

Peking University



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Bridging Two Campuses

PEKING UNIVERSITY NEWSLETTER

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We Are One Family Working for the Future

► Tang Yicum

On September 13th, the opening ceremony for Peking University's Yenching Academy was held. This autumn semester, the inaugural class of the Yenching Academy, 96 students from 32 countries and regions, started their master's degrees' studies at Peking University. To many, this is a moment to embark on a new journey by discovering an ancient but dynamic civilization and to grow together.

Officially announced a year ago, the Peking University Yenching Academy set its mission to equip outstanding young scholars with a broad, interdisciplinary knowledge of China that reflects both Chinese

and international perspectives and to cultivate leaders who will advocate for global progress and cultural understanding. The Academy has already established partner or cooperative relations with over 80 universities around the world. Students from these universities can either directly apply at their university or online.

The opening ceremony was hosted by Professor John Holden, Associate Dean of the Yenching Academy. Peking University President Lin Jianhua, Yenching Academy Donor Mr. Cao Qiyong, Professor Yuan Ming from PKU's School of International Studies, Canadian Ambassador Guy Saint-Jacques, and Yenching Academy Dean Liuwei

delivered keynote speeches at the ceremony. Distinguished guests from embassies, government agencies, and academic institutions also attended the ceremony, along with the inaugural group of Yenching Scholars.

A Glimpse at the "Middle Kingdom"

Daniel Khalessi, one student delegate speaking at the ceremony, referred to China as the "Middle Kingdom". Indeed, the Chinese word for China, "Zhongguo" (中国) conveys the meaning of "middle country". The ancient Chinese emperor once deemed China to be the center of the world, which

reflected the relative closure of Ancient China. Geographically speaking, China was separated from other regions by the Pacific Ocean and the mountain ranges of Eurasia. Culturally speaking, China developed its civilization without major interference or interruption by external culture, which resulted in China's unique language, literature, and history. The "Middle Kingdom" also has western implications, as China is a distant and fascinating nation awaiting exploration to many westerners.

Of course, such exploration does not necessarily begin at Yenching Academy. As Professor John Holden put it, many generations of people yearned for China. In 1971, a year

prior to President Nixon's historical visit to the People's Republic of China, Professor Holden, 19-years-old at the time, motivated by a strong belief that engaging China is necessary to realizing world peace and global prosperity, decided to learn Chinese. Professor Yuan Ming took notice of students' interest in Chinese food, but "this might just be a glimpse. You may not know there is an ancient Chinese saying 'food is the paramount necessity of the people,'" and she mentioned the renowned *A Bite of China* documentary. From past to present, interest in China continues.

Yet times have changed, and the world is different—China is widely recognized as a rising power, and a glimpse of the Middle Kingdom may be inadequate and misleading. China is also more than ever within reach. After 37 years of 'reform and opening up', China is closely connected with the world. In the late

1990s, Professor Lin Jianhua hosted a Harvard Professor, who encountered a vexing problem: He could not call his wife in United States to report his safe arrival. Today, this is no longer an issue as there are many telecommunication cables that span the Pacific Ocean, connecting China and the U.S. In 1962, when Professor Yuan Ming entered Peking University as a freshman, overseas students only came from about 10 countries. Today, the number has increased to 3500 students from 114 countries.

The Middle Kingdom is a leaf that has been turned over, and the Academy can help students get a better glimpse of both the ancient Middle Kingdom and modern China. The Academy's international student

body focuses on China studies and uses an innovative interdisciplinary academic structure to help the scholars better understand China.

A Link between the Past and Future

Great expectations are placed on Yenching Scholars shoulders, as they are expected to be cross-culture communicators and future leaders. The Academy places great emphasis on respecting the world's diversity. This emphasis is drawn from an undeniable fact that even in the age of globalization, the transition from a fragmented past to an integrated future is a work in progress. Frictions arise from insecurity, prejudice, and nationalism, leaving many parts of the world in chaos and turbulence. As future leaders, Peking University's Yenching Scholars are preparing themselves to deal with these challenges.

"Think outside the box", suggested Mr. Cao Qiyong, Donor of the Yenching Academy and Vice President of Hong Kong Yongxin, Limited. "Only through open debate and constructive engagement can fresh alternatives and perspectives be developed. When you think outside the box, you will acquire new and innovative views with different positions." Mr. Cao also believes future leaders must "not only work hard for their personal objectives, but also for the common good of the community" and they must "celebrate diversity and cooperation". Apart from supporting the Academy, Mr. Cao also funds many cross-cultural youth programs through the Baxian Foundation.

Seeing a bigger picture, Professor Yuan Ming touched upon her comprehension of culture: "It is a common phenomenon in the era

defining themselves, and despite the differences, great civilizations do share something in common: visionary conceptions, innovative

“ This autumn, the Peking University campus was infused with new talent and new opportunities, and their arrival will contribute to the development of Peking University, China, and the entire world. ”

of globalization that people are inquiring about the ancient and important question: 'Who I am?' and 'who are we?' The world is no longer divided in a western and non-western dichotomy. Civilizations are inspecting, expressing, and

ideas, spiritual pursuits, and communication."

As a senior diplomat, Ambassador Guy Saint-Jacques holds the belief that education is a critical element in international relations. Speaking of Canada-China relations, he

mentioned that China is the largest source of overseas students in Canada; over 1 million Chinese students are studying along with Canadian students from elementary school to postgraduate school. Furthermore, education leads to stronger people-to-people relations. With a better knowledge of other countries, the content and the network of bilateral relations will be broadened. Ambassador Guy Saint-Jacques explained his delight that the Yenching Academy has gathered students with interests in "having comprehensive knowledge of China", and he hopes they will acquire skills critical to their future goals and to serve society.

At Peking University, courses regarding Western history, art, and literature have been accessible to all



students regardless of their majors for a long time. Now, with the Yenching Academy, President Lin Jianhua explained that this is "a chance for the world's youth to learn more about the origins of Chinese culture." Thus, the exchange of culture and education will happen on a more equal basis.

A Step towards Boundless Possibilities

In his address, Daniel Khalessi quoted Laozi's "the journey of one thousand miles starts with a single step", which is a vivid description of the remarkable meaning of Yenching Academy. Located in China's top university, Peking University, and in China's capital, Beijing, the Yenching Academy is launched against the backdrop that China plays a growing role globally in economic, political,

and cultural interactions. China is in urgent need of talent with a global vision as well as indigenous training. Xiao Linlin, another student delegate, spoke at the ceremony on behalf of the Academy's many Chinese students: "It is my dream to give China a voice on the global stage."

For non-Yenching-Scholar Peking University students, the Yenching Academy will also be hugely beneficial, as Yenching Scholars will become one with and augment the Peking University family. The Yenching Academy Dean Liu Wei also announced that the Academy would organize various activities that are open to the entire school, including lectures, seminars, field trips, social practice programs, and many other activities.

Ambassador H.E. Luis Schmidt of Chile is proud that one Chilean student has applied for and been

enrolled in the Yenching Academy. He looks forward to more education collaboration between Chile and China in the future. Some students have already begun to imagine that someday in the future that the Yenching Academy and Peking University will host a world summit to discuss global issues with an appreciation of China's positions and those of the developing world.

Yenching Scholars, like other new students at Peking University, are just as eager as most freshmen to make new friends and make the university their new home, and as Dean Liu put it, "Autumn at Peking University is a season of sowing hope." This autumn, the Peking University campus was infused with new talent and new opportunities, and their arrival will contribute to the development of Peking University, China, and the entire world.

Being a Student Entrepreneur at PKU

▣ Ami Higuchi

I still remember the day I walked into the west gate of Peking University with the acceptance letter in my hand. It was a feeling I cannot express with words. I felt proud and blessed at the same time as I was able to pursue my bachelor degree at one of the most prestigious academic institutions in China. My dream finally came true. But I didn't want to stop dreaming there, I wanted to keep moving forward.

I'm from Israel, a sophomore at the School of International Studies at PKU. About a year ago, I started

my own business. We wow We with my Chinese friend at PKU with the help of PKU's incubators and resources. What my company does is under the concept of football fan-hosts-fan: We offer very unique wow experiences provided by local football fans to Chinese fans. As a crazy football fan myself, I also have dreams to watch my favorite team play at their home stadium or even meet my

favorite players and play football with them. Every person's dreams

“For me, being an international student and being an entrepreneur are kind of the same thing—I'm just doing what I love.”

and desires are different and each one of them is unique. Not only in the football world but anywhere, just like how I wanted to get in



to PKU and study international relations; however, not everyone in the world shares the same dreams as me, and that's why I wanted to make as many fans' dreams as possible come true.

PKU Incubator Resources

PKU has great resources and environment for entrepreneurship. My company was part of the PKU Incubation Camp, which operates under the name of PKU Science Park. In the PKU Incubation Camp, you get 6 months to “try out” your business while being able to access PKU resources and present yourself as a member of the PKU Incubation Camp. Also, the PKU campus itself is located in a place where many start-up companies operate. There are innovations everywhere around the area; new ideas are generated daily. Being immersed in this kind of environment, it keeps me going

and makes me want to create better things to make the world a bit more exciting. I'm not majoring in business nor economics. I don't know much about economic theories or manual methods to start up companies, but what I do know is if you are greedy enough in a good way to make your dreams come, you have what you need at PKU.

Working with Chinese Friends

Just few months before officially becoming a freshman at PKU, one of my acquaintances introduced me to a Chinese guy, Fang Yedun. He already graduated undergrad from PKU and is now continuing his study at the National School of Development at PKU. We got along surprisingly well and quickly became best friends. Before I came to PKU, I have never even dreamed of it because I just thought Chinese students wouldn't accept foreign-

ers—I was wrong. Yedun accepted me as me; no difference from others. Many of my Chinese colleagues also accepted me.

On the day when I brought my business idea up to him at a café near the school. At the moment I finished speaking, he said “Hao!” (Which means ok or good in Chinese). Now we work together everyday, and I realize how nearly impossible for the company to be able to stand where we are today without him. Needless to say, his devotion and commitment to the work and the resources that he has been accumulating over the past years at PKU are also helping our company in many ways.

Being an International Student and Entrepreneur at PKU

For me, being an international student and being an entrepreneur are kind of the same thing—I'm just doing what I love. I love politics and it's very interesting to learn about international affairs especially from the Chinese perspective. I believe China is a growing country with a lot of potential and opportunities. China-Israel economic ties are getting stronger. To learn about China and Chinese behavior and thoughts in aspects of foreign affairs is key to understanding the future world order.

And of course I'm a football-lover and I am grateful to be able to innovate in the football world. My company has encountered many hardships and challenges last year and still does a lot, especially a foreigner doing business in China. But



I kept going because this is what I truly love. Because I love it so much, I am able to convince others to work with me for what they love

as well. PKU is full of opportunities; you can find yourself and find what you love here. Unfortunately, some people do not see these op-

portunities, and it's my goal to help them see the opportunities that PKU offers.

Tones or Words Your Chinese Learning Struggles

► Baowei and Yue Xin

Chinese is considered one of the toughest languages to learn. Chinese is a language with varying tones, and the tones are essential in differentiating meanings in Chinese characters. To someone whose mother tongue is a language without tones, Chinese can be very difficult. There are altogether four tones in the language. For example, if one is not cautious about his or her pronunciation, when saying "May I ask (问 , wèn) you a question?", it may sound like "May I kiss (吻 , wěn) you?"

Below is a look into how international students at PKU feel about learning Chinese.

Chinese Learning Q&A

International students at PKU interviewed:

Baowei: a girl from India

Ruizhi: a girl from South Korea

Celline: a girl from Indonesia

Alice: a girl from Israel

Ben: a boy from the U.S.

How many years have you been learning Chinese?

Baowei: I have been in China for the past 10 years but I have not learned Chinese all along. Only starting in my undergrad studies did I take Chinese seriously.

Ruizhi: Almost 5 years.

Celline: For about six months.

Alice: I've been studying Chinese for 4.5 years: Three in Israel and 1.5 here.

Ben: I have been learning Chinese for about 4 years now. I started taking beginner Chinese in the fall of 2012 and just kept going from there. I remember taking my first class and my professor tried to explain to us Chinese phonology by comparing it to other languages. "If you know such and such language" he would say, "then you can understand this

sound in Chinese". He said, "If you speak Inuit (a language spoken by Native American's in Alaska)...", I looked around and didn't see any Inuits and thought to myself "why would you mention this".



How would you assess your Chinese literacy and oral/listening skills?

Baowei: I think my oral/listening is much better than my Chinese literacy—especially writing.

Ruizhi: I am able to watch Chinese TV dramas and shows.

Celline: Getting better and better.

Alice: I think my Chinese is pretty advanced, this semester I am attending graduate classes in Chinese, but it is still far from how good I wish it would be.

Ben: I think that my Chinese skills are pretty good, especially because I'm taking classes in international relations with Chinese students. However, I feel like I still need to improve my listening and writing skills. I find many times in class when I seem to zone in and out, sometimes I would completely understand what the teacher or my classmates are saying and sometimes I'm completely lost. I hope someday to be able to completely understand everything that's said in class! But then I also need to improve my essay writing, which will definitely be a challenge.

Which part of Chinese learning do you find the most difficult? How do you attempt to overcome it?

Baowei: I think writing, especially formal writing for thesis purpose is very difficult. I intend to overcome it by reading more and writing my feelings on topics.

Ruizhi: Chinese pronunciation. So, when I study Chinese, I would concentrate on articulating words. For

example, I would repeat the words that a native speaker says.

Celline: From my perspective, the hardest aspect of learning Mandarin Chinese is speaking and writing. Speaking in Mandarin is demanding for us as we have to articulate all the tones correctly. If not, the meaning of what is said can be changed.

Have you ever taken part in group activities in/out of PKU aiming to improve Chinese skills? What is it like and how do you feel?

Baowei: None.

Ruizhi: No. I want to take part, but I don't know how to join.



Writing Chinese characters never fails to challenge me. There are many characters for us to memorize.

Alice: The hardest part is pronouncing the different tones. I have actually given up on trying to get it right, and I just try to speak fast enough so people won't notice.

Ben: I find that Chinese can be difficult because all of the cultural words and local phrases that I find so hard to learn. In learning Chinese, I realize the best thing to do is to be patient and try to understand the context of what's said. Other than that, just asking Chinese friends is the best way to fix this problem!

Celline: Besides studying at PKU, I have found a group to learn Mandarin Chinese. In this group, we work together to help one another. I really love studying in this group.

Alice: No, I never took part in such activities.

Ben: My program, CIEE, has many activities aimed at improving our Chinese skills. We have things like Chinese target dinners where we are required to speak Chinese during the whole dinner. I really like these activities because it combines my two favorite things: studying language and food! My last meal was at a vegetarian restaurant and it was

delicious! I tried many traditional Chinese dishes in vegetarian form.

Do you have special methods of learning Chinese that fit you well?

Baowei: Just blurt it out. Don't hesitate.

Ruizhi: Interacting with Chinese friends. It's more interesting.

Celline: In my free time, I usually listen to songs and watch films in Mandarin Chinese, and they are really useful in learning Mandarin (especially in the listening aspect).

Alice: I have no special or even regular methods. I hardly do any homework or practice at home.

Ben: In the past, I studied mainly by writing characters over and over again; however, now I find the best way to study is to read and speak a lot. I find the more I read and speak Chinese the more the words stick in my head and the more I'm able to use them properly. I especially enjoy reading articles for class because they're very interesting.

How can our university and community help more in Chinese learning of international students?

Baowei: I think PKU is doing a wonderful job but I would like more support such as a language partner to edit my thesis.

Ruizhi: I want to have more opportunities to communicate with Chinese friends.

Celline: Because the majority of students at PKU and the community where I live use Mandarin as the everyday language, it has become easier and faster for me to learn the language.

Alice: I have no idea how the university can help more.

Ben: It would be nice if the university provided workshops for students on things like writing and cultural exchanges. At my home university, we have a writing center where students can learn how to improve their essay writing skills. And a cultural workshop would definitely help students learn how

to better adapt to living and making friends in China.

Conclusion

In order to improve your overall Chinese level, it is essential to master the tones. One method of practicing tones is having your teacher draw a tone map with the four tones (plus the "neutral" tone), which will allow the learner to clearly see the pitch value of each tone. Then you can practice using hand gestures, moving the hand according to the tone changes. Another way to improve is obviously through imitation of a native speaker. Observe your teachers' mouth, including the tension of the muscles and the way it opens, especially when pronouncing words you find difficult. Also, try recording yourself speaking Chinese and compare it to a native speaker's pronunciation. Wish you all the best in learning Chinese!



Length of service varies according to branch: twenty-one months for the Army and Marine Corps., twenty-three months for the Navy, and twenty-four months for the Air Force. Non-active duty, which includes civil service, ranges from twenty-four months to thirty-six months.

I have had my fair share of hardships and memorable experiences. I was deployed near the border between South and North Korea, and because of the proximity to North Korea, we were always at heightened alertness due to the constant need to be ready for battle. Life was this way for the next twenty-one months.

After completing my service last July, I returned to PKU to resume my undergraduate studies at the School of International Studies. Seeing the familiar and beautiful Weiming Lake,

the imposing grandeur of the university library, and the bustling student canteens once again strengthened my resolve to start fresh. However, upon returning to campus life, something felt different. No longer did I have sentry duties at three in the morning. No longer was my life under constant threat. No longer was I under the constant supervision of my superiors. Nevertheless, being fresh out of the military, I believe I still am, in essence, a soldier. The values instilled into me by the military are still strong and resonating. Here are the lessons that I learned in the military and how I can apply them in my new life back in PKU.

Teamwork

Needless to say, in the military, no man is his own island. We constant-

“ I was deployed near the border between South and North Korea, and because of the proximity to North Korea, we were always at heightened alertness due to the constant need to be ready for battle. ”

ly move in groups, live in groups, and train in groups. I was in the artillery brigade, and the fundamental mission of our squad was, in an

What the Military Taught Me

▣ Na Dohun

The date was October 21, 2013. After taking two gap years off after my freshman year at Peking University, I was ready to become a soldier. Along with a thousand of other

recruits, I was officially admitted to the Korean Army Training Center. With a mix of fear, anxiety, and curiosity, my twenty-one-month journey began.

Conscription, aka mandatory

military service, is enshrined in the constitution of the Republic of Korea. Every male citizen from the age of eighteen to thirty-five is required to serve in two tiers of military service: active duty and non-active duty.

event of an enemy provocation, we were to mobilize and to have our hardware fully operational in order to launch a counter-attack, all within five minutes. At first, this task seemed impossible. However, with teamwork, we made the impossible possible. Every member is allocated equally important roles. Moreover, we trust every member to effectively carry out their given roles in perfect coordination with each other. Therefore, what at first seemed infeasible turned into a breeze. The same can be said with campus life. Whether it's a group project or organizing events, teamwork plays a central role in determining success and failure. Furthermore, teamwork requires effective communication and mutual understanding within its members; thus, not only can we get the job done, but we can also make a few friends along the way. Learning the crucial importance of teamwork in everyday life is one of the most valuable lessons I've learned.



Functionality under Stress

In an event of a prolonged enemy provocation, and if the necessary command is given, our whole unit would prepare for deployment from the current location to another within twenty minutes. With the sheer amount of military equipment, documents, and soldiers, this was definitely not easy. College life is similar in that sense. Never-ending deadlines, frequent all-nighters, and successive exams all put students under immense pressure. Learning to keep cool and not crack under pressure will undoubtedly aid me in

navigating through my remaining years in college.

Loyalty

Loyalty is a core value in the military. Having sworn loyalty to my country, I have learned of the importance of loyalty. It is what keeps soldiers going during harsh military exercises; it is what keeps them steadfast in the face of enemy threats; it is what unites every soldier for a common cause. Loyalty is a value that has to be worked upon through commitment and sacrifice. Without it, we would undoubtedly fail in carrying out our duties. Loyalty is capable of getting tasks done quickly and efficiently through its uniting force and teamwork. In a campus setting, once I commit to an organization, I would do my utmost to carry out every task requested by my superior. I would remain faithful to the organization, rain or shine.

Although I had the choice of postponing my mandatory service to a later date, I am glad I enlisted as soon as possible. Now that this huge weight has been lifted off my shoulders, I can finally focus on my studies. I believe I will be able to apply what I learned in the military to further enrich my campus life.



Let's Hear What They Have to Say Japanese Students at Peking University

Yu Wufei

Japanese students, significant in numbers, are a splendid and charming presence on the campus of Peking University. Though Japanese students are not the largest group among foreign students, they always participate in various activities, including the International Culture Festival, PKUTV, PKU Cup, and the PKU Freshman Cup. As many of our readers know, the issue of Sino-Japan relations receives a lot of attention due to its intensity. For the Chinese, it is necessary to understand what the Japanese people think about the bilateral relation in order to have a better understanding on the issues. Luckily, Peking University is able to provide such opportunities. PKU welcomes outstanding international students from all over the globe; needless to say, it also includes students who will be future leaders and elites in their

home countries. So let us hear what our Japanese students have to say!

Living and Studying in Peking University

Nowadays, Japanese students are increasingly likely to choose China as their destination to study-abroad so to learn some Chinese language, culture, and history, and Peking University is usually on the top of their wish list. After graduating from Waseda University with a bachelor degree in Political Science, Fujita Rise, now a graduate student at the Department of Sociology, said "Peking University meets my academic needs better than any other colleges both in Japan and China. The teachers' researches seem to be much more interesting." She also stated that she is "overwhelmed" in a good way by the rich resources and academically active Chinese stu-

dents.

Regarding Chinese students at Peking University, their Japanese classmates had high praise. The Japanese students commented that the Chinese students are more willing to express their ideas in class, and that the Chinese students were also more likely to have discussions with professors: "Chinese students' ethics in studying really impressed me. They are more likely to interact with professors and other students in class compared to students in Japanese colleges" said Fujita.

Curiosity of China is ever-rising among Japanese people. Some pay attention to its long history, as Japan has been greatly influenced by Chinese culture since the 7th century or even earlier. All of the Japanese students interviewed agreed that they are interested in China and wanted to learn more about its culture. They are

all satisfied with the friendly atmosphere and supportive environment

“It is such a perfect combination of traditional and modern culture and lifestyle here in Beijing”

of Peking University. One of the Japanese students commented, “When I was still in Japan, I wouldn’t have dreamt of studying with local Chinese students in China. Well, the dream really did come true.”

To my amazement, some of the students have already experienced a traditional Beijing life. Fujita lived in her friend’s Chinese style house (Si He Yuan) in a narrow hutong alley in order to take care of the friend’s cat while her friend traveled abroad during the National Day holiday. Along both sides of the road were towering old trees and the residences of older residents. She chatted with the local residents almost everyday, and through these chats she came

to know more about local Beijing culture. “Take a turn on the right and you can see a totally different looking hutong alley”, she said, “You can find cafés and bars run by young people.” “It’s not uncommon to see stylish bars under traditional roofs and elder people enjoying their free time

and young people working on their businesses. It is such a perfect combination of traditional and modern culture and lifestyle here in Beijing” she commented.

Keep the Past in Mind and Hope for a Brighter Future

In terms of international politics, it is nearly impossible for two countries to have the exact same views, especially on topics such as history. But by having a frank discussion on the so-called “sensitive” topics, there is the possibility that the two countries may share some common views and that the misunderstandings could be overcome in a constructive way. People

from both countries are talking about history, and they are having a lot of peace and war discussions, which are practically led by their media. When it comes to the past, present, and future of Sino-Japan relations, the Japanese students in PKU also have a lot of opinions about it.

All of the Japanese students interviewed positively agreed that they are willing to make animosity of yesterday into partnership for tomorrow. Fujita said that she appreciates the reasonable views of some Chinese students on the history and politics of Sino-Japan relations. She mentioned that some of her Chinese friends told her that the “Past is past. Our new generation should get along and interact with each other,” and that “Politics is politics—it shouldn’t affect our friendship.” Some Chinese students also commented that “Since our background is so different, it’s better not to argue over politics or history. We shouldn’t go too deep into politics. I see my Japanese friend as a friend no different than any other Chinese friends.” Also, Okajima Daigo, an exchange

student from Osaka University and is now studying in the School of International Studies, has emphasized that due to China’s booming economy, the two countries should seize opportunities to attain a win-win paradigm in economics. Yamamoto Seita, also an exchange student from Osaka University, explained that “the communication between students yield twice the result with half the effort”.

All in all, the Japanese students are enjoying their time in Peking

University. They are aware of the past and are trying their utmost to better understand the unique culture of China. As members of the global village, all students should put in the effort to make our world a better place. We have to care about voices from different backgrounds and respect views and feelings of people from other countries. The development of NGOs and the rise of grassroots level of communication among people is more productive and effective in promoting improve-

ment in the bilateral relationship. The new generations in both countries should have better communications with and better understandings of each other. While bearing the past deep in our minds, both Japanese and Chinese people should be optimistic and embrace a brighter future of Sino-Japan relations and encourage more cultural exchanges. For that, international students, like Fujita Rise, are good examples of how to promote positive exchanges between China and Japan.

Professor Jean C. Oi Bridging Two Campuses

Andrew Mao

With an exterior appearance well-blended with the local atmosphere, including hand-painted scenery and humble traditional Chinese architecture, it is difficult to imagine the expansiveness and elaborateness of the Stanford Center’s underground depths, which boast three levels of state-of-the-art facilities. Yet the same probably goes to the awe-striking woman who runs the place, Professor Jean C. Oi. For it took me, with an incredible chance of luck, to actually take part in one of her courses before I was able to have a grasp of the charismatic individual that she is.

Professor Jean C. Oi is the William Haas Professor in Chinese Politics in the Department of Political Science at Stanford University, but she



is also senior fellow of the Institute for International Studies, where she directs the China Program. Leading Stanford’s China Initiative, Professor

Oi helped establish Stanford’s Center at Peking University (SCPKU) in the year 2012, and she remains the founding director up to this day.



“What distinguishes Professor Oi as an instructor, besides her incredible subject proficiency, of course, is how she constantly draws upon personal anecdotes to help students better contextualize issues.”

Yet Professor Oi's involvement with Peking University far predates the construction of the Stanford Center infrastructure itself. In fact, back in 2002, Professor Oi had spent two weeks on campus teaching China's political situation to students from the United States, who were part of an Overseas Seminar Program. "Everyone realizes China will be a major player—economically, politically, in all the realms," explains Professor Oi, and the campus of Peking University is literally at the heart of the Chinese academic sphere. She added that, Stanford graduates, from engineers to humanities majors, will increasingly need to interact with Chinese businesses and colleagues in China. "So they need to have hands-on understanding of what China is—the kind of training you can't get from reading a book," Professor Oi said. Perhaps that is an apt summary of not only the mission of the center, but also Professor Oi's dual role as director and instructor.

Speaking of Professor Oi at the seminar table, I was incredibly lucky to have her as a substitute teacher for the first two sessions of Chinese Society in the Post-Mao Era, a course exploring major social trends in Post-Mao China, hosted weekly at the Stanford Center.

What distinguishes Professor Oi as

an instructor, besides her incredible subject proficiency, of course, is how she constantly draws upon personal anecdotes helping students to better contextualize issues. For example, amidst a discussion over village elections, Professor Oi proudly recalls her rural surveying experiences, where she was lucky to witness firsthand an attempt to implement secret ballots in a local school house. She recreates for us the scene where seven villagers are allowed into a classroom with seven individual voting tables in place, "But guess what happens?" she asks the class. "Rather than filling ballots individually, the villagers gather around



one table to deliberate!" As we break out laughing, we better appreciate the notion of electoral democracy as a gradual learning process.

Professor Oi also stands out in her assertiveness and her candidness. Whenever a great idea is thrown out, you can count on her unreserved approval, but whenever something questionable is voiced over the discussion table, she will not hesitate to point out its insufficiency, unlike your typical instructor who might hint elusively. If you respond to Professor Oi with a problematic answer, expect to face a pummeling, interrogating exchange, "Really? I don't think so. Explain to me how that would be the case?" Yet at the same time, Professor Oi applies these standards to herself as well. She makes sure to avoid logical leaps in explanations and to always take the time to raise questions regarding her own lecture, "But is vote-buying really bad?" "Are protests really bad?" Perhaps it is part of her identity as director that gives Profes-

sor Oi an assertive and probing edge in her teaching styles. This challenges students to be critical, meticulous, and constantly on their toes.

What's more, there are other perks of being in charge of the place. For a class packed in an undersized room, it only took one simple phone call from Professor Oi to instantly relocate the entire class to a spacious lecture hall, one floor above. Besides the obvious convenience, it also allows Professor Oi maneuvering space to tailor her courses. For example,

to spice things up, Professor Oi provided a pizza lunch while the class enjoyed a lively discussion that went way past the period and extended well into noon. Indeed, there come certain privileges that amount to even greater appreciation of being able to work with Professor Oi, and being constantly challenged academically.

Professor Oi has been director of the Stanford Center for three years and counting, and under her effort the center has become a venue for mutual learning and understanding

for both Stanford University and Peking University students alike. For California natives, "It's difficult to convey the different world [the Chinese] are living in," without actually being in the heart of things. Whereas for Chinese students, the center nestled in the serene and scenic northern end of campus is an independent ecosystem in the middle of a bustling intellectual hub, where one can take the first step towards the outside world.

Marina Pop Cenić and the "Far East Society"

► Han Yihua

Marina Pop Cenić graduated from Peking University (PKU) in 1986. She is the vice president of "Far East Society", a non-governmental organization between China and the Republic of Serbia. Marina has contributed the past 26 years of her life to Sino-Serbia cultural exchanges and communication, and she received Li Keqiang when he visited Serbia in 2014.

Marina visited PKU and met with her old friends here at Beijing and was surprised to find out that her best friend back in college is now a professor at PKU, and the little boy she knew from her host family while she was studying in Beijing had already had his own little boy. She walked around the campus accompanied with the school directors and recalled

her memories with her classmates and her host family. The unforgettable experience of studying at PKU is the main reason why she founded the

"Far East Society", which carries her beautiful vision and wishes.

Founded in 1989, the "Far East Society" has developed from a club into





an association that contains many aspects of Chinese culture, including economics, politics, arts, and history. While aiming to introduce China to more and more Serbian people, it also works to share Serbian culture to Chinese people. Year after year, the “Far East Society” has established

“**Founded in 1989, the “Far East Society” has developed from a club into an association that contains many aspects of Chinese culture, including economics, politics, arts, and history.**”

cooperative relationships with many Serbian and Chinese organizations, and now she is hoping to build a long-term cooperation relationship with PKU to accelerate the academic exchanges and communications between teenagers among the two countries. Currently, there are over 400 college students who are studying Chinese characters and Chinese culture at the “Far East Society”. They study Chinese songs, poems, and the

Spring Festival Gala.

The Spring Festival Gala is one of the most indispensable elements for Chinese to celebrate the Spring Festival—the biggest festival in China—by sitting around the TV watching the show while eating dumplings and chatting boisterously with family members. Every year, Marina and her husband prepare for a Serbian version of the Spring Festival Gala to celebrate Chinese New Year with her students. All the performances are in Chinese, so the students can learn while having fun. After the Spring Festival, they will also celebrate the Lantern Festival together, which comes

shortly after the Spring Festival. They will use chopsticks to enjoy delicious Chinese cuisine and go to sing Chinese songs at KTV.

Though Marina has to teach from Monday to Friday, she enjoys it a lot, because everything related to China can remind her of those wonderful days she had at PKU. She also wishes her alma mater a happy 120th anniversary and promised to continuing her efforts to enhance the coopera-

tion and communication between China and Serbia, especially by enhancing relationships between PKU, the best University in China, and the best universities in Serbia.

Background Information

Marina Pop Cenić studied at the School of Foreign Languages at PKU from 1982 till 1986, and she is one of the co-founders and vice presidents of the “Far East Society”, and she is also member of the reception team for Premier Li Keqiang when he visited Serbia in 2014.

The “Far East Society” was co-founded in 1989 by scholars, diplomats, and entrepreneurs from the former Yugoslavia who were interested in East Asian issues. The main work of the “Far East Society” is to share East Asian culture, such as Chinese culture, history, and arts to Serbians and to hold large exchanges and communication activities with the assistance from the Serbian government. They invite important people, including government officials, ambassadors, and overseas Chinese to their local Spring Festival Gala.

China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study

A Hug with China ▶ He Yuchen

How was your summer vacation? Did you hang out with your friends, take a summer course abroad, or just join in a social event to explore the unknown world? What about going for a one-month field survey to “really see China”? The China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study (CHARLS) Team, consisting of over 800 undergraduate and graduate students from Peking University (PKU) offers a unique summer plan.

CHARLS is a program led by the National School of Development, PKU, since 2007 for the purpose of building a high quality database

about the living conditions of Chinese residents aged 45 or older to serve the need for scientific research on aging. The sample is comprised of about 10,000 households and 17,500 individuals in 150 counties/districts and 450 villages/resident committees, all of which are randomly selected. The baseline national wave of CHARLS was fielded in 2011 and runs every two years, and follow-up research is conducted on all these baseline samples. The data collected is published one year after each wave to support global studies on aging and other social issues in China.

CHARLS used experience from

the aging studies in the United States (HRS), the United Kingdom (ELSA) and Europe (SHARE) to guide its program. Some original methods of statistics are also introduced. Questionnaires cover demographics, family structure, health status, health care and insurance, work, retirement and pension, income and consumption, assets, and community level information. As of September 2015, the number of people in the CHARLS database approached 12,000, with approximately 13% of them being foreign individuals or institutes. With the follow-up study carried out step-by-step, the value of the database will



continuously increase and so will its influence. "We are trying to prove that China can make the world's top database in academic areas", said

“ We've visited nearly 200 families, experienced their lives, and listened to their stories. ”

Professor Zhao Yaohui, the leader of CHARLS program at the Commendation Conference of this year's national wave.

The 2015 CHARLS Team started its recruitment in late March. The selection process was rather tough since the number of applicants was



far larger than expected. Finally, 806 college students were enrolled and divided into 76 teams, including 185 PKU students (accounting for about 23%) and 3 students from foreign

universities. They received professional training on social investigation methods for seven days before setting out for their destinations throughout

China. What's more, health examination and blood sample collecting were also added to this year's CHARLS survey, so it required students to have basic nursing skills as well.

"This is a relatively mature project with rigorous methodology and comprehensive research plans, and the topic is of great academic value", said Darcy Chang, who had been a student of the course "Social Investigation and Research Methods" before later joining CHARLS. "We could get the chance to commu-

nicate with interviewees face to face, which is a precious chance for us to feel the charm of this discipline from another side."

For Fu Zhiyu, the leader of Jiangsu

Team 2, the uncovering of the 'real China' is the main attraction of the project. His curiosity on this topic was first piqued when he came across a Q&A on the Internet. Zhiyu found that in Shanghai, the threshold of the top 20% household annual income was 174,000RMB, which was "quite high, but much different from what I expected". He found that none of his friends could guess the true disposable income per capita of China. "Usually, we think we are living a very common life, but actually our life is of extremely high quality when compared to the whole Chinese population," and he continued, "It seems that we are far away from China." Fu has been devoted to social investigations related to this topic ever since.

During the 30 days spent in towns and villages, 76 survey teams finished data collecting of a sample comprising over 20,000 residents of China. For most of the student investigators, this was the longest trip they had ever taken, and of course, the toughest as well. Misunderstanding, rejection, and even scolding were so common that students got used to them. Because of the high altitude, the Longqing (Gansu & Qinghai) Team had trouble collecting blood samples. The assistant collector let the nurse take her own blood in order to test the device. Tang Yushi, the leader of the Dianchuan (Yunnan & Sichuan) Team recalled the days when he and his team members were stuck on a mountain road because of a landslide. "When waiting, we each held a potato in hand, eating and enjoying the beautiful sunset," said Tang, "it is CHARLS that taught us to be calm and steady when faced with difficulties."

What Fu Zhiyu learned from his CHARLS experience was the meaning of 'leadership'. At the beginning of the survey he tried to arrange everything for the team to ensure efficiency, but every day his plan would be interrupted by unexpected occurrences. "I was depressed for a while. I thought that I was doing well by the team, but I was proven wrong," he explained. Later, he learned to allocate tasks to team members and allow them freedom to arrange their own work. The running of the team soon became more coherent. "After all, coordination is the foremost task of a leader," he concluded.

As the investigation continued, the treasure of CHARLS went far beyond data and questionnaires. Meeting people became one of the most valuable experiences students had during the project. Nan Mengzhe, an undergraduate from the Central University of Finance and Economics, was the leader for the Longqing (Gansu & Qinghai) Team, and she said what impressed her most was the warmth she felt from strangers along her journey. The train attendant gave his seat to team members and helped them buy berth tickets once aboard the train. The man sitting next to them on the train told his own story as an entrepreneur, which was both encouraging and thought provoking. An old Buddhist living in the mountains gave her a copy of Di Zi Gui (Standard of Students) which his grandfather made by hand. "I can feel the sincerity of

the hopes that the society has for us," she continued, "Besides surveys and questionnaires, we should give the elderly our love and care."

Interviewing people with different backgrounds was another kind of experience. "We've visited nearly 200 families, experienced their lives, and



listened to their stories," said Tang Yushi. He and his friends were sometimes employed as a mediator in family conflict. "Despite the many years of education I have received, I found myself being of no help to the ordinary problems of an ordinary family. The only thing we could do was to be a listener, carrying their stories with us on our way to the accomplishing our dreams."

Darcy Chang shared his most unforgettable memory during his fieldwork conducted in Jilin Province with us. One of his interviewees was a solitary old man who had lost his wife and son. "His son died in a traffic accident at a very young age, and

his wife was so overwhelmed by grief that she passed away shortly after. But he was not the sad and downtrodden person as we thought he would be." Chang told us the story slowly and in detail: "He had no access to adequate education in his early years, but he insisted taking correspondence cours-

es and attending night schools. Now he's got three full bookcases in his rooms, with many calligraphy works of his own on his table." Chang was deeply touched by the sharp contrast between the man's misfortune and his earnest love for life. "I came to reflect on the so-called sympathy that we often place on people like him."

Word turns pale when describing those splendid days and nights they spent together. It seems that all the investigators were trying to retell their stories as completely as possible, but there were just too many memories. Friendship, skills, perseverance, horizons... For them, CHARLS is a once-in-a-lifetime gift.



We Want You! Come and Join Us! Student Associations Recruitment

▣ Zhou Huiying

On September 25, 2015, the three-day autumn recruitment by Peking University (PKU) student associations kicked off. By the end of the third day, 262 student associations covering political theory, academic innovation, culture and art, physical fitness, volunteer programs, cooperation and exchange, as well as regional culture had recruited hundreds of students for their respective clubs.

“The great campaign with one hundred regiments”

PKU is known for its academic achievements, as well as its spirit of democracy and freedom, and the blossoming of various student associations is one of the most telling reflections of this tradition. PKU has an established tradition of encouraging each student to develop his or her own interests. Therefore, more than

200 clubs have been established to satisfy students' interests. Every year, PKU student associations hold a big recruitment ceremony in “the Triangle”. Due to the number of participating associations and the sheer number of students bustling to sign up for their favorite clubs, the PKU student associations' recruitment is commonly called “The Great Campaign with One Hundred Regiments”, in reference to the famous historical battle

against Japanese invasion.

At this time every year, crowds of students flow into the Triangle and are filled with excitement and curiosity, while the club members stand beside their booths and extend warm welcomes to all. The Triangle is full of laughter, music, and boisterous voices, as well as the bright colors of various posters. A freshman who went to the Triangle said excitedly, “Wow, the recruitment is spectacular!”

Various and Original Ways of Recruiting

Associations use various ways to attract more attention. Many students were attracted by the cosplay from the Original Fire Comic Club. The members, who wore colorful costumes depicting characters from Japanese anime, stood in front of their booth passing out their club's leaflets. Similarly, the Jingwu Association had their members wear Taekwondo dobok to attract greater attention and publicity. Eye-catching costumes were not the only feature. The Hip Hop Society organized a dynamic hip-hop performance in front of the Nongyuan cafeteria, which attracted

much attention and won enthusiastic applause. The Chinese Music Institute and other music associations offered their audiences fantastic performances. Impressed by the wonderful performance of the Drum Circle, some newcomers couldn't help having a try at playing the drums! Another club, which couldn't be missed, was the Marxist Association. Its members paraded along the street, waving flags and singing “The Internationale” in unison. Some students were touched by the emotion they displayed, reflecting their firm faith and unity. There were also some students who preferred the soft and melodious harmonies produced by the members of the Peking University Student Choir, who warmly invited students to join them.

Technologically, one of the main characteristics of this year's recruitment was that most associations were not confined to in-person registration but also adopted online enrollment. A girl who was in charge of the recruitment of the Mountaineering Association said, “We had already put our recruitment advertisement and registration form on our official WeChat channel, mi-



croblog, and the PKU BBS. As more and more college students are using these social media forums, we think it would be more convenient for them to register online.”

Busy Preparation

As a Chinese saying goes, “Splendid stage performances requires ten years of hard training.” Members of some students' associations spent several weeks preparing for this recruitment drive. Their posters were fascinating and well organized with colorful pictures and photos of their daily activities and eye-catching welcome slogans. “We started our preparation from the beginning of this semester. We designed posters, postcards, registration forms, and booklets for the newcomers, and then we contacted the printing shops to print them. Additionally, we bought some display racks and gifts. Key members are divided into several groups for preparation, and we take turns to





I took the subway here to help."

"Interest is my Motivation."

"I'm interested in kendo, so I'm going to join the Kendo Society," Wang Hao, an international student told us. Like Wang Hao, most students join clubs out of interest. They want to find a platform to develop their interests and to make friends with people who share common goals and interests. But there are also many students who simply want to explore and try new things. Zheng Jiarui, a student from the College of Urban and Environmental Sciences, hesitated about whether to join the PKU:OIR Student Press Corps before she came to the recruitment site. She was not confident that her English ability would satisfy the club's entry requirements. However, in the end, she persuaded herself to join because she wanted to have a try and improve

her English.

What's more, some students regard the participation in student clubs as a social experience. The social activities of some clubs are attractive to many students. Ellie, a visiting scholar from England, told me that she had just arrived at PKU, and in order to become more familiar with the campus and to practice Chinese, she joined several associations which require a great deal of social interaction, such as the Peking University News and the Model United Nations Club. Ellie also joined the Tennis Association and Skiing Association so as to be able to exercise more and keep fit.

This semester's recruitment of student associations has ended, but it is the beginning of more colorful activities to be held by different associations. We wish each student the very best, hope they accomplish their goals, further develop their interests, and continue to chase their dreams.

come to the site. All of us are eager to meet more newcomers and to introduce our club to them," one of the members of the Original Fire Comic Club said, "and as soon as I finished my class at the Health Science Center,



Introduction to Health Economics A Course Worth Exploring

► Wei Wei

If you are interested in China's healthcare system reform, or if you are curious to know more about how to run a hospital, Professor Li Ling's Health Economics course might be for you.

As a devoted and renowned expert in health economics, health service management, mature economics, and economic growth theory, along with the experience of being a doctoral supervisor at the National School of Development of Peking University, Prof. Li is well known as a chief advisor on China's health care reform and chief committee member of Policy and Management Research of the Ministry of Health of the People's Republic of China. Her main research interests and teaching fields are health economics and economics of aging.

In 1978, Li Ling was admitted to the physics department at Wuhan University as an undergraduate. After graduation, she enrolled in the graduate program at the physics department and then transferred to the economics department. In 1987, she went abroad to study at the University of Pittsburgh and received her Ph.D. in economics. She was a faculty member at Towson University for 10 years before she came back to China to work at the National School of Development.



As a leading scholar in healthcare with an abundant experience and knowledge, Prof Li has great insights into the healthcare area in and outside of China. For instance, in 2006, she made a spot investigation in Suqian, a city in Jiangsu Province, and the rural areas around Suqian to discover if the local trial of overall marketization of healthcare was successful, but unfortunately, the trial turned out to be a failure.

In Prof. Li's own words, having studied physics and social science, she felt that what China needed the most was social management, especially the effective allocation of resources for the entire society. So she transferred from the physics department to the department of economics. Later at the University of Pitts-

burgh, she studied macroeconomics and grew interested in the elderly population. This population's consumption and expenditures have significant impact on national economy. For the elderly, they have limited need for things such as food and clothing, but almost unlimited demand for healthcare. Since then she began to pay attention to health economics, and she found this field to be very interesting: it involved almost all the difficult questions in modern economics, such as asymmetrical information, risk aversion, adverse selection, moral hazard, and so on.

When it comes to health economics, it is a branch of economics with regard to issues concerning efficiency, effectiveness, value,

and behavior in the production and consumption of health and healthcare, broadly including the study of the functioning of health

unsolved at this stage of China's healthcare system reform, which she asks students to think about critically. Students involved in the



In Prof. Li's own words, having studied physics and social science, she felt that what China needed the most was social management, especially the effective allocation of resources for the entire society.



care systems and health-affecting behaviors. In Prof. Li's course, you will get to learn the basic theories of health economics, and important issues ranging from China to the entire world will be taken into serious discussion, such as the careful analysis of China's internal healthcare system reform and a broad spectrum of healthcare system models of other countries.

As is designed to be relevant to China's healthcare system reform, the course itself is one of its own. You can hardly find similar classes at other China's universities. Although recent changes have been implemented in an effort to ensure healthcare for all of China, China's healthcare system is facing many challenges, which requires further studies, research, and experiments.

Interestingly, the course is not just about theoretical research and case studies. Nevertheless, there are much more than basic concepts and mechanisms in health economics. Prof Li raises a lot of practical problems that remain

course are also encouraged to carry out their own research into China's healthcare system reforms and to present the results to the whole class. Some of the shared research results turned out to be unexpectedly fruitful and inspiring. After class, Prof. Li also interacted a lot with students to exchange their ideas freely.

Some of the stirring perspectives of Prof. Li may appeal to you. In terms of the healthcare reform in rural areas, the government should take responsibility in two aspects—providing health insurance and increasing the level of coverage for the New Rural Cooperation Medical Insurance and rebuilding rural primary care system. Currently, the primary healthcare system funding level is still low, but it did allow the re-establishment of the three-level health services network: village doctors, township-village hospitals, and county hospitals. The township-village hospitals should not survive by selling medicines

anymore. It is critical to break the corrupted connection between hospitals and medicine sales; their budget should be provided by the government. To maintain quality and efficiency, the personnel system should also be more competitive. Employees for rural health care providers should compete for positions based on their qualification and performance evaluation and the new salary and incentive system should also be based on performance evaluation more than the traditional “fee for service” payment model.

Public hospitals are also another significant part of reforms. Prof. Li thinks the reform of workforce system plays significant role. An appropriate incentive system has to be established. She also indicated that the reform of public hospitals should still be mainly led by government, rather than overwhelmingly market-oriented. Healthcare services are not meant to be provided for profit and should come back to public services—aiming to provide the best quality of care to the public with



the lowest cost possible. Medication should not become a tool of profiting off of patients.

The reforms still have a long way to go. According to Prof. Li, the next step, as the ultimate goal

of healthcare, is “health”, which has to be realized by prevention instead of medication. The course encourages students to be socially responsible and to strive for improving China's nationwide

healthcare system. I hope you will be inspired and motivated by the course and that we can work together to make healthcare better for all Chinese people and all human beings.

Hello! I'm Your Campus Companion

► Han Yihua

Hello! I'm your campus companion. On September 6th and 7th, freshmen flooded into Peking University (PKU), and to help them get used to their new university life, senior students were there and ready to help.

PKU holds freshman training sessions as a routine every year when the most talented students from everywhere in China come to PKU to start one of the most fabulous and unforgettable journey in their lives. We made some changes this year: Instead of tedious lectures and lengthy talks from the deans, warm-hearted upper grade students chose to devote themselves to guiding newcomers into the completely new environment.

In small groups (less than 25 students), each student could feel touched and cared for and the training sessions could be an exclusive experience for them to kick-off their new life in PKU.

Divided into Weiming, Boya, Langrun, Changchun, all of which were the names of landmarks in PKU, the 4 groups wore green, yellow, blue, and orange clothes while accompanying the freshmen for a two-day experience trip on campus.

After a meeting on the night of the 5th, each “Baymax” met their little “Hioros” for the first time.

With funny but also trustworthy introductions, our little “Hioros”-seemed to feel much more comfortable and started curiously asking many questions. Knowing that, for most

of them, it will be the first time to live alone at school far away from their parents and friends. The “Baymaxes” tried their best and

even shared their own experience one or two years ago when they started as freshmen at PKU, which instilled sympathy among the newcomers.

The trip began early in the morning after a sound sleep at night. To help freshmen get used to the quick tempo of the university and to figure out their own vision in four years, there was the



University life isn't only about learning your major, it's also about learning and experiencing new things and opening up different possibilities that you might not even thought of before—it's all about an overall development.



first session “Wenweiming”. With a broad range and vivid description of different university lifestyles and activities, the purpose

of the session was to provide our freshmen with abundant opportunities and possibilities to do whatever they wanted to do. Finally, after a Q&A session, the freshman wrote down their own ideal outlook for the next in four years.

It didn't have to be exact, yet it doesn't even have to be great. The point is that by planning your own university life, you are already making big progress by marching into a more autonomous stage in your life.

The afternoon kicked off with a gaming session but it was more than just games. Students from different majors were divided

into different teams. By playing games, they got to know about others' hometowns, dreams, and lives before they became a PKU student. University life isn't only about learning your major, it's also about learning and experiencing new things and opening up different possibilities that you might not even thought of before—it's all about an overall development.

The day was finished with a PKU student and now teacher sharing his stories. He explained how his time at PKU were the most fabulous 4 years of his life, and now he is an assistant teacher. He shared his story

about how he became a conscientious leader from a procrastinating boy. He hoped that all the freshmen can make good use of these precious 4 years and the abundant recourses that PKU offers.

The second day was arranged as a campus tour and value discussing to help freshmen study the broad and profound history of PKU. The "Baymaxes" guided the freshmen through both the campus and it's rich history, and explained how PKU's history is intertwined so tightly with the country's history. Every university has their own tradition, and so does Peking University: PKU



students not only care about their personal success and happiness but also the well-being of their country, its people, and all of humanity.

Starting from the perfect match of Weiming Lake and the Boya Tower, which was always philosophical and thought-provoking, to the one of the Libraries which has the greatest collection in Asian world, it could be said "Yi Ta Hu Tu" (standing for one tower one lake and one library, which make landmarks of PKU) to become immortal in the myth of scenery, and the soul of the people of hundreds and thousands from PKU.

"It was exhausting, but worthwhile", said the person in charge of this year's companion program, Li Jinsha: "We started preparing even before the final exam of last semester, we spent days after days

collecting documents and creating interesting and meaningful events to fulfill the expectations from the freshmen and our passionate and caring upper grade volunteers, for without them, the whole thing couldn't have been a success."

Chen Jinyi was one of this year's freshmen to the School of Foreign Language, and she really enjoyed her trip: "It was an unforgettable experience, we met students from different departments and became friends just in two days. College life is totally different from high school life. Its much more free and colorful, which requires more autonomy, but I'm pretty sure I can handle it."

I, as one of the volunteer companions, also learned a lot within these two days and during the preparation work. First of all, I

was impressed by the talent of the young freshmen, even though they are just a year younger than me. I can see they are very innovative and eager to learn and explore. Secondly, when preparing for the activity, I had a good opportunity to look back on my own freshman year. It definitely was not an easy year and it absolutely had an impact on me, and the most important thing is that there was always warm-hearted people helping me, teaching me, and that is also the main reason I want to help the freshmen get used to their new life here in this big and warm family.

PKU is approaching its 120th anniversary now, and after 120 years, generations after generations have come and gone from PKU. They came with awe and veneration and left with responsibilities and dreams.



The Opening Ceremony of Peking University's Seventh Summer School International

Wang Shan

On July 8, 2015, the opening ceremony and student-faculty mixer of the 7th annual Peking University Summer School International (PKU:SSI)

of Education Administration of PKU attended the opening ceremony. More than 200 students and professors also attended.

Mr. Gao started off the event with

sors from home and abroad. Moreover, he indicated that the PKU:SSI was a valuable opportunity for international students to explore Chinese culture, and he explained that it was a good platform for cross-cultural exchanges, ever important amid the internalization of higher education.

Afterwards, Vice President Gao Song, Director Xia Hongwei, Deputy Director Liu Jianbo issued Summer School International visiting scholar appointment certificates to Professor Roger Thomas Ames from the University of Hawaii, Professor Xu Xin from Cornell University, and Professor Zhou Yu from Vassar College. Then he expressed his gratitude to the professors for their contributions to the PKU:SSI.

Dating back to 2009, the Summer School International program has

his opening remarks and a welcoming address. He spoke highly of the academic strictness as well as the wide range of the courses opened by PKU:SSI and complimented the high-quality teaching of the profes-

“Dating back to 2009, the Summer School International program has gradually become an essential educational and cultural exchange platform for international and Chinese students at Peking University.”

SI) was held at Huxin Island, Peking University (PKU). Gao Song, Vice President and Provost of PKU, Xia Hongwei, Director of the Office of International Relations of PKU, Liu Jianbo, Deputy Director of the Office

gradually become an essential educational and cultural exchange platform for international and Chinese students at Peking University. This year, the program has opened 25 English-instructed courses in many different disciplines, including Chinese culture, history, philosophy, economics, politics, international relations, environment, sports, and others. This year, there are 212 students from 25

countries and regions worldwide enrolled in the program. Students came from many prestigious institutions, including Yale University, the University of California, Oxford University, Cambridge University, University of Copenhagen, Berlin's Free University, the University of Amsterdam, National University of Singapore, and dozens of other well-known universities.

International and Chinese stu-

dents participate in the same courses and learn from each other in the summer school. In addition to regular courses, the Summer School International program also provides elective Chinese Language courses to help international students improve their Chinese. Students can also experience Chinese society and culture in person through the various cultural tours hosted by SSI.

Peking University and LSE Summer School Program

Zhang Rutian

During the past summer, students from different parts of the world came to join the Peking University and the London School of Economics and Political Science (PKU-LSE) Summer School. During the program, students learned new perspectives on global issues and got to know one another's cultures as well. The fruitful class content, colorful extra-curricular activities, and the foreign cultural immersion left the participants with unforgettable memories.

On August 9, students arrived at the New Sun Student Centre, collected learning materials and looked forward to their two-week long studying experience at Peking University (PKU).

There were integrated courses concerning China's current national situation cover-

ing different areas like politics, government, social policy, international relations, international development, economics, statistics, finance, management, law, media, and geography and the environment for students to select. What excited students most were the professors who were going to teach and guide them over the next

two weeks. The professors were from both LSE and PKU. Courses such as, "The Global Economy: Rethinking World Leadership and the Great Shift East," taught by Professor Danny Quah, "The Rise of an Empire? Unraveling Chinese



Domestic Politics and Policy," taught by Dr. Zhang Jian, "Management, Entrepreneurship, and Global Leadership," taught by Dr. Fei Qin, and "From NGOs to social Enterprises: Chinese Social Organizations in Local

opinions, and raise doubts, and a heated discussion normally followed presentations. After a whole morning of teaching, a one-and-a-half-hour seminar awaited the students in the afternoon. During the seminar, apart

“ The learning method employed in class was a two-way process: Students were free to ask questions, give opinions, and raise doubts, and a heated discussion normally followed presentations. ”

and Global Governance," taught by Dr. Timothy Hildebrandt were most popular among students.

For those students with no background in the content of the subjects, professors offered a simple, yet profound way to understand new concepts. For the students whose major areas of study centered on the subject matter, professors provided new perspectives to delve further into the important questions of that area of study. The learning method employed in class was a two-way process: Students were free to ask questions, give

from refining and reinforcing what they had learned in the morning, students turned to subjects more related to life around them. In particular, students showed deep concern and great enthusiasm on China's current issues. International students raised questions and made comments that Chinese students had never considered before. Chinese students also surprised international students with "what's really happening in China presently". Both groups of students gained useful knowledge through such discussions.

In Professor Danny Quah's class "The Global Economy: Rethinking World Leadership and the Great Shift East," he first gave students an overview of global economic growth and development. Professor Quah then introduced and analyzed the middle-income trap, the rise of China, global trade, international financial architecture and coordination as well as global hegemony. This overview complemented the reading list, and students gained a better understanding of familiar concepts and built the logical links between different parts of the subject. In the seminar, students debated on subjects like whether China would be the next global hegemonic power, and discussed whether China's economy would continue to grow while mitigating the middle-income trap and uncovering the next incentive of global economic growth. The professors were happy to hear the numerous brilliant ideas that were generated through the seminar.

Besides class sessions and seminars, the LSE-PKU Summer School also held a round table meeting in the first week on current issues. Four professors from different disciplines were present at the meeting. They shared their opinions and research on how China's economics and politics interacted with the world. The meeting was dynamic, with students also joining the discussion. The round table meeting lasted about three hours and everyone felt highly satisfied at its conclusion.

The LSE-PKU Summer School was not just limited to study. Life after class also played a key role in

this cultural and academic program. On the day that students arrived they were given a handbook with details on Beijing and PKU. With the assistance of a tour guide and local students' help, international students took a tour, experienced meals of different cuisines and tried the facilities of PKU.

Additionally, students also made the most of their spare time, visiting tourists' attractions like the Summer Palace, the Forbidden City, and the Great Wall. International students noted that observing how

with their special collections. Students also arranged dinners with professors, during which they got to know each other more and spent quality time together.

Near the end of the two-week session, the Right Honorable Philip Hammond MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs paid a visit to PKU, giving a speech entitled "UK-China: A Global Partnership for the 21st Century". During the speech, he expressed the willingness of both nations to cooperate in the field of education.

outstanding fellows and distinguished professors. This two-week experience was a gift and will be cherished for the rest of their lives. At the farewell party, students chatted and laughed, took photos, and exchanged contact information to ensure future communication.

Teachers also treasured the experience. Professor Danny Quah said, "Engaging with students from China and the rest of the world is an opportunity to see things from the inside and to listen to debate from people with fresh, open minds who want to understand. It is critical to see this kind of intellectual exchange that is happening when I participate in the LSE-PKU Summer School." Dr. Zhang Jian said, "Summer school is a great platform for students from a wide set of backgrounds... It is important to have a multi-dimensional understanding of China and to get to know this country through first-hand information."

The 2015 Summer school attracted about 300 participants from over 40 countries and brought together a diverse mix of students and professionals from industry, government, and international and non-governmental organizations. The LSE-PKU Summer School provides a unique opportunity to learn about China from within China, but with a truly international perspective. Students who attended the program all had a fruitful experience and made a difference in their future academic life and career. The most dynamic and diverse city in China – Beijing – also fascinated students with its economics, politics, and culture.



Chinese traditional architecture was different from Western architecture was a unique experience for them and helped them understand more about Chinese culture. What they loved most however, was Chinese food. Peking Duck was absolutely the first choice when trying local dishes. International students also went to Nanluoguxiang for snacks and "funny food" which they thought was both bizarre and fantastic. They bought souvenirs in Panjiayuan, bargaining with vendors and returning back to PKU

After the presentation, a few students from the LSE-PKU Summer School were able to speak with the MP.

The enjoyable learning journey came to an end all too quickly. After two weeks of intensive learning, the LSE-PKU Summer School threw a farewell party for all the students, professors, and crew members. A video made by students was played at the farewell party, in which they expressed their enthusiasm and gratitude for the course. They were thankful for running into so many



Congress of the International Institute of Philosophy Held at PKU

► Zhong Xue

The 2015 Congress of the International Institute of Philosophy (IIP) was successfully held at the Institute for Advanced Humanistic Studies (IAHS) of Peking University (PKU) from September 16 to 19, 2015.

IIP, founded in Paris in 1937, is now the most renowned academic institutions in the field of philosophy around the world. Academicians of IIP meet annually and the World Congress of Philosophy is held by IIP

is the first meeting held in China. The topic of the 2015 congress is Dimensions of Human, proposed by Du Weiming, academician of IIP and Dean of IAHS.

Twenty-three international academicians of IIP as well as 40 philosophy professors from key universities in China attended the congress. During the

“ Twenty-three international academicians of IIP as well as 40 philosophy professors from key universities in China attended the congress. ”

more about Chinese philosophy. The focus of the philosophical field has been shifting from the west to the east, and the issues that international philosophers now discuss demonstrate this shift. Currently, Chinese philosophical studies are surging and Chinese philosophers are working to improve traditional theories in the context of the modern era so that the ancient theories can be more easily accepted by western traditions.

Professor Du Weiming was appointed Vice President of IIP during the congress. He is one of the two Chinese IIP academicians and is the key figure for China's successful bidding for the next World Congress of Philosophy. Turkish philosopher Ioanna Kuçuradi congratulated him and said that he is highly capable of the new position. His appointment marked the progress of Chinese philosophy in the world. Professor Du is now busy preparing for the 24th World Congress of Philosophy with his team. He sincerely hopes the event will be a great success.



and FISP (International Federation of Philosophical Studies) every five years. The 24th World Congress of Philosophy will be held in Beijing in 2018 with the topic of Learning to be Human. The 2015 annual meeting

congress, 14 speeches were delivered, which were open to the public. Special conferences about Chinese philosophy were held for the first time, indicating the eagerness of philosophers around the world to know

The 23rd Stanford Program in Beijing

► Sohn Mina

On September 21, 2015, the opening ceremony of the 23rd Stanford Program in Beijing was held at the Chaitai International Center. Wang Yong, Vice Director of the Office of International Relations of Peking University (PKU), Zhao Yang, Dean of the School of Chinese as a Second Language of PKU, Andy Andreasen, Executive Director of the Stanford Center at Peking University (SCP-KU), and David Boyer, Associate Director of the Bing Overseas Studies Program of Stanford University attended the welcome reception.

The Stanford Program at PKU is the only branch school of Stanford in China. The program offers English courses related to Chinese Studies

and also offers Chinese language courses through the School of Chinese as a Second Language of PKU.

During the opening ceremony, Wang Yong expressed heartfelt welcome to all the participants. He said that globalization was particularly significant trend in the 21st century. As is expected, the program had become an important platform for American students to study in China. In his speech, he conveyed his sincere wishes that the students could gain a lot from the program. Zhao Yang hoped that the participants could experience real Chinese society and fully understand Chinese language and culture. Then, Andy Andreasen expressed his gratitude to PKU. David Boyer congratulated

the successful launch of the 23rd program and encouraged the participants.

Li Jia Lu, a student representative of PKU, shared her feelings about the United States, Cambodia, Hong Kong and the places she has been to. She said that cross-cultural communication is to share stories and to communicate with other countries. Then, Priyanka, a student representative of Stanford, made a speech about how she feels about China and shared her experience of learning “hello” and “thank you” in Chinese. She looked back at the help that she received since she arrived in China, and she was moved by all these experiences and looked forward to studying at PKU.





Launch of the “One Belt and One Road” Public Course Series on Foreign Languages and Culture Project

► ZhongXue

The “One Belt and One Road” Public Course Series on Foreign Languages and Culture Project was launched on September 15, 2015

open to all students regardless of major. It was initiated in response to President Xi Jinping’s proposal to build a “new silk road economic belt” and a “maritime silk road in

and One Road” strategy. Currently, the demand for students with comprehensive skills is increasing. Thus, the School of Foreign Languages of PKU took up the responsibility of educating students non-common language skills and giving them an international perspective. The project corresponds to the trend of increasing international communication between China and other countries.

A main part of the project is the language course series, taught by native speakers. Currently the courses include French, Russian, Spanish, Korean, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Hebrew, Arabic, Turkish, Filipino, Vietnamese, Bengali, Cyril Mongolian, Ibo, and Swahili. Amharic, Burmese, Thai, Hindi, Urdu,

“The project, held by PKU, is open to all students regardless of major. It was initiated in response to President Xi Jinping’s proposal to build a “new silk road economic belt” and a “maritime silk road in the 21st century”.

at the School of Foreign Languages, Peking University(PKU). Professors, ambassadors, and students attended the launching ceremony.

The project, held by PKU, is

the 21st century” (“One Belt and One Road” for short). There are language and culture courses as well as cultural activities covering the region concerning the “One Belt

and Persian will be opened later. Cultural courses offered in this semester include courses covering the Arabic world, Southeast Asia, Israel, modern Middle East studies, eastern literature, western culture, a comparative study of Chinese and

western cultures, intercommunication between Sino-Russian cultures, introduction to Spanish culture and history, and cultural exchanges between China and Japan. The program also includes several academic lectures and Culture Days as well

as ambassadors’ speeches. Foreign experts and ambassadors will be involved in the project, so the project not only offers academic training but also provides a platform for Chinese university students to communicate with people around the world.

“CHINA-AFRICA 500: Facts About China, Africa and Relations Between the Two” Book Launching Ceremony at PKU

► Ge Nan

On September 10, 2015, the launching ceremony of “500 Facts about China and Africa, and Sino-African Relationship” and the Chinese Bridge—Sino-African Friendship Knowledge Competition was held

at the Yingjie Overseas Exchange Centre of Peking University (PKU). Li Zhaoxing, President of China Public Diplomacy Association and former Chinese Foreign Minister; H.E. Sikonina Victor, head of the African Diplomatic Corps and Am-

bassador of Madagascar to China; Professor Li Qiang, Deputy Director of Peking University Board; H.E. Dolana Msimang, Ambassador of South Africa to China; and Mr. Xia Jianhui, Deputy Director General of Hanban attended and presented speeches at the ceremony.

The event was co-hosted by the Secretariat of the Chinese Follow-up Committee of Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and the Confucius Institute Headquarters (Hanban), and co-sponsored by the China Public Diplomacy Association and Peking University. The event was attended by over 300 people, including African diplomats to China, former Chinese ambassadors to African countries, representatives of the Secretariat of the Chinese Follow-up Committee of FOCAC, experts from Chinese Research Institutes on Africa, teachers and students from PKU and Beijing



Foreign Studies University, along with representatives of African students in China.

The Secretariat of the Chinese Follow-up Committee of FOCAC had compiled the book "CHINA-AFRICA 500: Facts About China, Africa, and Relations Between the Two", which summarizes the natural, historical, cultural, political and economic situation, and the developments and achievements of Sino-African relations. This book will serve as an important carrier and channel for Chinese and African communication and interaction. The Chinese Bridge—Sino-African Friendship Knowledge Competition is jointly organized by the Confucius Institute Headquarters (Hanban) and the Secretariat of the Chinese Follow-up Committee of FOCAC. The winners will conduct bilateral exchanges, and the Chinese winners will have opportunities to visit African countries like South Africa, Kenya or Egypt, while African winners will be able to visit China.

As September 10th is Teacher's Day, the ceremony began with all its attendees giving a sincere applause to their teachers. Professor Li Qiang delivered the first speech, stating that this activity would deepen Sino-African friendship by offering Chinese and African youth a golden opportunity to communicate with and learn from each other. Professor Li also recounted the efforts that PKU has

made in promoting Sino-African communication, including the establishment of the Center for African Studies, launching a series of courses and research projects concerning Africa, and cooperating with African educational institutions. He called upon Chinese and African youth to take an active part in enhancing Sino-African cultural integration.

Li Zhaoxing attached great importance to the activity, and he recalled his ten years of working in Africa and his vivid memories there, calling himself typical of those who had been to Africa: he had fallen in love with the country and missed it after leaving. Li said that 2015 marks the 15th anniversary of FOCAC. The South Africa Summit, which comes after the 2006 Beijing Peak, will be the first time it has come to the African continent. Therefore, it is of great significance for China and Africa to co-host the Summit successfully and to make it a new milestone in the history of Sino-African friendship. He believed that the book would further

enhance mutual understanding and friendship between Chinese and African people, and that the Competition would promote friendly communications between the two countries.

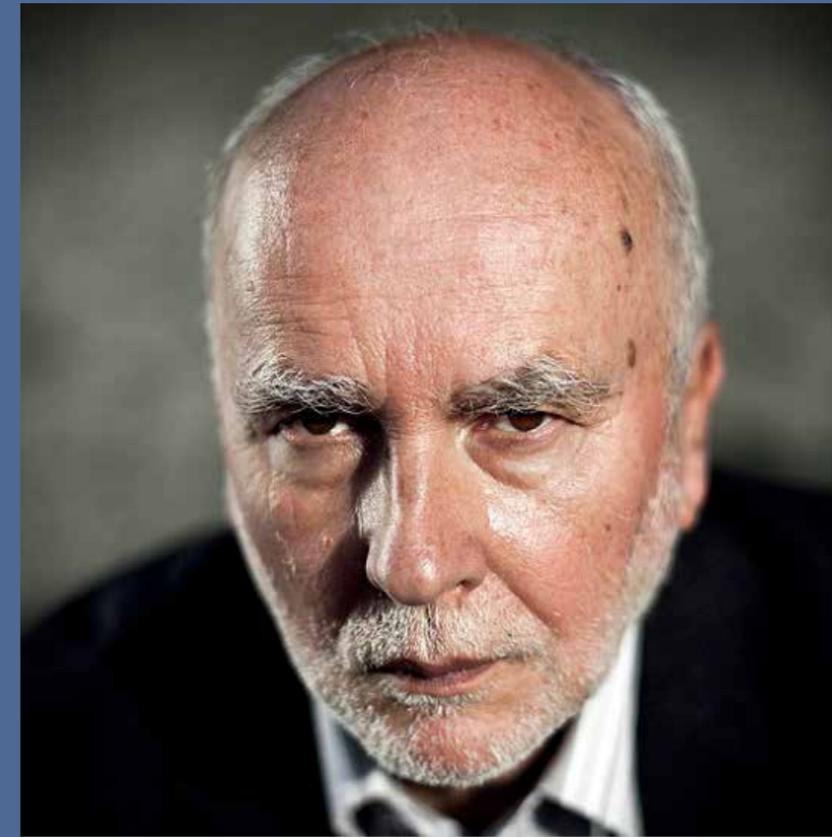
Later on, the ceremony's guests unveiled the book "CHINA-AFRICA 500", and Li Zhaoxing bestowed a new copy to Li Qiang as a gift.

Mr. Xia Jianhui, H.E. Sikonina Victor, and H.E. Dolana Msimang gave closing remarks and congratulated the event's success. They expressed warm praise to the book's editors, and encouraged young people of China and Africa to participate in the competition and to contribute more to promoting mutual understanding and friendship between the two countries.

Lin Songtian thanked those who were involved in and supported the activity. He introduced the background and main ideas of the book. It would be a great honor if "CHINA-AFRICA: 500 Facts" could play a role in bridging the mutual understanding and friendship between Chinese and African people.



The Verse Must Go On Zhongkun International Poetry Prize Winner Adam Zagajewski ▸ Xu Rui



rebellious, "reevaluatory" self. Zagajewski in his early years "got on the stage of poetry with a poetic rebellious manner" at the heart of Poland's "New Wave" poetry movement in 1960s. Through parody of old literature and critique of modern social phenomenon, he and his modernist peers attempted to inspire people to speak truth to power and think independently. It is also why, as Li Yiliang puts it, his poems in this period "are typical Eastern European poems, typical fine poems" which "express directly with few polishing," "although wonderful," but inevitably, "abstract and boring."

The rebellious Adam Zagajewski moved to Paris in 1982 and after accepting the invitation of the University of Houston in the United States, and at that time he began his twenty years of Franco-American wandering. Li Yiliang regards this period as Zagajewski's twenty years of "self-exile". Afterwards, his poems become "specific, multi-spaced, loose, and light" and, for the first time, include "images". From intense comments to light demonstrations, from the need of an era to the need of individual, his poems age with him.

Adam Zagajewski believes in the power of poetry to aid in deep introspection. He says, "Poetry is not only used to express some specific moments in life, but it should also respond to deeper things or atti-

An Olympic runner, encouraged by enthusiasts all over the stadium, stormed over a hundred miles; at the starting line, he leaned forward, during the race he kept his upper body straight like Mont Blanc, and when approaching the finish line, he bent down not only because of exhaustion, but to bow to the mysterious equilibrium of the universe, writes Adam Zagajewski of his spiritual mentor, Chomsky Milosz. From the exploration and discovery of his early years to the praise and criticism he

received later on, and finally, to his final presentation of self, the portrait of Milosz's life that Zagajewski paints is one that is of close reflection to his own.

"Poetry is greater than anything we can comprehend."

It is said that "poems grow old along with the poet." Yet, this old truism is difficult to apply in the case of Adam Zagajewski, whose current poems leave little trace of his old

tudes." In his view, creating poetry is not only a skill and a way to reveal personal feelings, but it is also a way to contemplate a complicated reality. The duty of poets and philosophers both is to contemplate the unsolved problems of the human race; however, poets' work is more of a "presentation". Zagajewski states that, "Poetry is a tunnel, suspicion is a spiral." For him, the beauty of poetry consists in its casted doubts—behind which lies the great skepticism of everything in this world.

Looking for 'who we are' in Poland

In the article "Polish Writing", Zagajewski wrote, "Polish writers have a different kind of gene, the collapse of the society system in the 18th century, the divided misfortune, the failure of the uprising, and the vulnerability of our country's long and dramatic existence; in a crooked and violent way, that gene transformed into a fantasized monster, become an object of worship and contempt." As with many Polish memoirs set in World War II and its post-war years, Zagajewski in his writing sought to find what had been obscured behind German ravages of World War II, tough Soviet reforms, and a history of wrestling with Russia and Western Europe—the Polish identity.

"Polish literature born in Paris, Argentina, or California must be as much as that born in Poland." If Literature and ethnicities are the roots of history, then literature in this case must be a premature child. The search for self-identity was central to the theme of the "New Wave", and

as the Zhongkun International Poetry Prize explains, "Adam Zagajewski's poetry reflected the great tradition of Polish modern poetry inherited from Milosz and Herbert, yet displays his unique individual pursuit and charm of his discovery." Through poetry, Zagajewski has given us the opportunity to look back and see what Poland was like then.

By writing only in his mother tongue, Adam Zagajewski has given

become an integral part of Chinese contemporary poetry."

"One week consists of only one Sabbath and the other six days—this is proportion"

"One week consists of only one Sabbath and the other six days—this is proportion" For Zagajewski, poetry is not all of what his life is about. In addition to being a poet, he is a visit-

“ As with many Polish memoirs set in World War II and its post-war years, Zagajewski in his writing sought to find what had been obscured behind German ravages of World War II, tough Soviet reforms, and a history of wrestling with Russia and Western Europe—the Polish identity. ”

up a lot. Many people upon reading the poet's work will deduce his personality, referring to him as "nationalist." However, he rejects this conflated interpretation, stating that, "I do not want to be thought as an exclusive Polish poet, but me and my language are bonded closely, but in a sense of pleasant and temporary understanding, I am willing to accept all things in the world." In Zagajewski's opinion, Polish writing gives him power and does not shackle him.

Zagajewski's opinion was affirmed by the following lines at the Zhongkun International Poetry Prize award ceremony: "For contemporary Chinese poetry, his poems are the most revealing, is that wonderful balance between aesthetic pleasure and historical morality; his poetry has

ing professor at several universities in the United States. Since 1983, he has been traveling between France and the US, lecturing on creative writing and on courses related to his spiritual mentor, Milosz. Zagajewski's value of his spiritual world did not interfere with his attention to everyday life. He states that "I was a happily married husband. Instead of thinking myself as a poet, I think of myself as a good husband." While he is not writing poetry, Zagajewski attends lectures, speaks to friends about his idol Milosz, lives with his wife in Paris, and strives to be a good husband.

When confronted with the world, Zagajewski in his early days wrote that "The world is cruel, greedy, meat-eating, cruel". Now, Zagajewski writes: "Praise this crippled world

and the falling gray feathers of a thrush, and that free, disappearing and appearing soft glow." Zagajewski explains that time changes a man,

and the verse must go on. "Poetry calls us to life," he states, "Happiness are not too far away from those tragic moments." Zagajewski sees a joint

between poetry and life, which has given him the prudent vision not only to escape life's pessimisms, but also to bring the taste of life into his poems.

Wang Gungwu on Borderless Civilizations Lessons from History

► Dong Rong

On October 7th, 2014, more than 300 experts and scholars from all over the world gathered at the Beijing Forum sponsored by Peking University. Distinguished professor and 84-year-old Chairman of the National University of Singapore's East Asia Institution, Wang Gungwu; 1995 Nobel laureate in economics from the University of Chicago, Professor Robert E. Lucas; Principal Nicholas B. Dirks of the University of California-Berkeley; and other top scholars gave keynote speeches at the opening ceremony of the Forum.

In his speech "Borderless Civilizations: Lessons from history", Professor Wang Gungwu pointed out that Huntington, the American scholar who raised the theory of "Clash of Civilizations" as the representative of modern Western academic circles, unfairly deemed Chinese and Islamic civilizations to be the opposite of the



West. In his opinion, unlike the other two civilizations, the Chinese culture didn't persist in the "one-god-belief", and on the contrary it attached much

importance to other beliefs, namely Zhuzi, in addition to Confucianism. The structure of Chinese belief and knowledge is open and inclusive, and

therefore Westerners should not try to understand it with one particular paradigm.

During his visit to Beijing, we had the honor of conducting an interview with Professor Wang.

Borders and the Nation-states

Q: *In your speech named *Borderless Civilizations: Lessons from History*, you firstly raised basic premise of the discussion, namely the term "civilization" is actually a relatively recent concept, which was born in the 17th century in Western Europe. This allows us to refer to a concept of "border", which you often mention as well. And this is also a concept appears late, with the rise of the nation-state. In our study of history and culture, is a "border" a concept that cannot be ignored as well? As a historian, what do*

you think of the concept of "border"?

A: A "Border" is also a recent concept rooted in the history of Western Europe. If this concept is for everyone's convenience to use, indicating which is yours and which is mine, it's not a problem. But if it becomes a strict line, which means if you dare to come and I'll shoot you, it is very dangerous.

However, "National boundaries" are like the latter. At first, Western Europe did not have a strict concept of national boundaries. It was after the 17th century when the war of religion was very fierce that "national boundaries" had a more stringent definition in order to resolve the contradiction between the religious sects.

The term "nation-state" is a relatively recent concept. To form a nation-state, it must have the same language, the same religion, and the same history. Once the concept appears, the former "empire" was defeated. What

we call French, Spain and many other nation-states were empires in history. The emergence of national boundaries and the birth of the "nation-state" also had influences on the whole political system, for the "nation-state" is in contrast to the "empire".

Q: *Can we get some inspiration for the concepts of "borders" and "nation-states" to understand the current disputes in the international society? For example, many of the boundaries of the African region are in accordance with the latitude and longitude lines. So although it is easy to make a mark on the map, the actual life of the local residents is not taken into account, which causes many tragedies.*

A: Right. Many of the problems today are related to these concepts. For example, regions like Yugoslavia suffer most. All kinds of forces are competing to carve up the territory. That is based on the logic of the "nation-state". Just to see who has the qualification to set the boundaries.

The concept of sovereignty is also new, especially in Asia. New nation-states were founded in the dissolution of the colonial empire in Western

Europe, and then the concept of "sovereignty" and "national boundaries" were used. Nowadays, many borders in Asia are set by the westerners—their division of colonies were very clear.

Africa is now in a mess. It's the same. Some of the "borders" are straight lines—they are entirely artificial. There is no reason to take a nation or a family and split them in two. However, no one dares to change it for fear that they will face a lot of trouble.

Of course, if everyone can peacefully accept the existing boundaries, that would be OK. And Africa is now applying this method. They held a conference in Addis Ababa (Edit: Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, an East African country, and also the location of the general headquarters of the African Union). During the conference, it is pointed out that the aftermath of imperialism is not easy to solve. If they kept on fighting, the civil wars wouldn't stop, so they decided to reach a common view to accept the current boundaries and to develop their nation-state based on them.

But there are still a lot of problems. The whole of West Africa is still fighting fiercely. Several countries are no exception, and now religious issues are involved, such as between Christianity and Islam. It's horrible. By contrast, East Africa is fairing a little better.

Q: *Specific to Asia, especially in the Southeast Asian, in fact, there are a lot of boundaries that are set by the colonists. What do you think about the current situation in Asia?*

A: Asia is now facing a lot of problems and they should be solved. Each nation-state should try to set the boundaries of the border first. For example, China, which now almost has all the boundaries set down, still faces problems with the boundary dispute with India.

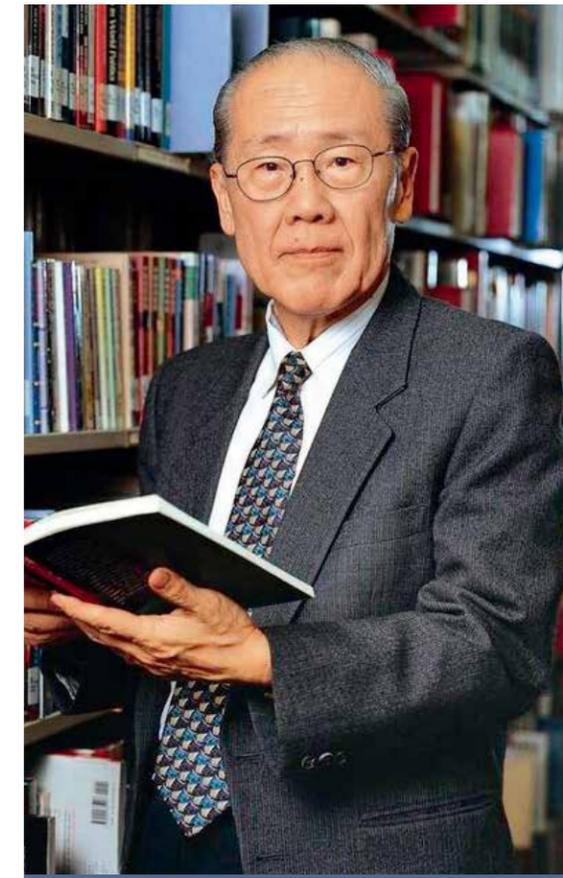
Of course, another problem in Southeast Asia is the problem of the maritime border. On the mainland, everyone can see the line drawn. Relatively simple. But how to solve (the boundary problem on) the sea—this is a great problem. At first, the voyage is without limitation. After the nation-state emerges, the resources in the sea, coastal, and seabed are also considered theirs (by the relative countries), so the boundaries in the sea have a variety of different views.

Of course, if everyone makes sense, maritime boundary problem can be solved. For example, in the Malacca Strait, the line between Malaysia and Indonesia is not set. It was set by two imperialist countries—the U.K. and the Netherlands—in order to avoid conflicts. In 1824, London signed the Anglo Dutch Treaty, which approximately set the boundaries between Malaysia and Indonesia. As far as I know, this is the first time both of the two sides made an agreement, drawn a line, and has lasted until now. Until the founding of both of the countries, the line was still accepted. Because there is land on both sides, and a line in the middle, so it was easier to resolve territorial disputes. But if there is land on neither side, or if there is no land on the other

side, how to deal with it? The problem in South China Sea is such a case.

Q: *Although we are not able to replicate the period before the nation-state, are we still able to get some inspiration from the history, when facing the South China Sea issue?*

A: On the one hand, the South China Sea issue is related to the emergence of the concept of "border". And on the other hand, with the rise of China today, Southeast Asian countries will have to reconsider how to establish a new relationship with China. For thousands of years, China is the only superpower in Asia. But from the end of eighteenth century to the end of the



Second World War, China became a weaker country. At that time, Europe, the U.S., and Southeast Asian countries have been accustomed to China's weakness. However, nowadays, with the rapid rise of China, its relationship with Southeast Asia is becoming more and more significant.

China's 30 years of economic development is deeply rooted in its globalization. China was once a self-sufficient country without foreign trade. However, in the past 30 years, China's development mainly relied on foreign trade and exports. Besides markets, a lot of resources need to be shipped from foreign countries, and as a result, China will have to take the ocean into account. So the dispensable maritime issues of the past have now become very important.

Two-thirds of the Chinese border is on the mainland, and one-third is coastal. In today's global economy, ocean transportation is very important, and protecting our maritime areas has become increasingly difficult. The issue of the East China Sea is relatively simple. It basically only involves the relationship between China and Japan, but the South China Sea is more complex, involving many Southeast Asian countries.

First of all, the nature of the South East Asia itself is completely different. Once there were different countries, different regimes, and different religions in the region, almost all of which are different. And they are completely not cooperative, especially in politics. There's no such thing as forming a group to fight against foreign forces. But

now it's different. Among the ten emerging countries in South East Asia, two or three of them are quite strong. Indonesia and Vietnam have considerable strength and Thailand is not a small country, either.

Now the ten Southeast Asian countries have different views on China. Now they have a new sense of contract and the establishment of the ASEAN is the result. The ASEAN story is interesting: at first, ASEAN

“In today's global economy, ocean transportation is very important, and protecting our maritime areas has become increasingly difficult.”

was established by five anti-communist countries, and now the association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is to establish a common contract—in this complex global economy, each country is unable to survive alone, so they should form a common voice. In this case, it is very important for China to establish a new relationship with ASEAN members.

In 2002, Prime Minister Zhu Rongji advocated and signed the China-ASEAN Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement, planning to create a China-ASEAN free trade area by 2010, which proved to be very effective. It has brought great impact, but has also attracted the attention of some foreign powers. So they took some methods in an attempt to curb the special relationship of

China and ASEAN. Therefore, the relationship between China and ASEAN is now becoming more and more complex.

The South China Sea is actually just an excuse, but it is not a serious problem itself. There is a dispute over sovereignty, so the outside can use it to ruin the relationship between China and ASEAN.

Q: *In the last four or five years, there is an important background for the development of Southeast Asia, namely the U.S.'s return to Asia. According to your observation, if we take Southeast Asian countries as a whole, will they support the U.S. or China? In this regard, how will China*

actively respond to this?

A: As far as I know, South East Asian countries are neither pro-America nor pro-China; they want ASEAN to be completely independent, treating all countries as equals in order to get the biggest benefits. In the future of the world, ASEAN will have a very important role. The main reason is that it is located between the Pacific and Indian oceans and to the south of China and Japan. Because of its position, there may be a lot of benefits. Therefore, ASEAN member countries basically want to have an independent and unified ASEAN bloc.

(This interview was given by Mr. Wang Gungwu and published on December 15, 2014, in the Economic Observer newspaper. This version has been translated and edited.)

PKU Makes Breakthrough in Biodegradable Alloys

Li Wei

Professor Zheng Yufeng's group from the State Key Laboratory for Turbulence and Complex System, College of Engineering, Peking University, recently published a research detailing Zn-1X (Mg, Ca, and Sr) alloys' potential for use in a new generation of biodegradable implants. This may open up a new avenue in the area of biodegradable metals. The research paper was published in the Nature Scientific Reports on May 29, 2015, and was titled "Development of biodegradable Zn-1X binary alloys with nutrient alloying elements Mg, Ca, and Sr".

As the biomaterials with the longest history of discovery, metallic materials have been widely used in the field of orthopedics, mouth rehabilitation, cardiovascular stents intervention, and other implants, due to its good mechanical properties. The clinical application of biomedical metal materials including pure metal, stainless steel, cobalt-chromium alloy, and titanium alloy, are due to its excellent corrosion resistance. These metals can retain their structural stability over a long period of time within the human body, even though our needs for implants or stents are just temporarily under most situations. Remaining in our body, these metallic implants or stents may bring about unexpected negative complications, thus they have to be removed through a second surgery, which will certainly add to



patients' fear and suffering.

Biodegradable metals have attracted considerable attention in recent years, with two major alloying systems: magnesium alloys, and iron alloys. Zinc, an essential element with osteogenic potential in the human body, has recently begun to be studied as a kind of potential biodegradable metal. Unfortunately, pure zinc is soft, brittle, and has low mechanical strength in practice, which requires further improvement in order to meet clinical requirements. On the other hand, the widely used industrial zinc-based alloys usually contain bio-toxic elements, which brings up

biosafety concerns.

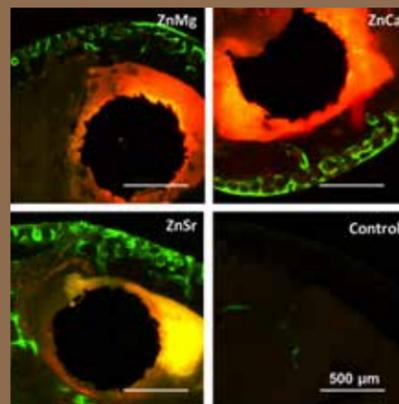
Professor Zheng Yufeng's group has found out a way to profoundly modify the mechanical properties and biocompatibility of pure zinc. They chose the three important essential nutrient elements: Mg, Ca, and Sr, which are well known for playing an irreplaceable role in bone formation and determining bone mineral density and bone strength as alloying elements to fabricate the Zn-1X binary alloy casting ingots. Different hot working conditions (rolling and extrusion) were employed on the Zn-1X (Mg, Ca, and Sr) alloys in order to further improve their mechanical per-

formance. The degradation and in vitro and in vivo biocompatibility test demonstrated that the Zn-1X alloys have enhanced mechanical properties, corrosion-resistant behaviors, and biocompatibilities of pure Zn by adding the alloying elements of Mg, Ca, and Sr.

Ph.D. student Li Huafang from Professor Zheng Yufeng's group is the first author of this research. Professor Qin Ling from Musculoskeletal Research Laboratory, Department of Orthopaedics & Traumatology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, also contributed to this research. This work was supported by the National Basic Research Program of China (973

Program), the National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars, the Research Fund for the Doctoral Program of Higher Education, the National Natural Science Foundation of China, the NSFC/RGC Joint Research Plan under Grant No. 51361165101 in Mainland China and N_CUHK449/13 in Hong Kong. It was also part of the Beijing Municipal Science and Technology Project, the Project for Supervisor of Excellent Doctoral Dissertation of Beijing, the China Postdoctoral Science Foundation, and the Joint Fund for Science and Technology Agency of Guizhou Province.

Representative histology of the cross-sections of mouse distal femoral



shaft from Zn-1Mg, Zn-1Ca, Zn-1Sr implanted pins groups and the sham control group observed under fluorescent microscopy at week 8. The green fluorescence indicates the new bone formation.

Correlation between Biodiversity & Ecosystem Functions Further Revealed on Tibetan Plateau

▣ Bai Luolan

As climates change and species are lost and recovered from ecosystems, it would seem that to be able to predict how ecosystems will function in the future in face of these changes is of great importance. Clearly, ecosystems perform

various functions simultaneously, which is referred to as ecosystem multi-functionality (EMF). Ecologists have been exploring the links between biodiversity and ecosystem functioning for more than two decades, yet research was mostly confined to aboveground studies. How-

ever, it remains unclear how climate mediates ecosystem functioning.

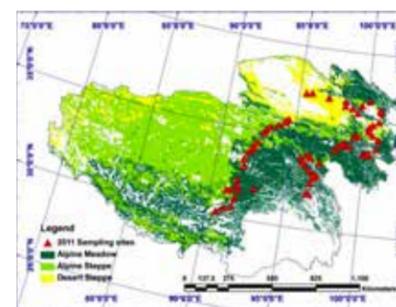
A research team led by Professor He Jinsheng, College of Urban and Environmental Sciences of Peking University, has explored the relative and combined effects of above and below ground biodiversity on mul-



iple ecosystem functions and how climate might mediate those relationships on the Tibetan Plateau. The article titled "The Links Between Ecosystem Multi-functionality and How Above and Below Ground Biodiversity are Mediated by Climate" was published in *Nature Communications* on September 2, 2015. Jing Xin, currently a post-doctoral student at the College of Urban and Environmental Sciences, Peking University, headed the research. The work was done in collaboration with scholars from the University of Copenhagen, the Chinese Academy

of Sciences and Chinese Academy of Forestry.

Researchers sampled plant and soil communities over an extensive area (>1,000,000 km²) in the northeastern and central Tibetan Plateau in China's Qinghai Province and the Tibetan Autonomous Region during the peak growing season, July to August of 2011. Their survey captured a substantial range of the vegetation types, soil classes, and climatic conditions found in the alpine grasslands on the Tibetan Plateau. In order to examine the biodiversity below ground, they used molecular techniques to assess diversity of soil bacteria, arbuscular mycorrhiza (AM) fungi, and archaea. DNA was extracted from soil samples and gene fragments encoding RNA were amplified and sequenced. Since the 60 selected sites were spread along an extensive climatic gradient, environmental



effects were also analyzed.

The researchers' results indicate that biodiversity, both aboveground (plant species richness) and below ground, was positively correlated with ecosystem multi-functionality (EMF), but that the below ground effect varied among components; some groups were positively related (bacteria and fauna), while others were not related (archaea and AM fungi) to EMF. Aboveground biodiversity explained more of the variation in EMF (42%) than did soil biodiversity (32%). Overall, plant species richness alone was the best single predictor of EMF, consistent with previous studies. The team of researchers established a model where a suite of biotic and abiotic variables (including soil pH, biodiversity, temperature, etc.) accounted for up to 86% of the variation in EMF, with the combined effects of above and below ground biodiversity accounting for 45% of the variation in EMF.

The results mentioned above have two important implications: first, including below ground biodiversity in models can improve the ability to explain and predict EMF. Second, regional-scale variation in climate, and perhaps climate change, can determine, or at least modify, the effects of biodiversity on EMF in natural ecosystems.

This research was funded by the National Basic Research Program of China, Strategic Priority Research Program of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the National Natural Science Foundation of China.

PKU Professors' Research Featured on Cover of Cell Stem Cell

▣ Bai Luolan

On August 6, 2015, the journal *Cell Stem Cell* reported recent advances on direct lineage reprogramming from Professor Deng Hongkui and Chai Zhen's labs as its cover story.

Direct lineage reprogramming refers to the conversion between differing cell types without stem cell-like middle stages. As research of the subject continues to occur, direct lineage reprogramming has emerged as a promising, fast, and direct approach for manipulating cell fate. It provides a new potential route to regenerate functional cells for therapeutic purposes.

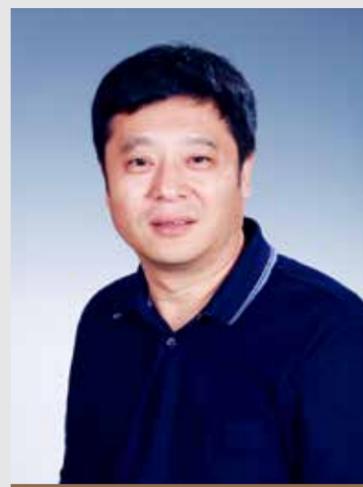
Previously, scientists have demonstrated that fibroblasts can be directly converted into diverse functional cell types by the viral introduction of known cell-fate-determining transcription factors or micro RNAs. However, the low efficiency of the method and the reliance on the success of the viral vectors have prompted scientists to seek alternate means of cell conversion. Thusly, an alternate strategy has emerged that utilizes small molecules to induce cell reprogramming. The small molecules in question are cell-permeable, cost effective, and non-immunogenic. Furthermore, the composition of the small molecules would be easy to standardize, manipulate, and

reproduce. Unlike transcription, the application of small molecules is also reversible.

In 2013, Deng's team developed a small-molecule approach to induce pluripotency (the ability of a cell to differentiate into another cell) from mouse somatic cells. This experiment demonstrated the feasibility of chemically reprogramming mouse cells toward pluripotency. They identified a chemical cocktail which was capable of reprogramming fibroblasts into induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSC).

This time, they confirmed the possibility of direct cell conversion between two differentiated cell types by pure chemicals.

In a previous study, the team found that three transcription factors (Ascl1, Brn2, and Myt11) are responsible for inducing neuron



generation from fibroblasts; of these, *Ascl1* is the master gene determining neuronal fate. Accordingly, the team screened for small molecules that promoted *Ascl1*-based conversion. Excitingly, they found that simultaneous administration of four chemicals identified as individual promoters of *Ascl1*-based reprogramming converted mouse fibroblasts into immature neurons. After further screening, an optimal combination of Forskolin, ISX9, CHIR99021, and I-BET151 (FICB) was determined to generate functional chemically induced neurons (CiNs) from fibroblasts at an extremely high efficiency (nine neurons for every ten starting fibroblasts).

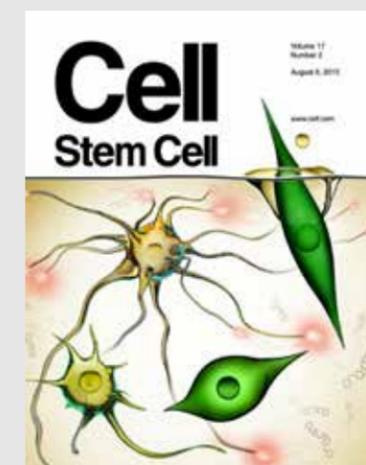
Gene expression profiling was performed on the generated CiNs to verify the co-expression of neuronal and functional subtype-specific

markers. It turned out that their gene expression profile resembled that of functional neurons and that both excitatory and inhibitory subtypes of single CiNs were detected. Other functional hallmarks of neurons were also confirmed for CiNs, including extensive neurite outgrowth and branching, voltage-dependent ion channels, the ability to fire action potentials and respond to glutamate and GABA, and the capacity to form afferent synapses with primary neurons. It was also shown that CiN generation was direct without an intermediary stage, indicating the success of direct reprogramming.

Overall, their study suggests a blueprint for engineering cell

identity using chemical agents in regenerative medicine. The possibility to employ this type of chemical reprogramming strategy for manipulating human somatic cell fates can be anticipated with promising therapeutic prospects. The findings also suggest an unanticipated level of somatic cell plasticity and indicate that somatic cell identity is much more flexible than previously appreciated.

Li Xiang, Zuo Xiaohan, and Jing Junzhan were the co-first authors of the article. The project was supervised by Prof. Deng Hongkui, Prof. Chai Zhen and Dr. Zhao Yang, who were co-corresponding authors of this article. The work was supported by the National Basic Research Pro-



gram of

China, the National Natural Science Foundation of China, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Key New Drug Creation and Manufacturing Program, and the Ministry of Education of China.

Team Develops a New Method to Analyze 5-formylcytosine

▣ Lin Zixi

A team led by Researcher Yi Chengqi from the School of Life Sciences at Peking University recently published an article titled "Bisulfite-free, base-resolution analysis of 5-formylcytosine at the genome scale" in the journal *Nature Methods* on September 7, 2015.

Active DNA demethylation in mammals involves oxidation of 5-methylcytosine (5mC) which can be oxidized by the ten-eleven translocation (TET)-dependent generation to 5-hydroxymethylcytosine (5hmC), 5-formylcytosine (5fC), and 5-carboxylcytosine (5caC). 5fC and 5caC can also be removed

through base-excision repair by mammalian thymine DNA glycosylase (TDG). However, genome-wide detection of 5fC at single-base resolution remains challenging. 5fC is found in many cell types and all major organs, but it is present at a level of 0.02% to 0.002% of cytosines. Therefore, highly sensi-

tive and selective methods are required for genome-wide detection of this derivative. Scientists have developed chemical-, enzyme- or antibody-based methods for enrichment of 5fC in genomic DNA, but such affinity-based approaches have only limited resolution. More recent base-resolution methods all rely on harsh bisulfite treatment for effective deamination of 5fC, which can result in further DNA degradation. Whole-genome mapping of 5fC using bisulfite-based methods requires an unusually high sequencing depth and thus is cost-prohibitive.

Yi's team now developed fC-CET, a bisulfite-free method that detects whole-genome 5fC signals at single-base resolution. They screened for chemicals that could form intramolecular cyclization with 5fC and successfully identified several chemicals that reacted readily with 5fC. One adduct between 5fC and 1,3-indandione (5fC-I) is read as a T instead of a C during PCR. Although the mechanism of the C-to-T transition awaits future investigation, they proposed that such a transition could be used as a direct readout of 5fC. To enrich 5fC-containing genomic DNA, they synthesized an azido derivative of 1,3-indandione (AI). AI completely converted 5fC to the 5fC-AI adduct under very mild conditions, without causing detectable DNA degradation, and hence allowing high DNA recovery. The reaction was also highly selective for 5fC among all modified cytosines. They then coupled a cleavable biotin to the AI-labeled 5fC via click chemistry. Such cyclization-enabled

C-to-T transition of 5fC (fC-CET) was used from the sequencing reads to obtain genome-wide maps of 5fC at single-base resolution.

They used several spike-in DNA sequences to confirm the specificity and sensitivity of fC-CET by quantitative PCR (qPCR). The results proved that AI showed no cross-reactivity to C, 5mC, 5hmC or 5caC. Moreover, chemical-assisted pulldown demonstrated efficient enrichment for 5fC-containing DNAs; even for sequences with only a single 5fC, fC-CET enriched the sequence by ~100-fold, with little of the density bias commonly associated with antibody-based strategies.

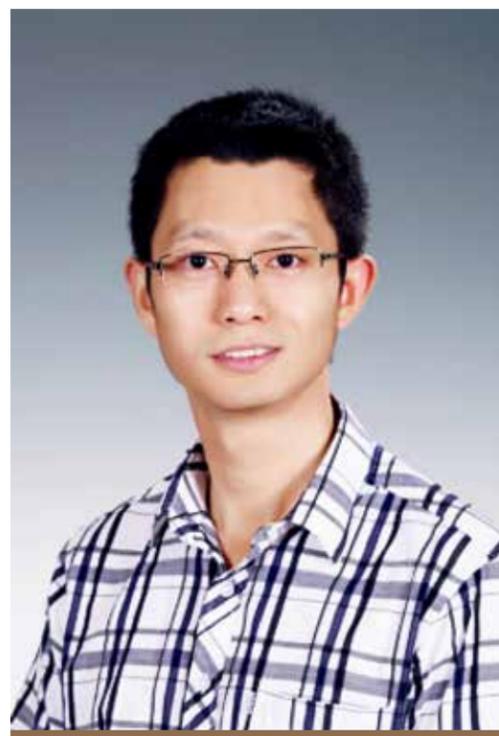
Then, they applied fC-CET to wild-type (Tdgfl/fl) and Tdg-null (Tdg-/-) mESCs and readily identified 29,501 and 77,750 5fC-enriched regions, respectively. These regions detected by fC-CET were in good agreement with those detected by fC-Seal.

Next, they created a base-resolution map of 5fC in the whole genome of mESCs. Previous base-resolution maps of 5fC were obtained either by reduced-representation bisulfite sequencing from wild-type mESCs or by whole-genome bisulfite sequencing from Tdg-/- mESCs. In comparison, fC-CET readily identified a comprehensive view of 5fC in the whole genome of mESCs.

With base-resolution maps of 5fC and TET-assisted bisulfite sequencing (TAB-Seq)-detected 5hmC, they next sought to investigate their spatial relationship by calculating the abundance of 5hmC and 5mC at the TAB-Seq-detected 5hmC

sites and fC-CET-detected 5fC sites. They found that abundance of 5mC in the 5fC-occupied sites is markedly lower. In addition, the chromatin-immunoprecipitation sequencing (ChIP-Seq) signals of both active histone-modification markers H3K4me1 and H3K27ac were much higher for 5fC than for 5hmC. Moreover, compared with the 5hmC regions, 5fC-marked regions were more enriched for the transcriptional coactivator. Taken together, their results suggests that 5fC-marked genomic regions may be more active than 5hmC-marked regions.

According to Yi, "Bisulfite-based epigenome sequencing tools have been the 'gold standards' of the field for a long time. Yet bisulfite treatment causes significant degradation, which significantly limits the use in analyzing precious samples. fC-CET



is bisulfite-free and yet base-resolution; thus I think this is a good step towards alternative and better epigenome sequencing technologies."

Professor He Bo from Depart-

ment of Chemistry and Institute for Biophysical Dynamics, the University of Chicago also supervised the project. Researcher Yi Chengqi and Professor He Bo are the joint-corre-

sponding authors. Undergraduate student Xia Bo, Ph.D. student from the University of Chicago Han Dali and Lu Xingyu are the co-first authors for the article.

Connection between the Consumption of Spicy Foods and Reduced Mortality Rate Revealed

► Han Jingtao

It is common belief that the over consumption of spicy food is bad for people's health because of the potent chemical it naturally contains -- capsaicin. According to New York City gastroenterologist Dr. Prem Chattoo, "Capsaicin is a very potent irritant. It can cause damage to the lining in the stomach, which in turn can cause gastritis, stomach ulcers and even intestinal disease such as colitis." However, in a recent study titled "Consumption of Spicy Foods and Cause of Specific Mortality; Population-based Cohort Study," carried out by Professor Lv Jun's group from the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the School of Public Health, Peking University Health Science Center, it was found that regular consump-

tion of spicy foods may actually contribute to reduced mortality rate. The research was published in the online British Medical Journal (BMJ) on July 8, 2015.

For some time now, scientists have been aware of the advantageous role spices and their bioactive chemicals play in a variety of chronic disorders. Whether spicy foods do more harm or good is still controversial, and empirical evidence linking daily consumption of spicy foods to reduced mortality rates is still lacking.

In the population-based prospective cohort study, a team co-led by Jun Lv, assistant professor from

Peking University Health Science Center, enrolled participants from 10 geographically diverse areas across China between 2004 and 2008 in China Kadoorie Biobank (CKB). One of the main aims of this study was to assess reliably the effects of both established and

“ However, in a recent study, it was found that regular consumption of spicy foods may actually contribute to reduced mortality rate. ”

emerging risk factors for a range of diseases. Participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire requiring

information about the frequency of their personal consumption of spicy foods and the main source of the spice, listed as “fresh chili pepper, dried chili pepper, chili sauce, chili oil, and other or don’t know.” Variables such as sociodemographic characteristics, lifestyle behaviors, personal health and medical history, and information on family members were also taken into consideration.

Thorough statistical analysis reveals some telling results. According to spicy food consumption categories (less than once a week and 1 or 2, 3 to 5, and 6 or 7 days), absolute mortality rates were 6.1, 4.4, 4.3, and 5.8 deaths per 1000 people every year. The results suggested that

participants who ate spicy foods every day reduced their risk of premature death by 14% when compared to people who ate chili peppers less than once a week. However, we should also note that eating spicy foods for 1 to 5 days a week instead of every day greatly assists the reduction of mortality rate.

Apart from its relationship with mortality, spicy food consumption was also specifically inversely associated with the risks of death due to cancer, ischemic heart disease, and respiratory disease. In addition, increased consumption of spicy foods in women was also significantly associated with a reduced risk of death due to infections. It is believed

that these features are related to the bioactive ingredients chili peppers contain.

In the sub-group analyses, researchers found that fresh chili is more favorable when it comes to preventing death due to cancer, ischemic heart disease, and diabetes. What’s more, significant differences were observed for alcohol consumption, with a stronger inverse association among participants who did not consume alcohol than those who did, which indicates that alcohol consumption may counteract the health effect brought by eating foods containing chili pepper.

The research received a great deal of media attention upon publication. Famous online news journals such as The Guardian, the New York Times and The Times all reported the findings the same day the article went online.

Professor Lv Jun from Peking University Health Science Center headed the study. The study was supported by grants from the National Natural Science Foundation of China, the National Key Technology Research and Development Program in the 12th five-year plan, the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology, the Welcome Trust in the UK, as well as the Kadoorie Charitable Foundation in Hong Kong. LQ is supported by National Institutes of Health grants from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, the Boston Obesity Nutrition Research Center, and the United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation.



PKU Team makes Nanoscale Observation of PM2.5

► Han Jingtao

Professor Duan Huiling and Professor Wang Jianxiang from the State Key Laboratory for Turbulence and Complex Systems from the College of Engineering, Peking University, along with other researchers from Soochow University, the State University of New Jersey, and the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention recently published a research that provides a different perspective to study the properties of a particular air pollutant. It was titled “Nanoscale characterization of PM2.5 airborne pollutants reveals high adhesiveness and aggregation capability of soot particles”. The research paper was published online in the Nature Scientific Reports on July 16, 2015.

Affecting billions of people around the globe, air pollution has become the major concern of modern cities. PM2.5, which are fine particles with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 micrometers or less, are the most noxious among all air pollutants for their ability to invade even the smallest airways in the respiratory system of human beings. Beijing, for example, suffered PM2.5 concentrations exceeding the limit recommended by the World Health Organization for 219 days in 2013.

The chemical properties alone, which are major factors affecting the noxiousness of the particles, does not determine dynamic behavior and thermodynamic properties. The shape and surface properties of particles also have notable impact on how they affect our health. However, thorough nano-mechanical particle analyses have never been performed before. Professor Duan Huiling and Professor Wang Jianxiang’s group carried out varied approaches such as atomic force microscopy (AFM), scanning electron microscope images (SEM) and energy dispersive X-ray spectroscopy surveys (EDAX) to obtain the essential information about these particles which have never been reported before.

After thoroughly investigating more than 500 fine particles collected in Beijing between December 2

and 7, 2013, with different tools, the results were quite revealing. According to the shape and chemical compositions of the particles, they were classified into three main groups: fluffy soot aggregates, elongated minerals with high content of metals, and spherical fly ashes made of metal-silicates. The rough particles seem to adapt to the shape of the fibrous network in the filter, suggesting that it could easily



change its shape to adapt to the contour of the surface. The contact area between them therefore increases, which magnifies their adhe-



sion force (improve their ability to adhere to each other). The adhesion forces measured on flat particles are close to the values of non-sticky flat surfaces such as Silicon, glass and Aluminum; on the contrary, rough particles showed adhesion force comparable to that of scotch tape or laboratory Carbon tape.

The team avoided the problem of conventional AFM, where it may move the particles on the surface of the substrate in contact mode, by using AFM tips with a very long cantilever and low spring constant from Bruker. With that, the researchers made an unprecedented observation. In the observation, the researchers found that the rough particle made of Carbon can aggre-

gate other with typical shapes and chemical compositions, such as Iron and Oxygen-rich fly ashes and elongated minerals. Their experiments demonstrated that fluffy soot shows strong adhesiveness and aggregation, leading to a more diverse composition and compilation of all possible toxic chemicals.

After examining the amount of particles of each type, the researchers concluded that, in the more than 500 particles analyzed: 49% are rich in Carbon, and are sticky, deformable and unstable. The other 26%

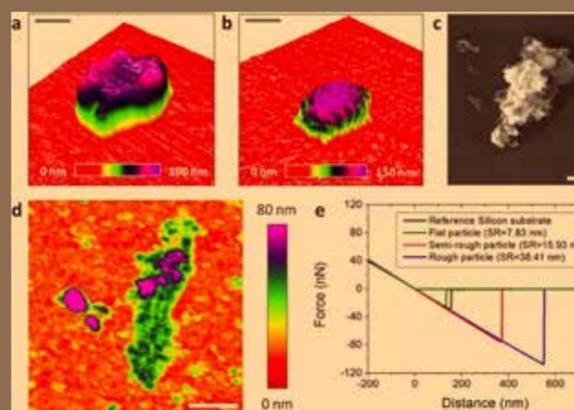
showed larger stability and were composed of metallic oxides. While the remaining 25% showed an intermediate behavior. This provided further support to the findings.

The new method of transferring particles is by using sonic waves to separate them from the filters together with a target substrate in the absence of solvent, through the use of low power, frequency, and short durations. This method provides possibilities for future in depth nanoscale observation of air pol-

lutants.

Shi Yuanyuan is the first author of this research. Mario Lanza from Institute of Functional Nano & Soft Materials, Soochow University, Wu Yaxi from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Institute of Environmental Health and Related Product Safety, and Dr. Lin Hao from Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey also contributed to this research. This work has been supported by the Major State Basic Research Development Program of the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC).

Aggregate of PM2.5 particles. (a) and (b) SEM and EDAX analyses of a PM2.5 particles aggregate on clean Silicon; the rough Carbon-rich soot particle shows to be very sticky and can attach Iron-rich spherical fly ash, elongated minerals and even rip off filter filaments during the transfer. (c) TEM analysis of an organic particle displaying hierarchical structure and proving the aggregation of small flakes and nanoparticles. The scale bars are 2 μ m for (a) and 100 nm for (c).



Brilliant Alumni for Bright Chemical Building

► Ge Nan

On July 6, 2015, the donation ceremony for Peking University's New Chemical Building was held at Linhexuan. Lin Jianhua, President of Peking University, Mr. Li Wei, Honorable Member of the School Council, along with other professors and alumni attended the ceremony.

In his speech, President Lin Jianhua expressed his gratitude to the

alumni and those corporations that contributed to the donation for the university. Mr. Li Wei, Chairman of IER Venture Capital Co., during his remarks looked back on his commitment to the project and how the plan was finally implemented. He said that the alumni were together making contributions to the development of PKU. At the end of his speech, he also expressed his thanks to the university for offering them

this great opportunity to make a donation.

After the ceremony, Professor Gao Yiqin, Dean of the College of Chemistry and Molecular Engineering, signed pacts with Zhu Bo Design Group Co., Ltd., LKK Design Co., Ltd., Landray Software Co., Ltd., Zhu Ge Financial Co., V&P Media Co., Ltd., and President Lin Jianhua also issued certificates of gratitude to all the donors.





Jinlianchu Financial Information Service to Support Startups and Innovation

► Liu Meina

On July 17, 2015, the launching ceremony for the Global Youth Innovation Festival was held at Tan Siu Lin Center for International Studies. During the ceremony, Wang Yuhong, 1987 graduate and the founder of Jinlianchu Financial Information Service Co. Ltd. (Beijing), signed a donation agreement

in support of innovation practice base and business startups. PKU Executive Vice President Wu Zhipan and PKU Vice President Gao Song attended the ceremony.

During the ceremony, Mr. Wang spoke highly of the innovative spirit and independent thinking of PKU students, and he said that he hopes that the funds would be helpful for

creating more talented people. On behalf of the faculty and students, Chen Mo from School of Journalism and Communication expressed her heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Wang's generosity for supporting the platform on innovation practice. She also hoped that the fund could help her start up her own business so that she can support PKU in return like Mr. Wang.

Donation from ENN Energy to Support Further Development in PKU

► Liu Meina

On July 8, 2015, a donation agreement was signed at Tan Siu Lin Center to mark ENN Energy's donation to Peking University. Lin Jianhua, President of Peking University, Wu Zhipan, PKU Executive Vice President, Wang Yusuo, Chairman

of ENN, and Han Ruigai, Chairman of the Public Welfare Charitable Foundation of ENN attended the ceremony.

President Lin spoke highly of ENN's contribution to the energy and chemical industry, solar technology, power conservation, and

environment technology.

During the ceremony, it was announced that the funds would be used for improving infrastructure construction, sponsoring scholarships, and supporting the study of new engineering technology in universities.



How to Give

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Administrative Building

Completed in 1926, the Administrative Building was originally named the "Shide Building". In 1931, it was renamed as the "Beigong Building". In fact, "Shide" and "Beigong" refer to the same person, James White Bashford, whose name was first translated as Shide and later as Beigong. Bashford was the second president of the Hui Wen School, which later developed into Yenching University.

The designer of the Administrative Building paid special attention to every detail of the structure. The symmetrical sides make the middle part stand out; the gray roofs, the red pillars, the white walls and the vivid paintings form a simple, elegant style and create a stately and quiet atmosphere. Some say it looks like an imperial palace, a holy temple, or an ancient Chinese academy. Large in size, the Administrative Building presents an aura of magnificence and leadership.

Photo: Huang Jianfeng

