

# Work Report for the Confucius Institute at Geneva University

From January to December, 2013

## **I. Overall situation for 2013**

During the last two years, the activities of the CI improved massively. Before starting this report, we would like to emphasize that the output listed below is the result of the hardwork of a group of only 4.2 people. We are really proud of our team!

### **1) Chinese Teaching**

#### **Chinese language teachers situation**

#### **Chinese language teaching and research workshops**

Since the beginning, Chinese teaching activities were established at a high level. Every course provided by the CI has been embodied in the university credits system. Four level of Chinese language have been offered to the students of Geneva University, Lausanne University and the Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne. The courses are based on the four manuals "Contemporary Chinese" level 1, 2, 3 and 4 (it includes beginner pinyin, hearing and writing, up to advanced writing and grammar). We are currently working on a Chinese language course for the general public. The design of the courses and the advertisement are already ready. The new courses will start in September next year. The number of students enrolled in our programs is increasing. In 2013, 178 students registered, and , if we add the number of participants to the HSK examination training together with those who attended the program for teachers of Chinese as a foreign language, the total number of students reaches the number of 378.

Besides Chinese teaching, the CI actively promoted workshop activities and special training sessions for teachers of Chinese as a foreign language. In June 10-14, the CI organized the first training course for Swiss teachers of Chinese as a foreign language. The course lasted 5 days, and 42 school teachers attended. On November

30, the CI organized the 3rd workshop of Chinese teaching to discuss the topic of "Analysis of common mistakes and difficulties of French Native speakers learning Chinese".

## **HSK Examination**

On March 23, 2013, the CI organized the HSK Examination. This year, 134 people participated, breaking a new record.

We helped the students who participated in the HSK to apply for scholarships. In 2013, 9 students received a scholarship and went to Renmin University and other universities for stays between 1 and 6 months.

## **2) Cultural activities**

### *Chinese New Year - The CI thanks you event*

On February 5, 2013, the CI has organized an event for the Chinese New Year and used this opportunity to express its thanks to all those who helped during the year. Employees from Geneva University Communication Office, the Rectorate, the Department of Human Resources, the International Office, the Department of East-Asian studies, the Welcome Center, and the Office for Public Security attended, with a total of 40 representatives.

## **Visits and receptions**

On March 22, 2013, Basile Zimmermann and Xiurong Zhao received a delegation of representatives of the Education bureau of the municipal Party committee of the city of Beijing. Lead by M. Zheng Dengwen, the delegation praised the CI's work, and commented that the academic direction chosen by the CI at Geneva University was correct and that it had established a model for other CIs in the world.

On October 29, Counsellor for Education Dr Sun Ling, President of the Strategic Development for Education Research Group Min Weifang (former Head of Peking University's school board), Peking University Faculty of Education Prof. Chen Xiaoyu and Associate Professor Guo Congbin, as well as other guests, visited the Confucius Institute.

## **Workshop on organisational changes in Chinese society**

On March 27-28, Prof. Li Lulu from Renmin University visited the CI in order to participate in a workshop with the Head of the Department of Sociology in Geneva University. Prof. Li gave a speech entitled "1978-2012: Organisational Changes in Chinese Society". During the public conference at the university, he presented his personal experience as an individual, and used it to explain the changes China went through during that period of time.

### **Taoist Music Performance**

On April 8-9, 2013, Concert of Heng Shan taoist music. This event was organized as a collaboration between the CI and the Music Conservatory in Geneva. Dr Steven Jones, from SOAS at the University of London gave a conference on Chinese ritual music during a workshop organized at this occasion.

### **First Chinese Bridge competition in Geneva**

On April 20, 2013, the CI organized the Chinese Bridge competition. It was the first time that the CI organizes this event in order to select the Swiss students who wish to participate in this international competition. The event attracted the attention of the Swiss Television, Radio, and website, and also the Chinese media who published 16 reports about it.

### **Conference about the Qin Terracota Army**

On April 29, 2013, the CI in collaboration with the Unit of Chinese studies organized a conference entitled "Qin- The Eternal Emperor and His Army".

### **Doctoral Seminar**

On June 6, 2013, the CI organized its first "undisciplined" doctoral seminar. 17 PhD candidates coming from Fribourg University, Geneva University, Lausanne University, Bern University, Neuchatel University participated in this meeting.

On July 7, August 29, October 3, the 2nd, 3rd and 4th doctoral seminars were organized. On November 14, December 12 the 5th and 6th meetings of the doctoral students will be organized by the CI.

### **Sino-Swiss Students Meeting**

On October 31, a meeting was organized between Chinese students studying abroad and Swiss students. The delegate CHEN Yong who is from the Association of the Chinese students and scholars in Switzerland made a presentation about the life of Chinese students

when studying in Switzerland. Dr Poizat-Xie, CI's Deputy Director and Lecturer at the Unit of Chinese studies, presented the activities of the CI during the last two years. After the meeting, a competition of ping-pong was organized outside, and later in the evening all the students were invited for a Chinese dinner at the institute.

### **3) Special Event**

#### **Property Law Workshop**

On January 14-16, about 100 scholars in Law studies met at the CI for 3 days of presentations and discussions on the topic of "Four Dimensions of Property Law". During 3 days, 26 speakers and moderators handled 19 presentations. Scholars came from Geneva University Law Faculty, Harvard University Law School, Renmin University Law School, and Sydney University Law School. During these 3 days, the speakers and the participants of the workshop discussed the history of the development of property law.

#### **Meeting of Swiss Universities Presidents**

On July 4-5, the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities (CRUS) met in Geneva for two days. At the invitation of the Rector of Geneva University, the 12 rectors and presidents of Switzerland visited the CI and held their annual meeting at the villa Rive-Belle. Director Basile Zimmermann presented briefly the CI's activities since its opening in late 2011.

#### **First Chinese Calligraphy Workshop**

On September 26-27, the CI organized the first conference on the topic of "Chinese Calligraphy - History and State of the Art". Prof. Qiu Zhenzhong, from Beijing Central Academy of Art, Prof. Huang Dun from Nanjing Academy of Art, Prof. Sun He from China University of Political Science and Law, together with Prof. Billeter (a famous Swiss sinologist and founder of the Chinese studies Unit at Geneva University), Professor and calligrapher André Kneib from the Institut des Langues Orientales de Paris, and the lecturer in Chinese studies Wang Fei, participated in the workshop and presented their work.

### **4) Media Reports**

The activities of the CI received reports from both Chinese and Western media. Between January and November 11, the CI's activities were reported 46 times, including on the Hanban's website, on Sina.com, Wangyi.com, PeopleDaily.com.cn, CRI online, China.com,

Renmin University website, Harvard University website, the Education bureau of the Chinese Embassy in Switzerland, Swiss Radio and Television, SwissInfo, and so forth.

## **II. Structural Design of the CI and Cooperation in the Sino-Swiss Partnership**

The building of the CI has now been completed. We have staff meetings every Thursday. The bookkeeping of the Institute is entirely open, every file is copied on a digital server (Dropbox), every employee of the CI can see all the incomes and expenses. The working schedule of everybody is written in Google Calendar, every employee of the CI can see them. The work of the secretary is written in Evernote (a digitally synchronized notebook). Every file is digitalized and archived.

Since the founding of the CI, on the basis of the signed agreement, we organize each year a Board meeting. The Board reviews the implementation of the activities, the budget and the current situation of the Institute.

The CI and the Department of Sociology of Renmin University collaborated, and submitted to the Swiss National Science Foundation a research project entitled "China Pollution Digital Map Project".

The CI plans to open two Confucius Classrooms next year.

## **III: Research achievements and Situation regarding the implementation of the Headquarters keypoints**

The CI is currently working on a publication entitled: "Analysis of the common mistakes and difficulties of French Native speakers learning Chinese". We will attempt to publish it next year.

The CI applied for a three PhD scholarships program from the Hanban which has just been approved. We are currently working on the implementation of this project. In the 2013 budget, we also applied for events on the following topics: a "Sciences Studies Workshop", which connects with the China Study Plan "Ressources for Cross-cultural Dialogue Between China and the West"; "The Impact of New Technologies on China: The Use of the China Pollution Map", which connects with "Exploration of Innovation Industries in Contemporary China". The CI actively assists the Hanban and the Unit of Chinese studies to put into shape the first Chair of a Master program in Chinese language teaching at Geneva University. This program received the support of the Rectorate and the Chinese studies Unit. The application work is in progress.

The CI is under the direct supervision of the Rectorate of Geneva University, and is one among 12 big projects of the Rectorate. At the moment, all Chinese language courses of the CI are part of the university credits system.

#### **IV: Other achievements**

*ic.unige.ch* The CI is running a "scientific blog", where summaries of academic events it organizes, as well as short papers, are presented. The Blog is open to the public on 19th, September.

At the moment, the blog has nine papers published. All of them were peer-reviewed, and the names of the reviewers are indicated on the blog.

*Invited research fellow.* The CI hosted a researcher from the China International Publish Group during four months.