

**A Century's Worth of Chinese Culture and Language
Education in Hungary**
A Celebratory Event in ELTE's Aula Magna
20 November 2023

A hundred years ago, in November 1923, the Institute of East Asian Studies was founded at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), marking the beginning of university-level education in Chinese language and culture in Hungary. A centennial celebration was held in the ELTE Aula Magna, attended by government and higher education leaders, diplomats, and representatives of Chinese businesses operating in Hungary.

During the event, László Borhy, Rector of ELTE, reflected on the institute's history, praising key figures who played significant roles in advancing Hungary's relationship with China. He mentioned Vilmos Pröhle and Lajos Ligeti, leaders of the first generation of Hungarian sinologists. He also highlighted the work of Sándor Józsa and Endre Galla, who in the 1950s were among the first Hungarian university students to study in China on scholarships and who later worked as teachers to elevate the Chinese language programme to new heights. Borhy also acknowledged Ferenc Mártonfi's contributions to scientific language learning. The institute's mission of establishing and maintaining relations with China has also faced hardships, as the economic difficulties of the 1990s also affected higher education. In 2002, the Chinese language programme at ELTE gained new momentum under the leadership of Imre Hamar. Currently, the Chinese faculty has 182 students in the BA, 14 in the MA, and 18 in the PhD programmes.

The next speech was delivered by Tao Gong, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China. He praised ELTE's reputation and the significance of its researchers, among whom can be found several Nobel Prize winners. The ambassador emphasised the importance of ELTE's international connections and the value of its educational relations with China.

Other speakers included Ádám Stifter, Deputy State Secretary for Foreign Affairs and External Economic Relations, who is responsible for Eastern relations; Orsolya Pacsáy-Tomassich, President of the Hungarian Diplomatic

Academy; Wangjing Rao, Deputy Director of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS); Dezhong Jia, Deputy Rector of the Beijing Foreign Studies University (BSFU); and Imre Hamar, Deputy Rector of ELTE responsible for international affairs, Head of the Institute of East Asian Studies at the ELTE Faculty of Humanities, and Head of the Department of Chinese Studies.

The speeches underscored the importance of the close relationship between ELTE and China, highlighting student exchange programmes, economic and cultural collaboration, and future opportunities.

The celebration concluded with a colourful cultural show featuring Chinese and Hungarian musical performances, as well as demonstrations of Chinese martial arts, offering the audience a glimpse into Chinese culture and traditions.

Enikő Gájász, Gábor Rusznák

International Buddhology Symposium 15–17 December 2023, Ōtani University, Kyoto, Japan

In December 2023, researchers of Buddhism from Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) attended the International Buddhology Symposium titled *Enlightenment, Wisdom, and Transformation in the World's Religious Traditions*. This is the second time that ELTE has been invited to Ōtani University in Kyoto and the fourth instalment in the International Buddhology Symposium series, which is jointly organised by the two universities, since 2013. The symposium was long overdue—there had been a three-year delay due to Covid-19 restrictions, which were lifted in Japan only in the middle of 2023.

From ELTE Faculty of Humanities the presenters were Prof. Dr Imre Hamar, Vice Rector of ELTE, Director of the Institute of East Asian Studies and the Budapest Centre for Buddhist Studies; Prof. Dr Ferenc Ruzsa and Dr Péter-Dániel Szántó, former and current heads of the Department of Buddhology and Tibetology; Dr Mónika Kiss, assistant professor of the Department of Japanese Studies; and Péter Boros, a student in the Sinology doctoral programme.

Previous International Symposia

- 2013 *Faith in Buddhism*, Budapest, ELTE University (papers published in 2016; URL: https://tavolkeletiintezet.elte.hu/buddhistcentre/downloads/hamar_faith_in_buddhism.pdf)
- 2016 *The Buddha's Words and Their Interpretations*, Kyoto, Ōtani University (papers published in 2021; URL: <https://www.otani.ac.jp/news/2021/u10fi9000000q5jn-att/nab3mq000008ctlv.pdf>)
- 2018 *Buddhism in Practice*, Budapest, ELTE University (papers published in 2023; URL: <https://ojs.elte.hu/tkt/issue/view/583>)

The Program of the 2023 Symposium

Enlightenment, Wisdom, and Transformation in the World's Religious Traditions

An International Symposium Hosted by Ōtani University's
Shin Buddhist Comprehensive Research Institute

In Collaboration with Eötvös Loránd University's Institute of East Asian
Studies

December 15–17, 2023

December 15 (Friday)
Opening Ceremony 9:30~9:50 (Kōrukan 3 rd Floor Media Hall)
Session 1 10:00~12:00 (Kōrukan 3 rd Floor Media Hall) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Who invented enlightenment? <i>Ferenc Ruzsa (Eötvös Loránd University)</i> (2) Self-Understanding, Selfless Action and Transformation (Yoga in the Bhagavadgītā: Exhibiting a Liberated Man in Hinduism) <i>Godabarisha Mishra (Nalanda International University)</i> (3) GLADDENING LIGHT: Wisdom as folly, theophany, inebriation and transfiguration <i>Thomas Plant (Rikkyō University)</i> Respondent: Michael Pye (Marburg University)
Lunch 12:00~13:30

Session 2 13:30~15:30 (Media Hall)

- (1) Jesus Christ as the Incarnate Wisdom of God
Tsunoda Yuichi 角田佑一 (*Sophia University*)
 - (2) “Wisdom” in East Asian Mahayana Buddhism
Paul Swanson (*Nanzan University*)
 - (3) Enlightenment, Wisdom, and Transformation in Islam
Mark Sedgwick (*Aarhus University*)
- Respondent: Domingos Sousa (*Nanzan University*)

Coffee Break 15:30~15:50**Keynote address 15:50~17:00** (Media Hall)

Shinran’s Understanding of Birth in the Pure Land: What Is the ‘Company of the Rightly Settled’?
Hase Shōtō 長谷正當 (*Kyōto University*/ *Ōtani University*)

December 16 (Saturday)**Session 3 10:00~11:30** (Media Hall)

- (1) Remaining in Suffering and Walking Ahead: The Shift in the Meaning of Life in Buddhism
Minoura Akio 箕浦暁雄 (*Ōtani University*)
 - (2) The Wisdom to Become Buddhist: Arguments for Lay Conversion in Late Antique Indian Buddhist Homiletics
Péter-Dániel Szántó (*Eötvös Loránd University*)
- Respondent: Kigoshi Yasushi 木越康 (*Ōtani University*)

Lunch 11:30~13:00**Session 4 13:00~15:00** (Media Hall)

- (1) Enlightenment through meditation in 20th century Buddhist and Christian thought
Péter Boros (*Eötvös Loránd University*)
 - (2) Light, Visions, and the Name: Medieval Japanese Pure Land Approaches to the True Nature of Reality
Nasu Eishō 那須英勝 (*Ryūkoku University*)
 - (3) Shinran’s Understanding of the Pure Land as “The Land of Immeasurable Light”
Michael Conway (*Ōtani University*)
- Respondent: James Heisig (*Nanzan University*)

Coffee Break 15:00~15:30**Session 5 15:30~17:30** (Media Hall)

- (1) The place of mystical wisdom in Judaism: The controversy between M. Buber and G. Scholem
Ono Fumio 小野文生 (*Dōshisha University*)

- (2) The Emergence of the ‘Human Buddha’ in the Nineteenth Century Europe and the Prejudice of the Enlightenment: Focusing on Ozeray and Burnouf
Nitta Tomomichi 新田智通 (*Ōtani University*)

- (3) Unbreaking the Broken Commandment: A Buddhist Reading of Hakai

Ama Michihiro (*Ōtani University*)

Respondent: Fujieda Shin 藤枝真 (*Ōtani University*)

December 17 (Sunday)**Session 6 9:30~11:30** (Media Hall)

- (1) The Enlightenment and Transformation of King Ajātaśatru according to the Mahāyāna *Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra*
Inoue Takami 井上尚実 (*Ōtani University*)
- (2) To discipline or to forget: The idea of the self and ethical conduct in Sufism and Zen through the writings of al-Ghazālī and Dōgen
Yazaki Saeko 矢崎早枝子 (*Glasgow University*)
- (3) ‘You are “gods”; you are all sons of the Most High.’ [Ps. 82.6]: Deification and Perfection in Medieval Mystical Thought
Louise Nelstrop (*Oxford University*)

Respondent: Tōnaga Yasushi (*Kyōto University*)

Lunch 11:30~13:00

Session 7 13:00~15:00 (Media Hall)

- (1) Versatile Samantabhadra: The Many Forms of Fugen Bosatsu in Japan
Mónika Kiss (Eötvös Loránd University)
- (2) ‘Illumination Wisdom’ for Achieving Enlightenment in the Book of *Red Wisdom* by Suhrawardī
Sepideh Afrashteh (Ōtani University)
- (3) Enlightenment and its Path: The Tantric Way of the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara Cult in Tibetan Buddhism
Shen Weirong 沈衛榮 (Jinghua University)
 Respondent: Robert Rhodes (Ōtani University)

Coffee Break 15:00~15:30**Session 8 15:30~17:00** (Media Hall)

- (1) ‘Universalism’ as a Topic of Controversy in both Buddhism and Christianity: “Original Enlightenment” (本覺) and Apocatastasis (ἀποκατάστασις)
Robert Gimello (Notre Dame University)
- (2) The Process of Enlightenment in Yogācāra and Huayan Buddhism
Imre Hamar (Eötvös Loránd University)
 Respondent: Dake Mitsuya 嵩満也 (Ryūkoku University)