooks and multimedia materials for language learning.
- "Chinese Customs and Holidays" Exhibition. During the month of March this year, CI organized a two week long exhibition dedicated to Chinese customs and holidays in the high schools and elementary schools with which CI has continuous cooperation. This exhibition enhanced the students knowledge of Chinese cultural heritage and additionally raised their interest in China, its civilization and language.
- "Chinese Language and Knowledge on China Competition". This year, on April 27th, CI organized a competition for high school students learning Chinese language, testing their Chinese language proficiency and knowledge of Chinese culture. Participants from 5 high schools

registered for the competition. Among them were three schools that are CI's partners in the project of popularizing Chinese language in high schools, while the other two schools are the only philological high schools in Serbia (Belgrade and Sremski Karlovci). Seven of the best high school students were awarded the opportunity to participate in the "International Summer Youth Camp" and "Chinese Language Learning Summer Camp" in Beijing.

- Lectures on Contemporary Chinese Literature. During May this year, CI in cooperation with the Belgrade City Library organized a series of lectures on contemporary Chinese literature. This was a good way to announce China being the guest of honor of the Belgrade book fair. Professors of the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade talked about translated works of Chinese literature, contemporary Chinese seen by Mo Yan, etc.
- Chinese Culture Month in Vojvodina. CI organized from June 11th to July 2nd in Vojvodina a Chinese culture month. First there was the Chinese film month in Zrenjanin, at the Cultural Center, and then in Subotica an exhibition entitled "Cities, Places, People – Contemporary China" was opened, with a lecture on the Chinese Nobel laureate Mo Yan. These activities were attended by over 1000 visitors.

All these activities were excellently covered by Serbian and Chinese press and media. Reports on CI activities appeared on RTS, Prva TV, HANBAN's website, as well as Politika, Novosti, etc.

3. Participation in Significant Hanban Projects

- A documentary on CI was filmed, as part of a project marking the tenth anniversary of the establishment of Confucius Institutes. In accordance with the requests and expectations of HANBAN, CI organized the filming of a promotional documentary on CI entitled "The Confucius Institute in Belgrade". The film is 14 minutes long, with narration in Serbian and Chinese subtitles. It is posted on both the Serbian and the Chinese web page.
- On the occasion of the Global CI Day, CI organized a series of activities. First, at the beginning of September there was an essay writing competition for the general public and university and high school students, on the topic "China and I". The first prize for the Serbian language essay was awarded to Gordana Kitak, while the first prize in the Chinese language essay was awarded to Jelena Gavric. At the Back to Nature kindergarten, on September 25th CI organized the official opening of the newly equipped Chinese language classroom,

and at the same time 5 high schools and two elementary schools held a photography exhibition entitled “China and I”. At the University Library on September 26th there was the “Promotion of the CI Almanac”. On September 27th at Belgrade’s central downtown square, CI organized a public Chinese language lesson and numerous cultural events. At the Conference Hall of the University of Belgrade on September 29th, the final ceremony was held, attended by the Vice-Rector and the Ambassador of PR China to Serbia and his closest associates. On this occasion, the best CI participants were awarded prizes and plaques. This event was enriched with cultural performances.

- Tour of a Chinese University's Art Troupe. CI organized the guest performance of the Hubei Province Geology University art troupe. This was a successful performance, attended by officials of the Chinese embassy, representatives of CI's cooperating institutions, CI course participants, Chinese volunteers, and teachers.

Ongoing Hanban Project

- China is the guest of honor of the Belgrade International Book Fair (from October 26th to November 2nd). Numerous publishers from PR China will participate in the Fair, and CI will organize HANBAN's participation in the Fair. As part of the Book Fair events, CI will present public Chinese language lessons, cultural activities, promoting teaching materials, etc.

October 2014

Report by
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