

**In Memoriam Pál Miklós
(1927–2002)**

We are mourning Pál Miklós, the prominent sinologist, art historian and literary historian, who was born in Diósgyőr on May 18th 1927. He graduated from Pázmány Péter University in Budapest (1950) and studied at the University of Beijing and at the Academy of Fine Arts (*Meishu Xueyuan*) in Beijing (1951–1954). He was an outstanding member of the new generation of Hungarian sinologists, who had excellent Oriental language skills and sound background in the field of sinology. After working as an assistant-keeper in the Ferenc Hopp Museum of Eastern Asiatic Arts for some years, he was appointed to the Institute of Literature of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In 1959 he received his Ph. D. under the professorship of Zoltán Felvinczi Takács with his dissertation on Chinese art in the 20th century. Being interested in Chinese literature and theatre, at the early stage of his career he translated several works of the modern Chinese literature written by Cao Yu, Lao She and Guo Moruo. With professor Tőkei, he wrote a short history of Chinese literature.

In 1977 he became general director of the Museum of Applied Arts, where a new professional era began under his guidance. He organised exhibitions which represented new ways of museology and inspired high-level scientific activities. In 1987 he finally attained his long cherished aim, he organised the new permanent exhibition of Chinese art represented the Chinese collection of the Ferenc Hopp Museum (*Chinese Arts*. Catalogue 1987). After retiring from the Museum he had to divide his time between teaching (Eötvös Loránd University, Bálint György Media School), and research activities. He tried to share the experience and knowledge of a laborious and rich life with his students and continued fruitful scientific research.

He was an exacting scholar with a wide intellectual horizon. He investigated the problems of mutuality in literature and visual arts. Two

questions stood in the foreground of his researches in the field of sinology: Buddhist culture and Chinese painting. In the 1950s he travelled to Dunhuang a doctoral student in China and made detailed sketches about the Thousand Buddha Cave Temples. After returning to Hungary he published a book about the monuments – *Cave Temples of Thousand Buddhas at Dunhuang* (1959). In the 1970s he investigated the connections of *Chan* or *Zen* Buddhism to art (*Zen Buddhism and the Art*, 1978) and translated several basic *Chan* texts under the title *Wumen guan* (*Pass without Gate*, 1987).

He first engaged in Chinese painting in the course of his study of Chinese art in Peking. Those years spent in China meant more than the personal acquaintance of art objects and monuments, it gave him an excellent opportunity to meet well-known contemporary Chinese painters such as Qi Baishi, Xu Beihong, Li Keran, etc. In 1962 he published a monograph about *Qi Baishi* (1862–1957). His basic work on Chinese painting, *The Dragon's Eye, Introduction into the Iconography of the Chinese Painting* was published in 1973. This book truly reflected his unique method of investigations, a new approach to Chinese art. Without chronological guidelines, he focused on the objects of arts as they were and examined them from artistic and sociological points of view. His book on Chinese painting was also published in French, German, and Polish.

In the last ten years he assisted and inspired publishing bilingual texts on Chinese painting (*Theory of Chinese Painting*. Trans. by Ferenc Tőkei, 1997) and published collected papers under the title *Ink and Brush* (1996). In spite of his illness, he unceasingly encouraged scientific work of his students in the fields of Chinese art and history of civilisation.

We will cherish his memory and try to succeed him in serving sinology with the same devotion as he did.

“Quia pulvis erat, in pulverem reversus est
suavis laborum praeteritorum est memoria.”

Györgyi Fajcsák