



Peking University

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2015 / Issue 30



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Lin Jianhua

The New President of PKU

by Zheng Zihui



Lin Jianhua, Deputy Director of the Science and Technology Committee in China's Ministry of Education, delegate of the Twelfth National People's Congress, and Former President of Zhejiang University, was recently named the 27th President of Peking University.

A Well-Thought-Out Decision

On February 15, 2015, the inauguration ceremony was held at the YingJie Exchange Centre in the Sunshine Hall with more than three hundred guests in the audience. Pan Ligang, Vice-President of the Organization Department of the Central Committee of

the CPC spoke during the inauguration. In his speech, he said that the decision was well-thought-out and in the best interest of Peking University. PKU, established in 1898, is one of the country's top universities, and is often viewed as a fountainhead of avant-garde thinking that is tied to modern educational development in China. He stressed that Peking University and its people should follow the grand trend of socialist modernization; embrace the future with a broader perspective, a more open attitude, and a more persistent spirit. He thanked Wang Enge, who had led PKU for two years, for his hard work in strengthening teaching and research and

for putting forward various undertakings towards the University's development. Pan Ligang then continued to explain that Lin Jianhua's rich experience in education and running a school, his focus on innovation, and his persistence, diligence, pragmatism, democratic work style, and self-discipline make Lin an excellent choice to succeed Wang Enge.

In the following speeches made by Yuan Guiren, Minister in the Ministry of Education, Gou Zhongwen, Secretary of the Beijing Municipal Committee, and Wang Enge, Former President of Peking University and incumbent Vice-President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, all congratulated

Lin on his inauguration and expressed their support for the decision to appoint Lin Jianhua president of PKU. Then, both Mr. Yuan and Mr. Gou thanked Wang Enge for his contributions to PKU.

President Lin's Achievements and Accolades

Born in Shandong province in October 1955, Lin graduated from Peking University's College of Chemistry with a doctoral degree in 1986. Unlike his predecessors, he spent nearly 30 years at PKU as a student, professor, and dean before rising to the presidency. He earned his bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in chemistry before starting his teaching and research career in 1986. From 1988 to 1990, he was a research scientist at the Max-Planck Institute of Solid State Research in Stuttgart, Germany, and from 1990 to 1993, he was a doctoral fellow in the Department of Chemistry at Iowa State University in the United States. With his research focus on inorganic solid-state and material chemistry, he published over eighty papers and was editor of a number of chemistry magazines.

Lin returned to PKU as an Associate Professor in 1993, and from that time he served in a variety of posts until 2010: Professor of chemistry, Dean of the College of Chemistry, Vice-President and Provost, and then Executive Vice-

President and Provost of Peking University. After leaving PKU, he led Chongqing University from 2010 to 2013 and Zhejiang University from 2013 to 2015.

As Dean of the College of Chemistry, he implemented a series of reforms to attract talented students, improve discipline, and establish a principal investigator mechanism for research at

interdisciplinary studies, and established a number of research centers and institutes, such as the Biodynamic Optical Imaging Center (BIOPIC). He also made a remarkable contribution to the re-establishment of the College of Engineering, which was an important step in enhancing Peking University's position as a world-class educational institution.



the College, which greatly improved both the teaching and research abilities of the faculty. Another part of his reforms was to encourage the faculty to teach more courses so to increase course availability for students, and he encouraged faculty to spend more time guiding undergraduate dissertations, which enhanced the overall quality of teaching and learning in the College.

When he became Executive Vice-President and Provost of PKU, Lin devoted much of his efforts to a mentorship program that pairs up professors with freshmen, a further step in his reforms of undergraduate education. He promoted the combination of medicine, science, and engineering, enhanced

"The University is a Big Family"

After leaving Peking University for four years, Lin said during his inauguration that he was incredibly excited to be back at Yanyuan. Looking at the many familiar faces and also so many radiant new faces, he found himself lost for words. He thanked the Party Central Committee for having trust in him, and he said that he understood the responsibilities that come with this trust. He promised that through his determination and dedication, he would not let people down.

It is clear that Lin has great affections for Peking University: "Peking University was never just a school, she is a totem worshipped by generations, she represents the

future and hope of a nation; Weiming Lake was never just a lake, it ripples in the light of academic excellence; Jingyuan was never just a garden, students lie upon the waving grass looking up at the starry sky envisioning an even brighter future. This is not an ordinary landscape, every growing tree and every blossoming flower here are all part of a dream coming true. China has been through many stages of transformation, and Peking University has always been a significant landmark throughout these times.”

“In my heart, Peking

University is like a big family. Teachers, students, staff, and alumni are all important members of a big family, and the family ties bond us closely together. Teachers and students are like parents and children; teachers always hope to impart all the knowledge they have to their students. Schoolmates are like brothers and sisters; they study and live together. Colleagues are like relatives, although they come from all over the country and world, their mutual goals and pursuits make us a team stronger than ever before.” Lin said with great enthusiasm.

Lin vividly remembers that he once wrote a manuscript for the school when he was the Dean of the College of Chemistry 1998. It had a line that went like this: “I, like many others, may just be a passerby at Peking University, but we should be proud of any contribution that we make during our years here, no matter how insignificant they seem.”

Peking University, with over a century of history, has come far, and yet there remains so much to do and so much to accomplish. May our new president lead Peking University into a brighter future! ■

passed thirty years of reform and opening up, please visit it!” said the 72-year-old monk in Chinese and dressed in a navy blue cassock.

Thousand Buddha Caves: Like a Long-lost Friend

In 1982, he visited Xinjiang for the first time to conduct his jewelry business and was impressed by the honest and warm-hearted people of Xinjiang. Four years later, he traveled to the Kizil Thousand Buddha Caves (the earliest Buddhist art treasure trove in China—located 60 kilometers east of Baicheng County, Xinjiang), and he donated 100,000 yuan towards its protection. A year later, he became a monk in Japan, after which he continued to call for the protection of the Kizil Caves: “There are many ethnic groups in Xinjiang, and all of them are very hospitable,” commented Mr. Yasutaka, “Xinjiang is also rich in cultural heritage, which appeals to me very much. That’s the major reason why I love her so much”.

In 1987, Yasutaka established the “Japan-China Friendship Association for the Protection of Kizil Caves” and traveled around Japan to advocate his cause. “At that time, many people did not know about the Kizil Caves, so fundraising was extremely difficult,” he recalled. Nevertheless, he managed to raise over one hundred million yen, which he donated to the preservation of



“ There are many ethnic groups in Xinjiang, and all of them are very hospitable. Xinjiang is also rich in cultural heritage, which appeals to me very much. That’s the major reason why I love her so much. ”

the Kizil Caves. However, the preservation of Kizil Caves is not simply about raising funds. Deep in the desert, getting to the mysterious caves can prove a difficult task. Even with camels and Jeeps, the expedition was a difficult one. In addition, thousands of years of erosion and recent thefts have done enormous damage to the already-fragile caves. Getting supplies was also a daunting challenge: “Guess how many tons of water do sixty people need to survive for three weeks?” he asked during his speech, “Fifty tons!” But they could hardly meet such a requirement due to the harsh local conditions. Yet despite the various challenges, Yasutaka insisted on continuing his efforts.

World Heritage: Unveiling Treasures in the desert

Many precious artifacts were also found in Niya, today known as Minfeng, located in the Taklamakan Desert in Xinjiang. In his speech, Yasutaka called for everyone to realize the importance of

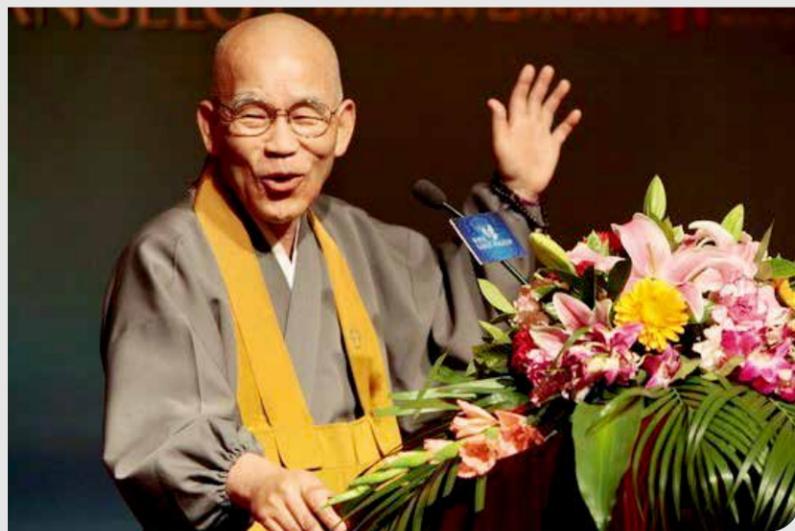
the cultural heritage that the Silk Road possesses. He was thrilled by the success of the application for the Chang’an-Tianshan corridor of the Silk Road to be added to the World Heritage list, adding that he had followed the news very closely in Japan.

He was fully aware of the expedition’s dangers: “It is very dangerous in the desert, and there are even deaths from time to time,” he recalled. Sandstorms, transportation difficulties, lack of funds, and difficulty in coordination between experts from different countries are just some of the challenges they faced on a regular basis. Nevertheless, “Preservation must come first” remains Yasutaka’s motto. “Research can always come afterwards, but if the cultural heritage disappears, there will be nothing to work on at all.”

International Cooperation: Back to the Starting Point with a Smile

“We need a forum like this to discuss and cooperate,” Yasutaka stated. Preservation

Kojima Yasutaka I Would Like to be Buried in the Taklimakan Desert ■ Xu Rui



Kojima Yasutaka, a prominent Buddhist monk from Japan, has always been friendly with

China. Over the past thirty years, he has donated over 30 million yuan to Xinjiang, and is committed to the economic,

educational, and cultural development of Xinjiang. During the Beijing Forum of 2014, he presented a speech entitled “My Xinjiang Silk Road – Culture, Politics, Economy, and the Road to Cooperation”. The Silk Road, in which Xinjiang is an important stopover, is a network of trade and cultural transmission routes that was central to cultural interaction between the West and East by traders, merchants, pilgrims, and others from China, India, and the Mediterranean during various periods of history.

“Xinjiang has witnessed dramatic changes during the

and cooperation go hand in hand, and the importance of international cooperation has already been reflected in China, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan's joint application for world heritage status for corridors of the Silk Road. Countries around the world have diverse history, politics, and culture, which is why conflicts may occur. Communication becomes particularly important in preventing such conflicts. Kojima Yasutaka believes that the preservation and study of the Silk Road is not only important for China but also for the rest of the world.

Kojima Yasutaka stressed in his speech that he fully understood the diplomatic skills and legal knowledge needed for international cooperation. Foreign researchers and media tend to take photos or publish research results without permission or authorization. He believed that this was no different from smuggling cultural relics abroad. Respect for Chinese laws and regulations has always been part of his principles, and this perhaps is the reason why he is the only foreigner to be awarded with a license from China's State Administration of Cultural Heritage.

He ended the speech with a large pronouncement: "I would like to be buried in the Taklimakan Desert!", which received a loud applause. We caught a glimpse of his love for Xinjiang and of his thirty years of unrelenting efforts in Xinjiang. ▀

Additional Information:
Approved by the Chinese Ministry of Education and under the auspices of the Beijing Municipal Government, the Beijing Forum is an international forum co-sponsored by Peking University, the Beijing Municipal Commission of Education, and the Korea Foundation for Advanced Studies.



Coming to China Was the Right Step

▣ David Walker

On February 28, 2013, my wife, Karen, and I flew from Melbourne to Beijing. I had accepted a two-year appointment to the newly created BHP Billiton Chair of Australian Studies, located in the Australian Studies Centre, School of Foreign Languages, Peking University (PKU). I had visited China and Beijing a number of times before as I am also a visiting professor at Renmin University. But the decision to live in China was a big step. Was it also the right step?

The Spring Festival was over, and while the weather was getting warmer it was not exactly spring weather as we Australians understood it. In the middle of April that year, there was a heavy and unusually late snowfall. We rushed out early that morning to photograph the beautiful PKU campus covered in snow. The lakes, the trees,

and the charming old Chinese pavilions were all freshly draped in snow. Others were there, all taking photographs of the scene too, but we were among the first. We felt very lucky to be in China and at PKU.

PKU was a logical location for Australia's first Chair of Australian Studies. PKU had opened its Australian Studies centre in 1998. The first and continuing Director of the Centre is Professor Hu Zhuanglin. He was a member of the famous 'gang of nine'—the first young Chinese scholars who were sent to the University of Sydney in 1979 to further their studies.

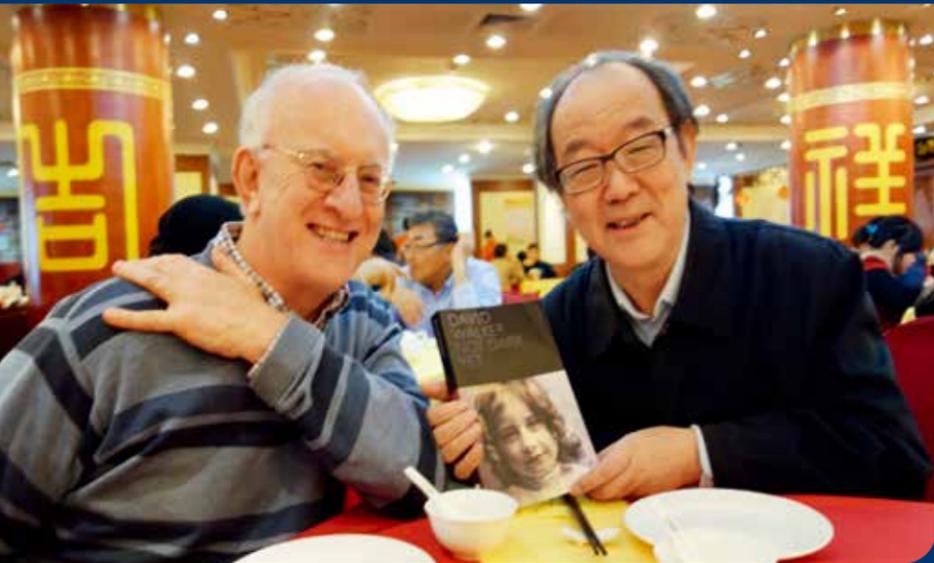
Professor Hu went on to become a distinguished linguist and a leading figure in China's Australian Studies community. The Australian Studies Centre at PKU now hosts an annual translation fellowship named in honour of Professor Hu.

In my role as Chair of Australian Studies, I am greatly assisted by another newly created body, the Foundation for Australian Studies in China (FASIC). FASIC is a not-for-profit organisation and while it enjoys government



support from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Universities Australia organization, the bulk of its funding comes from the private sector. BHP Billiton, the largest mining company in the world, is a generous supporter





of both the Chair and FASIC.

Although it is based at PKU, the Chair is designed to assist the development of Australian Studies programs across China. There are now well over thirty centres, and this year another three or four new centres will open.

These centres now make up an impressive network of Australian Studies Centres and programs across China, and it is one of my pleasant responsibilities as Chair to visit as many of them as possible. This has taken us to Mudanjiang in the far North East of China, to Hohhot in Inner Mongolia and to Shanghai.

We have visited Centres in Wei Hai, Hefei, Xuzhou, and Suzhou, and further visits are being planned. For most of these trips, we travel by bullet train. This is a wonderful way to see China, to meet other travellers, and to understand the speed of

China's development. Australia has talked about getting a bullet train, but while the talk is often fast and furious, the response has been very slow. Bullet trains need to be supported by big populations and much of Australia is very sparsely settled.

One of the very impressive sights on our journeys across China is the recently planted trees along roads and railway lines. Over the last 10 to 15 years China has planted millions of trees. Tree planting in Beijing is similarly impressive. When the trees lose their leaves in winter, the large birds' nests stand out clearly. Our two young granddaughters visited us in 2013. There was a great deal they loved about China, but the birds' nests were high on their list of good things to see.

On many of our train trips, we have been accompanied by Professor Li Yao. He has translated more Australian

books in to Chinese than anyone else. His total number stands at over thirty now, a record that is unlikely to be broken.

One of Professor Li Yao's translation tasks was a book of my own, titled *Not Dark Yet: A Personal History*. As we travelled by train to Shenyang, Harbin, and Jinan, Li Yao would ask me questions about the precise meaning of this or that phrase. There could be no better way of having a book translated. Train travel provides a perfect opportunity for both author and translator to get to know and understand each other.

The book is the story of an Australian family over five generations. It is a story of war and loss and of ordinary people living their lives in a new and often harsh continent. Li Yao tells me that Chinese people are interested in such stories. As an author, I hope he is right!

Among my other duties as Chair is to do what we can to make the Australian Studies Centre as active as possible. We host round table discussions, welcome visitors, and run conferences. If you want to know more about what we do, you can visit our website at: <http://pkuasc.fasic.org.au>. We have also worked closely with Professor Joe Graves from the PKU's World Institute for Film and Drama. In 2014, Peking University students performed their first Australian play, *Cosi*, written by Louis Nowra.

A new season of *Cosi*, to be performed both in Chinese and English, opens in March 2015.

My wife and I have already seen *Cosi* four times and have enjoyed the performance each time. The students have done wonderful job! We invited Australia's Ambassador to China, Her Excellency Ms. Frances Adamson, who laughed a lot and loved it, too. *Cosi* has been a great success and the Australian drama program is now an ongoing part of the activities at the PKU Centre.

I also teach a survey course on Australia. The course ranges widely from an examination of indigenous Australia down to current social, cultural, and political questions. It examines the history of Australia-China relations from the mid-

nineteenth century to the present, and there couldn't be better time to be teaching such a course. China is now a major trading partner of Australia. A free trade agreement has just recently been signed, and relations between our two countries have never been stronger. and relations between our two countries have never been stronger. And, very importantly, it is a pleasure teaching Chinese students.

In October 2014, the possibility of staying in Beijing for another year was raised. Did we want to stay another year? While we missed our young granddaughters very much and would like to see them, we decided to stay another year. Coming to China was the right step. We have

made many new friends, taught some wonderful students, and had a remarkable opportunity to see China in a way that few foreigners are able to. It has been a great pleasure and privilege to be here. China will always form a very important part of our lives and we will certainly try to return here on a regular basis. ■

Additional Information:

David Walker is the inaugural BHP Billiton Chair of Australian Studies at Peking University. He has written extensively on Australia and its relations with China and Asia. His recent book Not Dark Yet: A Personal History has been translated into Chinese by Professor Li Yao and was published by the People's Literature Publishing House, Beijing.

My Volunteer Trip to Egypt

✎ Yin Yihui

I am Chloe, an ordinary girl majoring in finance at the PKU School of Economics. The only remarkable thing about me is that I am deeply interested in volunteer work. For me, studying or working is just a way of enriching myself and guaranteeing my livelihood, while volunteer work is something closer to what I pursue in life. The moment I heard that I was given the chance to spend a month



volunteering in Egypt, I said yes without a second thought.

Unlike other volunteering

projects that I had previously participated in, this one was more target-oriented and well



organized. Volunteers were selected months in advance through the Internet from all over the world. A week of basic training ensured that we were equipped to perform numerous tasks on a tight schedule — we were trained to be professional, in contrast with many other volunteer programs which often place culture immersion first and volunteer work second. During our days there, we learnt from local craftsmen and in turn taught the skills to poor local people who lack the basic skills to make a living. We also cooked for the people as well as gave them recycled clothes.

The first few days were quite hard for me, no thanks to my stomach that disagreed with almost all the local food in Cairo. However, despite all the difficulties, I was able to complete all the tasks, as I was passionate about the work. I realized that no matter what difficulties we faced, people can achieve great things as long as they love what they do.

During the weeks of volunteer work, I made many

local friends. Vita is a very old woman living in a small house on her own. She lost contact with her son in a revolution, and her husband had passed away years ago. I was assigned the task to teach her handicraft skills so that she can make enough money to support herself. But to be frank, I doubted that I could teach a woman of her age. After all, we didn't share the same language and the handicraft skills involved seemed a little too hard even for a person with good eyesight like me. However, I shouldn't have worried, as Vita was so hardworking and confident that she made huge progress every day. I cannot forget the big smiles that she had every day, no matter if she made a mistake or if she did it well. On my last day, she showed me the photos of her family, and I learned from her shining eyes that she had never felt alone.

I have always felt that I needed to get out of my comfort zone and experience the real world. Yet, only until I stepped into the tiny,

muddy, and smelly slum, did I really understand poverty. Only when I saw the luxurious Shelton Hotel just several kilometers away from the slum, did I actually understand what disparity is, and it was moments like these that made me feel the urgency and necessity of doing something to make a difference.

Apart from the volunteering work I did, the friendship that I forged with the other volunteers was also an unforgettable memory. Never will I forget the crazy nights we stayed up watching the World Cup together, the lovely weekends when we sunbathed on the Alexandre beach, and partied on a boat on the Nile River, or the thrill of seeing the Milky Way in the desert at midnight.

While I may not be able to change the world by myself, I believe that every bit needs to be done and every bit counts. I enjoy volunteering, even if what I can do is so little, and I hold the belief that the world will one day be beautiful and full of love and giving. ■

Dong Qiang

The Bridge between France and China

► Yue Xin & Zhang Zuyue

Reading and discussing literary critics from the 19th century; being invited to his home for an afternoon tea; spending the last class of the semester at the Dr. Arthur M. Sackler Museum under his guidance — these were some of the experiences that students who took Professor Dong Qiang's class had.

On January 29, 2015, Professor Dong Qiang was awarded with the Legion of Honor, the highest honor in France, which was established by Napoleon in 1802. French Prime Minister Manuel Valls presented Dong Qiang with the award, which is given to individuals who have made significant contributions to the country. Past recipients include musician Bob Dylan, novelist J.K. Rowling, and Russian president Vladimir Putin, as

well as Chinese figures such as business magnate Sir Li Ka-shing, and novelist Louis Cha Leung-yung. Dong Qiang is the only Chinese recipient in the French-language teaching profession. Normally, if the award was presented by the French President or Prime Minister, the prize winner is not allowed to deliver a speech, but in this case, Prime Minister Manuel Valls invited Dong Qiang to deliver a speech after the award ceremony.

During his speech, Dong Qiang emphasized that 2014 marked the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and France, and he stressed that this award belonged not just to him, but to all those who had contributed to Sino-French relations.

Dong Qiang was awarded the French Education Medal



“Palm Tree Leaf” in 2008, and became the president of the jury of Le Prix Fu Lei in 2009. He also received La Grande Medaille de la Francophonie by L'Institut de France in 2013, and he was also regarded as one of the “50 ans 50 personnes” during the ceremony of the fiftieth anniversary of Sino-French diplomatic relations in 2014.

These awards are evidence



of Dong Qiang's important contributions in cross-cultural communication. Dong Qiang has translated to Chinese the masterpieces of André Breton, the founder of French surrealism; the works of Milan Kundera, a famous Czech writer; and the works of the 2008 Nobel Prize winner Gustave Le Clézio. He

also translated some Chinese classics into French, such as *The Analects of Confucius* and *The Selected Poems of Li Po*. He also co-authored the best-selling children's book, *The Ten Thousand Nights of Dream*, intended for French children wishing to learn Chinese.

Not only is Professor Dong an established translator, but

he is also a respected teacher who has inspired his students to dive into the world of the French language and culture. According to his students, his teaching approach is flexible, and new things can always be learned and experienced during his lessons—not only in literature but in art as well. ▀

Cosmopolitan Individuals The Chinese Diaspora at PKU

▣ Yue Xin



As Angela Xin sat at a manicure parlor in a mall in Nanjing, she told the lady working on her nails that she is an American.

“Why do you look Chinese?” asked the puzzled lady. Angela explained to her that although she is ethnically Chinese, she had lived her entire life in

the United States. The lady remained confused.

“In my first few months in China, people would always ask if I was a Korean, half-white, or a Chinese ethnic minority.” However, as Angela's mastery of Mandarin gradually improved, doubts of her origin dwindled.

“One thing that I noted about myself was that I had black hair and black eyes like everyone else in China. I could easily blend into any crowd, whether at a subway station or in a class, and I was treated the same as everyone else in the 1.3 billion population. Back in America, however, I knew I was different, part of the larger melting pot. More accurately,

I was one of the 17.3 million of what is considered Asia America.”

Cosmopolitan is a more appropriate adjective to portray students like Angela, as they are bicultural and bilingual individuals of Chinese ethnicity. When these overseas Chinese students first arrive at Peking University (PKU) they are usually excited to bond with their local friends. However, as time passed, they began to realize that they did not completely fit into the local population, nor did they truly fit into the Western student groups. “The truth was, I kind of fit into both,” Angela quipped.

This cultural fuzziness is also found in Belezza Chan, an MBA student at PKU, who was born in Brazil and received her education in the United States. “Back in the US, people say I am Chinese because of the way I look. In Brazil, I am a gringa (a somewhat disparaging term referring to a foreign woman in Latin America—especially when of English or American origin) because of how much time I have lived outside of my home country. In China, I am not Chinese because of my behavior. As part of the Chinese diaspora, I do not feel like I belong anywhere I go, including China.”

Belezza has picked up a lot of Chinese culture while in China, and she is impressed by China's long history. She is amazed that the food here can be so different from what her

mom cooked or what Chinese restaurants offer outside China. She also got to know for the first time that different parts of China have very distinct cultures, and she finds it interesting when her classmates talk in Mandarin in different accents.

Angela Xin is the co-founder and organizer of the PKU Omega Society, an international intellectual community that seeks to connect the local Chinese students with the Chinese diaspora at PKU. “We choose the name ‘Omega’ because it is homophonic with ‘Europe, America, and Asia’, the most

“**We choose the name ‘Omega’ because it is homophonic with ‘Europe, America, and Asia’, the most common places we are from.**”

common places we are from,” explained Angela. The Omega Society often organizes group activities with the PKU English Corner group, and they strive to improve the English skills of local Chinese students and the Mandarin proficiency of the overseas Chinese.

The first meeting of the Omega Society was launched on March 5, 2015, in a small classroom with many snacks

and drinks. Chatting with excitement, the students bonded together in terms of their mutual ethnic origin.

“Would you please recommend some courses that introduce Chinese culture and politics?” asked Dannah Zhang, a student majoring in finance at York University in Canada who had just started her exchange semester in PKU. When it comes to finance, the curriculum here seems very similar to what we have in our home university, but having the opportunity to take other modules like Chinese Modern History would be the real difference for me.”

Dickson Tan, president of the Malaysian Students Association at PKU, is also of Chinese origin. Having spent his childhood in a country with diverse cultures, he is adept at Mandarin, Malay, English, as well as Cantonese, and other Southern Chinese dialects. Another Chinese Malaysian in the Omega Society is Liew Soon Yi, who introduced to the audience the Chinese independent high schools in Malaysia during the discussions.

On the following Friday night, these Chinese internationals went to party at Wudaokou—one of the most boisterous spots in Beijing. Talking and laughing in fluent English while playing beer pong at their dining table, they were having a party like the parties that they were used to in their own countries. ▀



Honoring the Girls

Girls' Day at Peking University

✎ Zhou Huiying

Every year on March 7, Peking University (PKU) celebrates its Girls' Day. In China, "women" (fù nǚ) was a term used more for married women, so International Women's Day on March 8 didn't really feel like a day for unmarried college students, and female university students in the 1990s came up with the idea of Girls' Day, which they believed was better suited to unmarried college girls than the International Women's Day. Girls' Day has since become a festival celebrated in several universities around China, and many of its activities catered to female students on this special day.

On March 7, as one walks on campus, one will definitely come across numerous banners

put up by male students to express their admiration for PKU's female students. The content of the banners were bold, sincere, and often poetic, such as "I'm willing to cross thousands of miles in exchange for a wisp of your affection."

All activities went through long preparation before the day of the festival. PKU's Students Union, as well the student unions of the various faculties and departments all tried their best to present a memorable and unique experience for the female students.

The PKU Student Union prepared various surprises for female students, such as giving them free customized postcards that they could send to their families and friends to share the happiness of the festival with them. What's



more, female students who did not have a mirror in their dormitory room got one installed for free. One girl excitedly said, "It was a shame that there was no dressing mirror in our room. It was really inconvenient to go to the restroom whenever I needed it. This is the most thoughtful and practical gift I have ever received."

Another interesting activity organized by the PKU Student Union was "Meet Your Ms./Mr. Destiny". The game had male and female students pick a random card, and the pairs who had picked the same cards would then be deemed as 'destined to be'. Even more, the first pair that had the same

“The charm of this game lies in the uncertainty and mysteriousness of fate. We really hoped this game would be a surprise and bring some happiness to the girls.”

card number could enjoy a candlelight dinner together for free! "The charm of this game lies in the uncertainty and mysteriousness of fate. We really hoped this game would be a surprise and bring some happiness to the girls", said an organizer from the PKU Student Union.

Apart from colorful activities held by the PKU Student Union, the School of Foreign Languages held a series of unique and interesting activities as well.

One of them was called "Cinderella and the Prince". Each female student from the School of Foreign Languages was "Cinderella" and the boys were the girls' "princes". The

female students wrote their wishes and personal contact information on a card, and then these cards would be collected and randomly distributed to the male students, who then got in touch with their assigned "Cinderella" to help her realize her wishes. Those wishes were usually small but meaningful: such as helping the girls borrow books or buying them breakfast.

"I was so excited when I received the reply of my 'prince'. Instead of borrowing the book that I requested from the library, he bought it for me. This activity gave me an opportunity to see the gentle and generous side of the male students in my department. I'm really happy, and I'd like to show my appreciation to our students' union and my 'prince'!" a female student said.

What got both male and female students most excited was the "Running Man" game, which was easy but competitive. Participants were divided into teams, each consisting of one female student and two male students. A nametag was affixed to the back of each participant and then the game began. Male students whose nametags were removed would be removed from the game, but the game would

still continue; however, should the girl in the team lose her nametag, the entire team would immediately lose the game. Hence, it was imperative that the boys protect the girl from the opponents at all costs. The entire venue was filled with adrenaline as the students screamed and scrambled in order to avoid being cornered by their opponents.

Apart from this exciting game, the PKU School of Foreign Languages Student Union also organized some activities that showed a quieter side of the students. "Goddess by Your Side" was one such activity. This was a photography competition that encouraged male students to take photos of the beautiful moments of one of their female classmates: It could be of a girl smelling a flower, feeding the cats around campus, or simply smiling.

This year's Girls' Day has left us with so many wonderful memories for both female and male students. Girl's Day is not only a festival for girls but also an opportunity for all students to relax, appreciate each other's company, and to know one another better. ■





Building a Bridge Across the Strait Winter Camps of the Taiwan Research Association

by Liu Susu

“ Thanks to TRA (Taiwan Research Association), my Taiwanese friends and I have had a good time in Beijing, and we met again the following week—this time in Taipei! ”

The Taiwan Research Association is a student association at Peking University (PKU). Founded in 2002, it strives to promote cultural communication between young people from both sides of the Taiwan Strait. With the support of the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, the All-China Federation of Taiwan Compatriots, the National Society of Taiwan Studies, the Office of Hong Kong, Macao & Taiwan Affairs at PKU, and the School of International Studies at PKU, TRA has become one of the most popular associations in PKU in less than ten years.

The Taiwan Research Association conducts a variety of events, including lectures, sharing sessions, and regular movie screenings. These fun events ensure that members participate actively in the association's activities, which are

aimed at boosting cross-strait communications.

Mao Wei had attended both the Beijing Chinese Culture Winter Camp and the Taiwan Environmental Protection Winter Camp, which were the mainstay of TRA's activities this winter.

Beijing Chinese Culture Winter Camp

During the Beijing Chinese Culture Winter Camp, 280 college students from Taiwan, together with 30 volunteers from PKU explored the historic city of Beijing.

They visited the best of Beijing's scenic spots and historical sites. As the Chinese saying goes, “He who has never been to the Great Wall is not a true man”. As the world's longest manmade structure and one of the Seven Wonders of the

World, China's Great Wall did not fail to fascinate the young people. Cold as the weather was, the whole group still climbed up to a tower on the Great Wall. Keeping to their prior promise, the male students, in typical macho spirit, took off their shirts and took a photo of themselves flexing their muscles. “It was a challenging but unforgettable experience,” Mao said, “We successfully drew the attention of passers-by.”

“The tour of the Palace Museum (located in the Forbidden Palace) also impressed them a lot,” Mao told us. Mao was at first confused when he heard that there was another Palace Museum in Taipei, too. His puzzlement was soon resolved after a productive conversation with the Taiwanese students. He learnt that Taipei's Palace Museum and Beijing's Palace Museum share the same

roots, as the old Palace Museum in Beijing was split in two as a result of the Chinese Civil War.

The natural sights around campus surprised the group of Taiwanese students as well. They were all understandably excited as they inched their way to the center of the frozen Weiming Lake in PKU: “Wow! It's my first time walking on a lake!” a girl exclaimed. Having come from the South, many of them have never seen snow or frozen lakes. They also greatly appreciated the whole-day of skiing.

The Taiwanese students were given an opportunity to attend lectures on China's development, to attend Peking Opera performances, and also to have the world-famous Peking roast duck. Over the days spent here, our friends from Taiwan embraced and adored the traditional culture that Beijing has to offer.

Taiwan Environmental Protection Winter Camp

The Taiwan Environmental Protection Winter Camp was held just a week after the Beijing Chinese Culture Camp. Organized by TRA, it was attended by college students from the top universities from both sides of the Strait. Mao Wei was also one of the participants in the winter camp.

The participants were selected from Peking University, Tsinghua University, Beijing Normal University, Beijing Forestry University, National

Taiwan University, National Chiao Tung University (Taiwan), National Taiwan University of Science and Technology, and National Tsinghua University (Taiwan).

During the camp, they had the opportunity to visit eco-friendly companies, environmental protection associations, and a local incinerator in Taiwan.

Da Ai (meaning “great love”) Technology Company is a famous social enterprise in the field of environmental protection in Taiwan. The company has its roots in Tzu Chi, a non-government organization founded in 1990

by Cheng Yan—a Taiwanese nun, often called the “Mother Theresa of Asia”. In 2003, the Tzu Chi International Humanitarian Aid Association (TIHAA) was formed. In the following years, TIHAA fully utilized its social networks to mobilize volunteers, and they began to manufacture recycled blankets and apparel to send to refugees overseas. In 2008, they founded Da Ai Technology Company in order to better carry out its mission of protecting Mother Earth. It is now a self-sufficient social enterprise, with no help needed from the authorities.

After visiting the production lines and learning about the story of the company, students were amazed by the synthetic

clothes made from plastic bottles. They also got a glimpse of the hardships that the organization had faced, especially in its early years.

As the largest trash incinerator of all three in Taipei, the Beitou Trash Incinerator catches people's attention locally and even globally. In this city with a two million population, there are only thirty pollution trash incinerator areas and one landfill



site. Residents in the vicinity of the Beitou Trash Incinerator spoke highly of the measures that the authorities have taken to minimize their inconvenience. They explained that sport facilities were free to them as part of the benefits provided by the authorities. The incinerator was also under strict regulation by both government and social groups, so they did not need to worry about air pollution.

The environmental protection journey in Taipei inspired the Beijing students to focus their attention on the environmental issues plaguing the Mainland. At the same time, the Taiwanese students better appreciated and cherished the outcomes of their efforts in environmental protection over the years. ■



Goodbye 2014, Hello 2015

by Jiayin Zhao & Xiaojian Chen

Five, four, three, two, one... Happy New Year! With the countdown and a myriad of performances, including songs, dances and magic acts, Peking University (PKU) brought in the New Year in the Khoo Teck Puat Gymnasium. The audience, including PKU Council Chairman Zhu Shanlu and PKU's Former President Wang Enge, had a magnificent and amazing night.

The grandeur of the night left a long-lasting impression on the audience. "The shows are marvelous! I just wish the night would be longer so I can enjoy it longer!" one audience member exclaimed. Many in the audience said that The Shiniest Star in the Sky performance sung by Lin Zhongwang from Yuanpei College was their favorite moment of the night, and everyone was so touched by the beautiful melody that they waved

their phones in the air like glow sticks.

Student staff from the PKU Department of Culture and Sports carefully selected all of the performances of the night. The preparation process started one entire month in advance, and some performances were confirmed only two weeks before the gala. "We've posted relevant information on the school BBS, Renren (China's version of Facebook), and WeChat. The students and teachers were all very enthusiastic, and we had quite a hard time choosing from them," said He Sisi, head of the department and director overseeing the gala night.

The gala presented the audiences with other impressive shows as well, including a magic act by Rui Changchang, a student from the School of Physics. At first, he was rather timid and shy, and he blushed every time he spoke. However, his performance

was spectacular. The staff worked together on the improvement of his deliver speech. Again and again, they went through his show and each time came up with brand-new ideas to interact with the audience. The hosts assisted the performance as well, coming up with more ideas and working together as a team. Thanks to the effort of everyone, the magic show amazed the audience and was received by applause that filled every corner of the stadium.

Adorable young children from the PKU Preschool Education Center performed another show that night called The Coolest Ethnic Trend, a trending Chinese pop song. Their show was the first show right after the New Year countdown and marked a refreshing start of the New Year. The parents showed their satisfaction of the performance as well as their gratification to their teacher's efforts by giving them a

large bouquet of fragrant flowers.

Tickets, as one can imagine, were really scarce among the students. The staff posted the information on how to obtain tickets a few days before the big night, and enthusiastic students formed a long and winding line on the first day to get a ticket. The school's bulletin board was also inundated with posts from students seeking to buy tickets. Although the celebration was moved from the Centennial Memorial Auditorium to the larger Khoo Teck Puat Gymnasium due to the overwhelming demand for seats, some students and alumni were still left disappointed.

The stage was also open to the teachers and school staff. The zealous teachers had started their preparation months ago and came up with a dazzling Chinese dance called the Fragrant Lotus. Other shows were presented as well, including

a Chinese traditional dance performance of The Weiming Lake: The Moon Reflection by the Shenzhen Graduate School

“Having gone through over twenty days of preparation and nights of stress, it is really worthwhile to see everyone enjoying their night on New Year's Eve.”

of PKU. Students from the Capital Normal University and Communication University of China also brought to us a talk show about How to Fall in Love, while the international students in PKU entertained the audience with their creative show Mario. A group formed by the school's staff, including security guards, cleaners, and cafeteria ladies

performed the classic song My Chinese Heart. Touched by their heartwarming performance and their contribution to the school, the crowd stood up and applauded loudly.

"Having gone through over twenty days of preparation and nights of stress, it is really worthwhile to see everyone enjoying their night on New Year's Eve," gushed He Sisi, "It's really awesome to make so many friends and learn so much in the process. I just want to say 'thank you' to my dear colleagues."

"This is my second year in the department of culture and sports, and I'm really enjoying my time here—it's a warm and big family. Having witnessed the development of the shows from their original form to their final perfect and polished form, I must say that it was really worth our time and effort," said Zhu Xiaoxue, a student staff of the gala, with a grin. ■

Our TEDx, Our Aha! Moments

✦ Wei Wei & Zhang Rutian



On March 7, 2015, TEDxPekingUniversity was successfully held at Peking University (PKU). Nine outstanding speakers from different fields and backgrounds shared their own eureka experiences in life with hundreds in the audience.

TED, an inspiring mixture of Technology, Entertainment, and Design, is a global nonprofit

community aimed at spreading great ideas and enlightening conversations. With its powerful, inspiring and short messages, TED talks are extremely popular around the world. The TEDx project was created in the spirit of TED's mission: "ideas worth spreading". It supports independent organizers who want to create a TED-like event in their own community. A

TEDx event is a local gathering that is fully planned and coordinated independently. The content and design of each TEDx event is unique and developed independently, and in this case, TEDxPekingUniversity is designed around the topic of "the Aha! Moment" and organized by the PKU community.

When it came to the theme, "the Aha! Moment",

the TEDxPekingUniversity organizing team leader Yin Danqing, research fellow at the PKU Graduate School of Education, talked about her passion in TED. After listening to online TED talks, she inevitably became one of those go-getters who think about the possibility of being more involved in the event rather than simply watching from the sidelines.

After a long-drawn battle to apply for the official license, the organizing team finally obtained clearance to organize a TEDx event. Yin saw this as a meaningful project to unearth local voices and make more great ideas heard: "As a psychological term, 'the aha moment' refers to the common human experience of suddenly understanding a previously incomprehensible problem or concept." she explained. The team, after heated discussions, eventually chose this theme to unite the nine speeches.

Once the event was announced, a massive number of enthusiastic volunteers signed up to assist in the event. The majority of these volunteers were students at PKU, and they were assigned with multiple tasks, including stage design, souvenir design, as well as backstage and front stage work. Despite their varied responsibilities, passion and innovation were something they share in common.

TEDxPekingUniversity proved so popular that a mere twenty percent of the people who signed up to be in the audience were accepted. For this twenty



“ I am so glad to be here to get inspiration for my own 'aha moments'. I was really impressed by the speakers. I think these mind-blowing experiences will have great influence on me. ”

inspiration for my own 'aha moments'. I was really impressed by the speakers. I think these mind-blowing experiences will have great influence on me.” Another in the audience was deeply moved by David Walker, who became legally blind but got on with life and worked with great inner strength. This student was also determined and excited to do more sports to keep fit and shape his personality after learning about Yu Jia's persistence in participating in marathons.

percent, the interesting and thought-provoking nine speeches made it an interesting and well-spent afternoon. The success of this event must be attributed to the organizers and the volunteers who worked hand-in-hand to make this an unforgettable day for the audience.

"We were able to listen to different but great views from deep thinkers. I took many notes during the speeches, although I knew that there would be videos uploaded soon," a PKU student in the audience said with delight, "I am so glad to be here to get

The volunteers were, in particular, proud that they contributed to the creation of TEDxPekingUniversity as a stage for people to share enlightening ideas. "It is our TEDx!" a girl cheered, "I was so lucky to be involved in this event, to meet with interesting and friendly people from different backgrounds who shared the passion about TED and creative thinking, and to become part of a team. Sometimes it was tough, but I always knew there were teammates working with me and supporting me." ■



China's Economy in 2015 Forecasts from Leading Chinese Economists

Wang Runjian

A half-day forum was held at the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) on January 7, 2015, bringing together leading experts on China's economy to present their forecasts on China's economy in the coming year. The forum is part of the Sino-US Economic Dialogue co-organized by Peking University's (PKU) National School of Development (NSD) and the China Macroeconomic Research Center (CMRC), as well as the National Committee on United States-China Relations (NCUSCR).

Nearly three hundred prominent figures from the economic, business, and media fields came together at the forum to discuss pertinent economic issues for the year 2015. Despite

the current slowdown of China's growth, the speakers at the forum were largely optimistic about China's reform and development prospects following the Third Plenum of the 18th CPC Central Committee.

Professor Justin Lin Yifu, Honorary Dean of the NSD, delivered the opening remarks on the topic of "China's Medium to Long-Term Economic Development Prospects Post Third Plenum". Professor Lu Feng, Director of the CMRC, also presented his forecast on China's macro-economy in his speech, "Analysis and Predictions for the Chinese Economy in 2015".

Both speakers pointed out that despite the slowing of China's economic growth as

the country's economy enters a "new normal", China still has the potential to maintain a medium-to-high level growth rate of about seven percent for the next two decades. However, to continue enjoying the huge potential for development, China has to deepen its comprehensive reforms and ensure a stable external environment.

Following the forum, the Chinese economists met with the USA's National Security Council, Department of the Treasury, Department of Commerce, Department of State, and the White House on January 8 and 9. The dialogue saw in-depth and meaningful discussions on key economic issues between both countries. ■



height.

Led by Professor Bancha Chalapirom, Dean of CU's Faculty of Education, eleven delegates from CU visited PKU in December 2014. The delegation was welcomed by PKU Vice President Li Yansong, and the two sides discussed the possibilities of carrying out more collaboration in

“In January 2015, twenty professors and students from CU participated in the winter camp organized on the PKU campus.”

student exchanges and teaching exchanges. During the visit, the delegation also met with the council of the Confucius Institute at Chulalongkorn University (CICU).

In January 2015, twenty professors and students from CU participated in the winter camp organized on the PKU campus. Incorporating a variety of courses such as Chinese, calligraphy, painting, paper

cutting, and Tai Chi (a Chinese martial art). The camp not only aimed at improving the Chinese proficiency of its participants but was also designed to provide them with a comprehensive picture of Chinese culture. The PKU Office for Student Affairs also introduced to the participants what it is like to study at PKU as an international student and many expressed their wish to study at PKU in the future.

The winter camp is part of a series of cultural exchange programs organized by CICU, which was established in 2007 under the support of Her Royal Highness Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, alumna of both CU and PKU. Since then, CICU has become a crucial bridge between the two schools' exchanges and cooperation, and it was named an "Outstanding Confucius Institute" for its contributions towards the promotion of Chinese culture and language in Thailand.

Back in September 2014, a delegation from PKU paid a visit to CU to discuss further cooperation, and the delegates

also attended the tenth anniversary gala event of the Confucius Institute Day at CU. On January 7, 2015, the HRH Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Chinese Library of CICU was completed after two years' planning and construction. With a collection of twenty-four thousand Chinese books, it is now the largest Chinese library in Thailand and an important channel for Thai people to learn more about China.

The delegation visit and the winter camp marked the deepening of the collaboration between CU and PKU, and the camp has also added to the diversity of the short-term study programs that PKU offers. PKU has always been exploring new modes for short-term cultural exchange programs, and at present, its high-level, multi-type, year-round programs attract over four thousand overseas participants to the campus each year, which have become an integral part of PKU's diverse study programs for international students. ■

Close Collaboration between Chulalongkorn University and PKU

Zhong Xue

From December 2014 to January 2015, a delegation from Thailand's Chulalongkorn

University (CU) participated in a winter camp held at Peking University (PKU) for CU's professors and students. During

this winter camp program, both schools enhanced their collaborative spirit and brought their relationship to a greater

David Walker

Fighting Back from “Legal Blindness”

▣ *Ou Kun*

On March 7, 2015, TEDxPKU was conducted at Peking University (PKU). David R. Walker, professor of the PKU-BHP Billiton Chair Professor of Australian Studies, was invited to share his experience of continuing his life and archival research despite being deemed “legally blind” by his ophthalmologist. Below is an adapted version of his lecture.

Declared Legally Blind

“Towards the end of 2004, I become legally blind. It was November, and I had begun my workweek in a normal fashion. I was reading, I was driving, I was able to make myself a cup of coffee, and I was able to function like a normal human being. But by the end of that week, I was declared legally blind. I suffered from what was called macular degeneration, which is the process by which the center of

the field of vision in the retina collapses altogether. Now I still have peripheral vision, so I can see things on the edge of my line of sight but anything that I look at directly appears to me as a blur.

I’m a historian, and historians have to read many documents, such as newspapers, letters, and manuscripts. But over the course of the three days, the world that I inhabited professionally, psychologically, and socially disappeared very abruptly. I was in a very dark place, both literally and metaphorically.”

“Get on it, get the renewable neuroplasticity happening!”

“At that time, I had been doing some reading and thinking on neuroplasticity, the process by which the brain adapts to the change. The traditional understanding of the brain is that

it functions like a machine. As a machine gets older, it breaks down. Even if it can be repaired, it will not be able to return to its former glory. Under this theory, the brain inevitably has to deal with progressive deterioration. Neuroplasticity challenges this traditional understanding by arguing that the brain is capable of constant renewal. If the brain suffers damage, it will find ways of compensating for that damage as well as find new pathways around it. Thus it is possible for it to continue functioning. I thought I would actually give this a try. So I got behind a computer. There I was, sitting in front of the computer trying to work out how to send and read emails. After about two to three months, it started to work. I began to see some words and began to make some sense of what was on the screen. Eventually, it occurred to me that the whole neuroplasticity idea was kind of working for me: I was beginning

to understand how to get the brain to deliver what I wanted. I wanted to read, I wanted some of those old capacities to come back, and I was telling my brain, “Get on it, get the renewable neuroplasticity happening!” Over a period of time, my brain began to make all those compensatory arrangements that the neuroscientists said the brain was capable of delivering. That was one of those “connecting the dots” moments, when I could see in effect something that originally seemed abstract and theoretical. My eyes were no better, but I could see it working; my brain had told me that it was going to start delivering to me the things that I needed.”

The archive

“Though I could send and receive emails, I still could not read archived documents, but I really wanted to continue my history research, and I wanted to function as a normal human being. So it was important for me to keep going. It occurred to me that actually, I did have an archive that I could get access to. This was something that we could all get access to—the archive that we carried between our ears. It is the body of memories and reflections that tell us how to function in the world. So I started to think about my parents, about what kind of people they were: how did they speak? Did they speak dramatically, did they speak politely, did they use rough language, and did they get

angry? All of those questions, all of those experiences that we stored away about the people that we have lived with, they form a tremendously powerful set of meaning that sits between our ears. Though this archive was often not terribly well organized, it had some terrific advantages. I could get into it at any time of the day or night. It was free, and I have a lot of interesting stuff there. This archive took me to a different kind of history, a different way of understanding and seeing the world. It helped

of the three. She did not let us wear glasses at home. So, I got used to the idea of pretending to see much more than I could, and in fact, I now thank my mother fully because that was a very valuable skill. Now that I’m legally blind, I need to pretend that I can see more than I am able to. I continue digging deeper into the archive, and because of this archive, I was able to write my book *Not Dark Yet*. “So this exercise, the brain archive exercise, the exercise of overcoming legal blindness,

“Towards the end of 2004, I become legally blind. It was November, and I had begun my workweek in a normal fashion. I was reading, I was driving, I was able to make myself a cup of coffee, and I was able to function like a normal human being. But by the end of that week, I was declared legally blind.”

me do something that I needed to do, and that was to be a functioning historian, to think about the ways we construct the past, and more importantly, the ways in which the past construct us.

Therefore, the archive between the ears became very important. It gave me confidence that I had material to work with and ways to get into the territory of my research, and part of the territory was my dear departed mother, who has gone to another world. She had three children. We all had poor vision. I was the third child, and I was, I’m proud to say, the most defective

the exercise of overcoming that dark place, has delivered to me something that is extremely rewarding: it’s given me access to China, which is terrific, and it’s given me opportunities to speak to people like you. So thank you very much! The message is: Get on with it. Keep going. Life can be good. Thank you!”

After the 20-minute speech, the audience was deeply impressed by David and his faith in life, and they gave him a standing ovation. Though he was unable to see clearly, he must have sensed the enthusiasm, admiration, and support from the crowd. ■





Zhang Tianyi

The Tale of a Law Graduate who Became a Small Restaurant Owner

► Yuan Yating

On the evening of March 7, 2015, Zhang Tianyi, who graduated from the Peking University Law School just eight months ago, returned to his alma mater to share his reflections on his entrepreneurship journey. Zhang is the founder of Fu Niu Tang, a small restaurant in Beijing selling rice noodles from Changde, Hunan.

The “Aha moment” for Zhang

He began with a story about his father, or more specifically, how shocked his father felt when he heard the news that his child, who he had intended to work in the government upon graduation, was selling rice noodles in Beijing instead. “My father told me at that very moment, all the previous boasting he once made had tragically changed into tears

that he could only swallow.”

“This was just a part of the tremendous pressure that I experienced when I decided to start Fu Niu Tang to sell rice noodles.”

So today we are going to talk about the “Aha moment”. Was there an epiphany that led to the birth of Fu Niu Tang? There was, I think. It struck me that all the worries that had plagued me before were pointless. Time flies and our time on Earth is limited. This was when I made up my mind to work on something after graduation that will endow my life with meaning and stretch it to its limits.”

The dilemma of the post-90s generation

Zhang wishes to experience life through his shop, but he also understands that not everyone feels the same way as him,

especially his elders, like Ms. Dong Mingzhu. Dong Mingzhu is a leading businesswoman who runs the state-owned Gree Electric Appliances. Dong had gone on TV and openly called for Zhang to close shop. Zhang explains, “Although Ms. Dong greatly regrets my decision, I do not agree with her.”

“These days, when you graduate from university, chances are that you will find a sign that reads ‘Dead End’. The post-90s generation is said to be blessed, but from my point of view, we are the most miserable generation. All market opportunities, industry opportunities, and social resources have been carved up over the thirty years of reform and opening. People born in the 1980s, if I’m not mistaken, graduated from college in 2003. Back then, I believe one could

eke out a living in Beijing on one’s own, buy a property, and achieve one’s dream of settling down comfortably. In contrast, I was born in the 1990s. When I graduated from college, it was almost impossible to realize my dream and buy a house in Beijing. What we are facing now is a set of intractable and fixed rules.”

The food and beverage industry is an underexplored market

“So what can we do? My philosophy is to break the rules, if I am unable to adapt to it.”

“The dilemma of our generation is there is fierce competition and few

“**My philosophy is to break the rules, if I am unable to adapt to it.**”

opportunities. Nevertheless, you are able to seize some opportunities if you delve into an underexplored market.”

“Even though many people think that selling rice noodles is too conventional or an inferior professional choice—I stick to my own opinion. At the very basic level, I am infatuated with rice noodles, and I am very happy to eat my own noodles every day.”

“In my opinion, there will be an increasing demand in the rice noodles market.”

Zhang flashed the 2014 Interbrand ranking on the screen, which listed the top ten enterprises in the USA whose values are more than 100 billion.

He explains, “Interestingly, these ten enterprises are only involved in three industries: The first sector is information technology (IT), such as Apple. The second sector is manufacturing, like Toyota. The last sector is the food and beverage (F&B) industry. Now let’s take a look at China. Can we find any Chinese enterprise that has a value of 100 billion or more in the IT industry? Yes. In the manufacturing sector? Yes. However, the answer seems to be no for the F&B industry.”

“In fact, this is a market with inefficient market competition and enormous potential. As Premier Li Keqiang asserted before, the Chinese economy relies on future consumption. What is consumption? Well, nothing more than the basic necessities—food, clothing, housing, and transportation. The next decade in China is destined to be a golden decade for the F&B industry.”

Bearing in mind the “three hundred million people”

“If we ever have the chance to become the first Chinese food restaurant chain with an output value of one hundred billion, then what would be the factor that brings us there? It would be the mission and core values of Fu Niu Tang: to ‘run an enterprise that bears in mind three hundred million people.’”

“So what does that mean? ‘Three hundred million’ is the

population that works in the service industry in China. If you work in the industry for some time, you will notice a situation that you are unwilling but forced to recognize—millions of employees in this industry, who contribute tremendously to China’s economic development and the harmony and stability of the society, do not get the social respect and recognition they deserve. This reminds me of something on the news recently: It was reported that the wage of a construction worker rose to ten thousand Yuan a month, but no one wants to take up the job. That is because the job is deemed to offer no professional pride, self-identity, or hope for promotion. I am looking forward to building up a respectable F&B business that our three hundred million peers can be proud of, and that also means we have to do something about our corporate culture, values, and management.”

Zhang then introduced his playful and innovative management system. The system centered on “niubility”, a “currency” that he issues among his staff. “I seek to design a working system resembling a game. We publish a fixed number of tasks every day. As players, our colleagues will take up the task, such as ‘serving with a smile’, accomplish it, and receive rewards.”

Zhang Tianyi sets a great example for young people today. There’s nothing too big for him, and as the saying goes, we’re only limited by our imagination. ▀

AGO18 Protein Uncovered to Control Viral Diseases in Rice

✎ Won Cheng Yi

A research team comprised of Professor Li Yi of the College of Life Sciences, Peking University (PKU), Professor Qi Yijun of the College of Life Sciences, Tsinghua University (THU), and Professor Wu Zujian of the Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University in Fuzhou, recently published a paper titled “Viral-inducible Argonaute18 confers broad-spectrum virus resistance in rice by sequestering a host microRNA” on peer-reviewed scientific journal *eLife*. By using methods including bioinformatics, molecular biology, and genetics studies, the team discovered that rice

resistance to evolutionarily diverse viruses requires Argonaute18 (AGO18).

While rice is an important staple for many people, rice production has long been vulnerable to various forms of viral pathogens, and there has been lack of effective controls to stop these pathogens. Although RNA interference (RNAi) is known to mediate antiviral immunity in plant and animal models, the mechanism of antiviral RNAi in rice and other economically important crops is poorly understood. The team discovered that antiviral function of AGO18 depends on its activity to sequester microRNA168 (miR168), and that the expression of miR168-



resistant AGO1a in ago18 background increases antiviral activity.

Wu Jianguo and Yang Rui are co-first authors. The research was funded by various organizations, including the National Basic Research Program (973 Program), National Natural Science Foundation of China, State Key Laboratory of Protein Plant Gene Research, and PKU-THU Joint Center for Life Sciences. ■

Discovery of New Mechanism Inducing Diabetic Cardiomyopathy

✎ Won Cheng Yi

Professor Xiao Rui-ping's team from the Institute of Molecular Medicine, Peking University, recently published an article, “Upregulation of MG53 Induces Diabetic Cardiomyopathy via Transcriptional Activation of

PPAR- α ” in the American Heart Association's Circulation publication. Diabetic cardiomyopathy, which contributes to more than 50% of diabetic deaths, is detected through symptoms such as myocardial lipid accumulation, hypertrophy, fibrosis, and

cardiac dysfunction. The mechanism underlying diabetic cardiomyopathy is presently poorly understood. Recent studies have shown that a striated muscle-specific E3 ligase Mitsugumin 53 (MG53, or TRIM72) is a primary causal factor of

systemic insulin resistance and metabolic disorders. Although it is most abundantly expressed in myocardium, the biological and pathological roles of MG53 in triggering cardiac metabolic disorders remain elusive.

This paper suggests that the overexpression of myocardial MG53 is sufficient to induce diabetic cardiomyopathy via dual mechanisms involving the up-regulation of PPAR- α and the impairment of insulin signaling. These findings not only reveal a novel function



of MG53 in regulating cardiac PPAR- α gene expression and lipid metabolism, but also

underscore MG53 as an important therapeutic target for diabetes and associated cardiomyopathy.

Prof. Xiao and Professor Hu Xinli are the corresponding authors. Liu Fenghua, Song

Ruisong, and Feng Yuanqing are co-first authors. The research was carried out in collaboration with the Peking Biological Dynamic Optical Imaging Centers Huangyan Yi Laboratory and was funded by the National Natural Science Foundation of China, the Ministry of Science, Peking University—Tsinghua University Joint Center for Life Sciences, the State Key Laboratory of Membrane Biofilm Engineering, and Key Laboratories of Beijing. ■

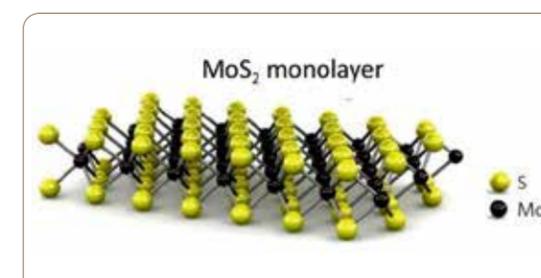
Breakthroughs in Monolayer MoS₂ Growth on Au Foils and On-Site Domain Boundary Imaging

✎ Won Cheng Yi

A team led by Professor Zhang Yanfeng from the Department of Materials Science and Engineering, Peking University (PKU) recently published a paper titled “Monolayer MoS₂ Growth on Au Foils and On-Site Domain Boundary Imaging” in the renowned material science magazine *Advanced Functional Materials*. The team achieved breakthroughs in high-quality monolayer single-cell thick-layered molybdenum disulfide (MoS₂) growth on gold (Au) foils and on-site domain boundary imaging.

MoS₂ is a member

of the transition metal dichalcogenides (TMDCs). MoS₂ has the relevant characteristics that have sparked wide interest in both basic research and novel applications, such as optoelectronics, valleytronics, light absorption, and hydrogen evolution reaction (HER). The paper demonstrates the controlled growth of monolayer MoS₂ flakes and continuous films on Au foils via low-pressure CVD (LPCVD), with the introduction of hydrogen (H₂) as a carrier gas. H₂ acts both as a carrier gas and as an etching reagent of MoS₂, and the



two competitive effects work concurrently to determine the crystal quality and the domain size of single-crystalline monolayer MoS₂. In particular, the application of low-energy electron microscopy/diffraction (LEEM/LEED) technique helps to identify the domain orientations and domain boundaries of polycrystalline MoS₂ flakes directly on Au foils and aids

in attempts to elucidate the merging behavior at the as-grown state.

The paper was financially supported by the National Natural Science Foundation

of China and the Ministry of Science and Technology of China. ■

Huang Lin's Paper Awarded "Most Influential Paper" by Control Theory & Applications

Won Cheng Yi

A team led by Professor Huang Lin from the Department of Mechanics and Engineering Science, College of Engineering, Peking University, recently received the award of "Most Influential Paper" by the domestic magazine *Control Theory & Applications* for their paper, "Analysis & Control of Diversity of System Dynamic Properties: On the Post-absolute Stability".

The main strength of control theory has been to analyze the stability of system equilibrium and stabilize controller synthesis. However,

the weaknesses of control theory become apparent when dynamic properties different from the stability of the single equilibrium are introduced, including the boundedness of system trajectories (i.e. Lagrange stability), dichotomy, gradient-like behavior, and the Bakaev stability (ensuring no transition of equilibria). In response to this phenomenon, frequency-domain methods as well as linear matrix inequalities methods are established to ensure that a feedback controller has the above-mentioned properties. In addition, the paper investigates the stability and

control of periodic oscillations (auto-oscillations and forced oscillations) of high order systems. It also introduces estimates of the Hausdorff dimension and the Lyapunov exponent of strange attractors.



The paper was funded by the Project of National Natural Science Fund. Its corresponding authors include Yang Ying, Geng Zhiyong, Wang Jinzhi, and Duan Zhisheng from the Department of Mechanics and Engineering Science at the PKU College of Engineering. ■

New Findings on the Functions of Plant-based miRNA to Control and Mediate

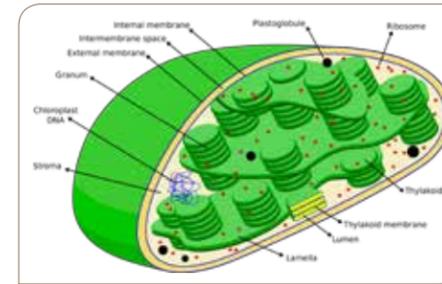
Won Cheng Yi

A team led by Prof. Li Lei from the School of Life Sciences, Peking University, recently published a paper titled "MicroRNA408 Is Critical for the HY5-SPL7 Gene Network That Mediates

the Coordinated Response to Light and Copper" in the peer-reviewed scientific journal *The Plant Cell* on Dec 16, 2014.

Light and copper are important environmental determinants of plant growth

and development. Despite the wealth of knowledge on both light and copper signaling, the molecular mechanisms that integrate the two pathways have remained poorly understood. In the paper,



researchers use *Arabidopsis thaliana* to demonstrate an interaction between Squamosa Promoter Binding Protein-Like-7 (SPL7) and Elongated Hypocotyl-5 (HY5), which mediate copper and light signaling respectively. Through whole-genome chromatin immune-precipitation and RNA sequencing analyses,

the team discovered that the two transcription factors co-regulate many genes.

Moreover, they discovered that the coordination of SPL7 and HY5 regulates the transcription of MIR408, which results in differential expression of microRNA408 (miR408) and its target genes. This regulation is tied to copper allocation to the chloroplast and plastocyanin levels. Finally, miR408 rescues the distinct developmental defects of the HY5, SPL7, and HY5 SPL7 mutants. These findings revealed the existence of

crosstalk between light and copper, mediated by a HY5-SPL7 network. The integration of transcriptional and post-transcriptional regulation is critical for governing proper metabolism and development in response to combined copper and light signaling.

Co-first authors are Postdoctoral Zhang Huiyong and Doctoral Zhao Xin. The research is funded by the State Key Laboratory of Protein and Plant Genetic Research, and Peking University-Tsinghua Center for Life Sciences Funding. ■

New Theory Published on Phenotype Transition in Single Cells

Won Cheng Yi

Professor Ge Hao and Professor Xie X. Sunney from the Biodynamic Optical Imaging Center (BIOPIIC), Peking University, in collaboration with Professor Qian Hong from the Department of Applied Mathematics, University of Washington, recently published a new theory concerning multiple phenotypic states in single cells through The paper titled Stochastic Phenotype Transition of a Single Cell in an Intermediate Region of Gene State Switching. It was published by the American Physical Society's peer-reviewed, scientific journal *Physical Review Letters* on

Feb 20, 2015.

Single cells often display different gene expressions, resulting in multiple phenotypic states. The protein level in single cells might either be high or low, contributing to an all-or-none phenomenon. Such a phenomenon is crucial for single cells operating in an unpredictable environment. Multiple phenotypic states often arise in a single cell with different gene-expression states that undergo transcription regulation with positive feedback. The stochastic gene state switching is pertinent to the fact that there is only a single copy of DNA inside a typical cell that leads to

stochastic productions of mRNA and protein, while the copy-number fluctuations of proteins results from the low copy numbers of certain proteins.

Contrary to the findings of certain models, recent research shows that, at least in bacteria, single cells switch faster between different phenotypic states than transcription and translation, but slower than



the cell splitting cycle. This is the intermediate region which is difficult to handle mathematically.

This research derives a model based on a full chemical-master-equation description, in which the protein copy number, for

a given gene state, follows a deterministic mean-field description while the protein-synthesis rate fluctuate due to stochastic gene state switching. The simplified kinetics yields a non-equilibrium landscape function, which, similar to the energy function for

equilibrium fluctuation, provides the leading orders of fluctuations around each phenotypic state, as well as the transition rates between the two phenotypic states.

The corresponding authors for this paper are Prof. Ge and Prof. Xie. ▀

Study Sheds New Light on How Human Brain Processes Different Languages ▀ Won Cheng Yi

Most animals have their distinct forms of communications. For example, bees use dances to indicate the location of flowers to other bees, whereas vervet monkeys use high-pitch howls to differentiate friends from foes. However, humans are distinct in the sense that they have developed a diversity of language syntaxes and structures. So how does the human brain process different languages?

Professor Gao Jiahong from the Center for MRI Research, Academy for Advanced Interdisciplinary Studies, Peking University, recently led an investigation into the cortical dynamics involved in processing two very diverse languages: Chinese (a tonal language) and English (a non-tonal language). Through the usage of functional MRI and dynamic causal modeling

analysis, the paper computed and compared brain network models exhaustively with all possible connections among nodes of language regions in the temporal and frontal cortex. The paper found



that both Chinese and English speakers displayed the same direction of information flow from the posterior to anterior

portions of the temporal cortex during speech comprehension. However, the inferior frontal gyrus received neural signals from the left posterior portion of the temporal cortex in English speakers, whereas for Chinese speakers the inferior frontal gyrus received signals from the bilateral anterior

portion of the temporal cortex.

The results of the study reveals that although speech processing is largely carried out in the common left hemisphere classical language areas (Broca's and Wernicke's areas) and anterior temporal cortex, speech comprehension across different language groups depends on how these brain regions interact with each other. Moreover, the right anterior temporal cortex, which is crucial for tone processing, is equally important as its left homolog, the left anterior temporal cortex, in modulating the cortical dynamics in tonal language comprehension. The current study pinpoints the importance of the bilateral anterior temporal cortex in language comprehension, which is downplayed or even ignored by popular contemporary models of speech comprehension. ▀



PKU Zou Bihua Lawyer Development Foundation

▀ Zhang Rutian

On December 30th, 2014, the Zou Bihua Alumni Memorial and the Peking University (PKU) Zou Bihua Lawyer Development Foundation establishment ceremony was held at PKU. Senior leadership from PKU and the Supreme People's Court attended the ceremony.

Zou Bihua, former deputy head of Shanghai Higher People's Court had died in December at the age of 47 after

a distinguished judicial career of 26 years. His death was mourned by many, including President Xi Jinping who praised Zou as an "impartial judge who cared about people".

Zou's former classmates Liu Jianmin, Lou Jianbo, and Ge Jinbiao represented the alumni to inject funds into the foundation. Zhang Shouwen, head of PKU Zou Bihua Lawyer Development Foundation Committee and Law School at PKU, expressed

his sincere gratitude to the support received from all sectors of society.

The PKU Zou Bihua Lawyer Development Foundation pledged to inherit Zou Bihua's spirit and conduct a series of activities aimed at rewarding outstanding students and talents in the law community. The foundation will be run as a special project under the Peking University Education Foundation. ▀

How to Give

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The Alumnus Bridge

As you enter Peking University through its west gate, you will arrive at one of the most famous bridges at Peking University, the Alumnus Bridge. There are in total 24 bridges at Peking University, but this bridge is unique; it was donated by alumni in 1926, and that's how it was named.

Every day, and especially during holidays, many visitors from all over Beijing and China come to Peking University, and they will most assuredly take photos at the western gate and the Alumnus Bridge, as these are two of the most famous landmarks on campus. While crossing over the bridge on one's way to campus, one will see the clear water flowing underfoot and the green grass ahead in the courtyard near the administrative buildings.

