

# VOICE OF FRIENDSHIP 友声



William Shakespeare  
(1564-1616)



Tang Xianzu  
(1550-1616)



Cervantes  
(1547-1616)

Jointly Commemorating the 400th Anniversary of the Death of  
Tang Xianzu, William Shakespeare and Cervantes

The 4th Round-Table Summit of the  
Global CEO Council Held in Beijing  
Interview with Gu Kaijie Indian  
Ambassador to China  
Fuzhou Enters International View  
A Lifetime of Belief Bridges East and West

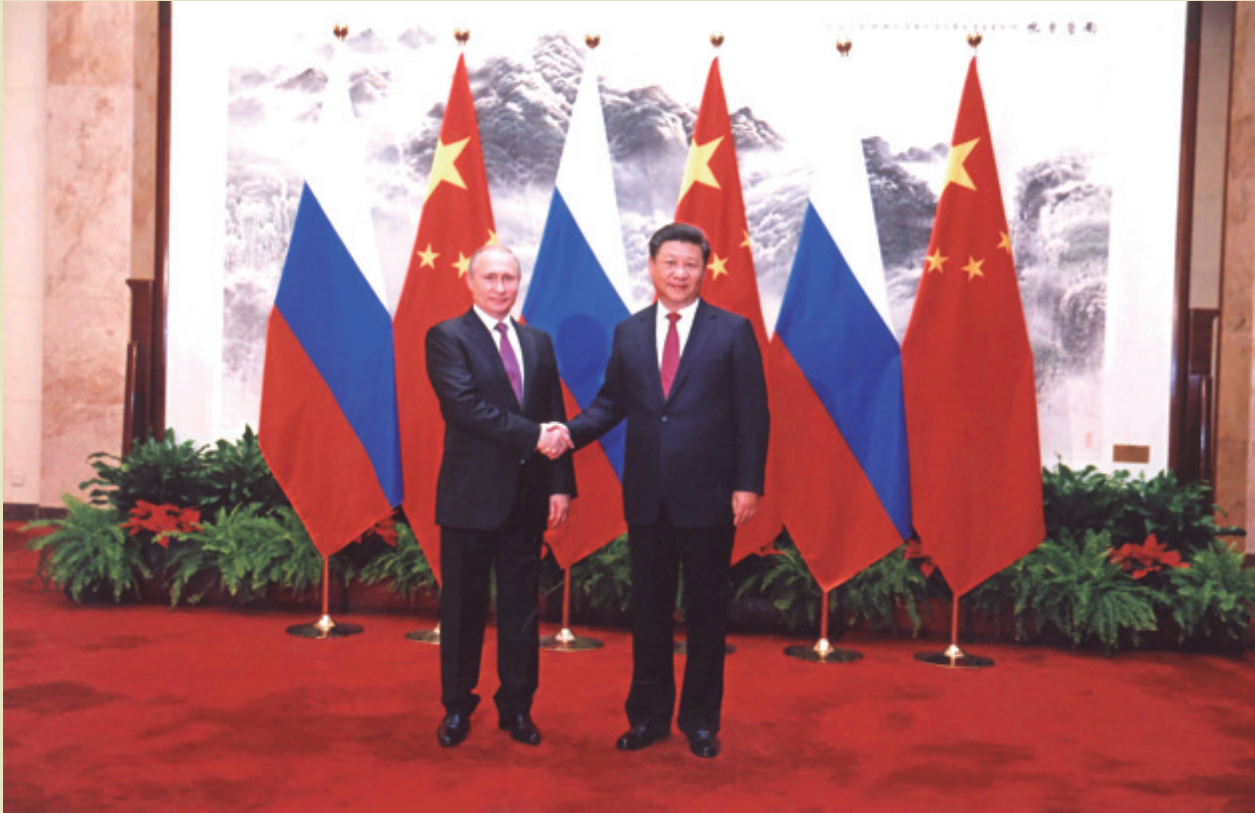
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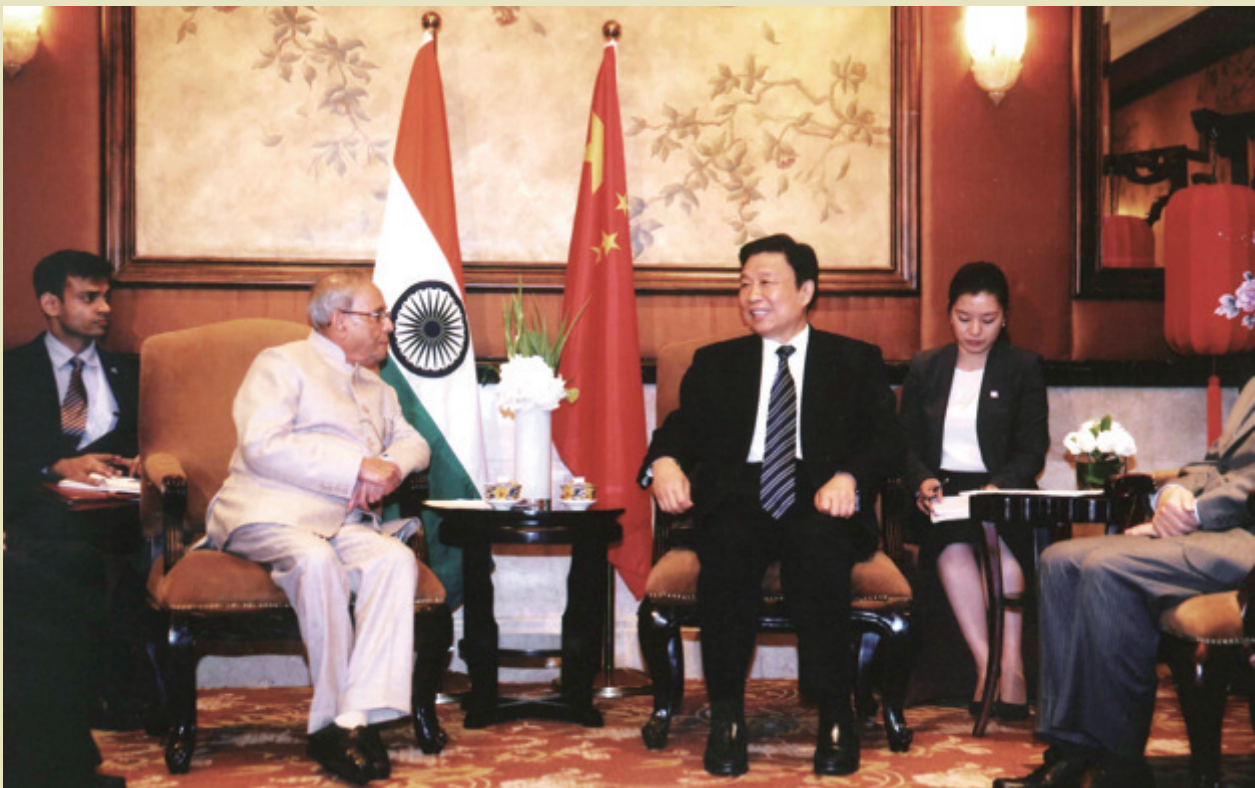
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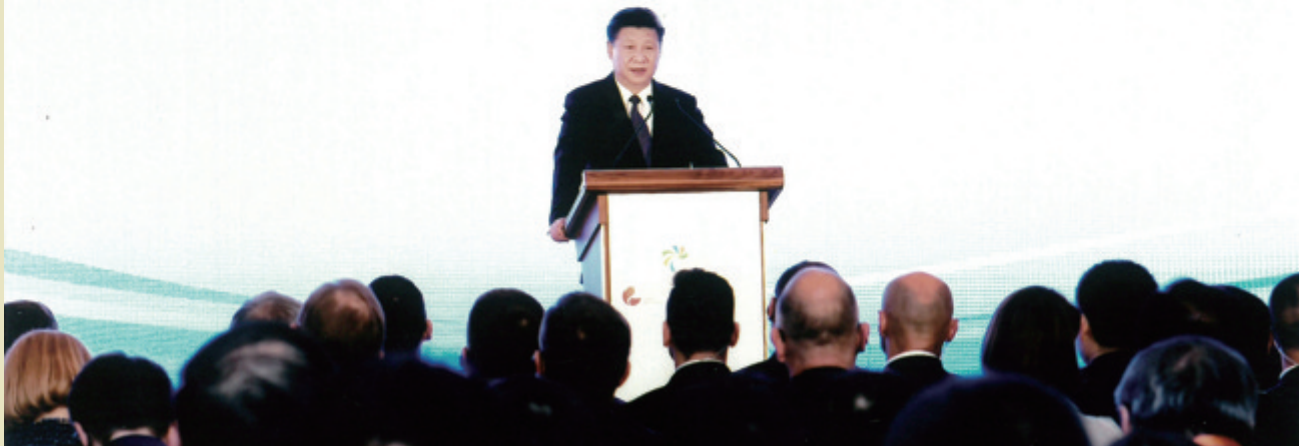
Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin attend the 15th anniversary ceremony of the signing of 2001 Sino–Russian Treaty of Friendship.



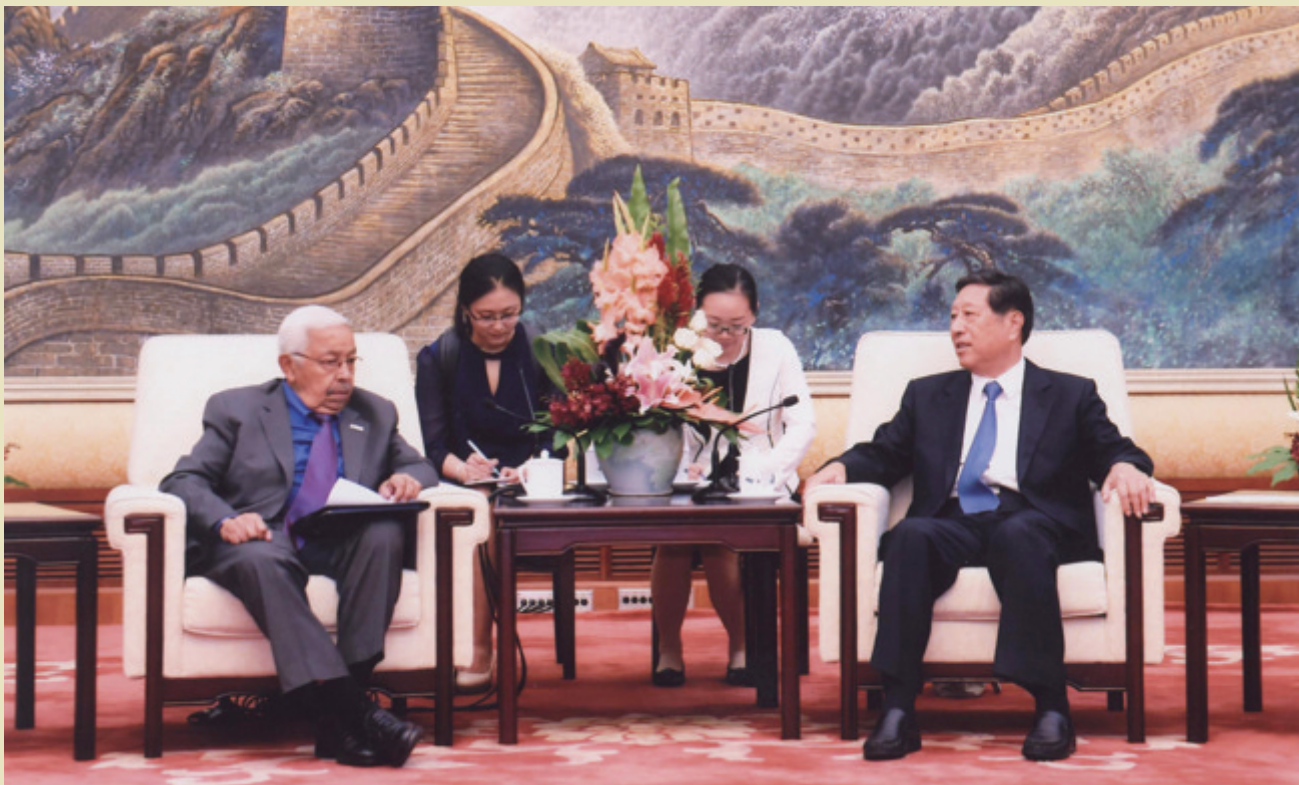
Vice President Li Yuanchao meets Indian President Pranab Mukherjee.

Forum Jedwabnego Szlaku,  
Forum Współpracy Regionalnej i Polsko-Chińskie Forum B  
丝路国际论坛暨中波地方与经贸合作论坛  
Forum and Poland-China Regional Cooperation & Business

2016 Warszawa, Polska 2016年6月20日 波兰·华沙 June 20, 2016 Warsaw, Poland



President Xi Jinping gives a speech at China-Poland Forum on Local Cooperation.



Zhang Ping, vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, meets former president of Cape Verde, Pedro Verona Rodrigues Pires.



## » Contents

### Express News

- 04 President Li Xiaolin Meets with British Ambassador to China / *Wang Fan*
- 04 Vice-President Xie Yuan meets with Apple's Vice-President Ge Jun / *Jiang Yingshan*
- 05 Vice-President Hu Sishe attends the opening ceremony of the 5th Beijing Cup International Schools Football Tournament / *Sun Yutian*
- 05 Vice-President Lin Yi Attends "China Arab Friendship Youth Ambassadors Program 2016" / *Gong Xu*
- 06 Vice-President Song Jingwu meets with CLAIR President OKAMOTO TAMOTSU / *Fu Bo*
- 06 The 2016 China (Chengdu)-US Sister Cities Youth Debate Challenge comes to a successful end / *Hu Yang*

### The 4th Round-Table Summit of the Global CEO Council

- 07 The 4th Round-Table Summit of the Global CEO Council held in Beijing / *Research Center for People-to-People Diplomacy of the CPAFFC*
- 08 Impressions of the Global CEO Council / *Liu Lang*
- 09 Global CEO Council's first rendezvous with AIIB / *Wang Hefei*
- 12 CEO VOICES / *Research Center for People-to-People Diplomacy of the CPAFFC*
- 13 Rainbow Bridge in Zun Yi / *Liu Lang*
- 14 International students' visit to Zunyi with RainbowBridge Project / *Jia Jipan*

### Joint Commemoration in Fuzhou

- 15 Tang Xianzu and Shakespeare, giants of Eastern and Western culture / *Zou Yuanjiang*

- 17 300 photographers focus on seeking “Mr Tang” in Le’an County / *Fan Qiang*
- 18 A work from Tang Xianzu’s hometown / *Ming Hua*
- 19 Fuzhou enters into international view/ *Ning Huang*

## Interview

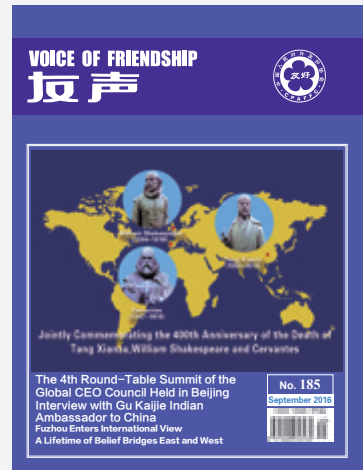
- 22 Interview with India’s Ambassador to China / *Staff reporter*

## Cultural Exchanges

- 24 A lifetime of belief bridges East and West / *Zhou Wei*
- 27 Foreign faces in “Thunderstorm” / *Tang Mingxin*
- 30 A grand theater of China-UK Youth Drama Exchange / *Hao Xiaosong*
- 33 China steadfastly safeguards peace and stability in the South China Sea / *Wu Sike*
- 38 G20: China’s part in global economic growth / *He Yafei*

## View

- 42 Story of an old friend / *Du Wentang*
- 44 Pierrette Djouassa, president of the Gabon-China Friendship Association / *Fang Ying*
- 46 Deepen traditional friendship between China and Montenegro and promote the building of “One Belt, One Road” / *Sichuan People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries*
- 48 Memory of Japanese visit 50 years ago still fresh / *Wu Ruijun*
- 52 Proposal for a Coordinated International Institute on Friendshipology / *Billy Lee*
- 55 China-Pakistan relations enter golden era
- 56 Accordion wind is blowing / *Qian Guangjian*
- 58 A better South China Sea / *Cai Baishan*



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## President Li Xiaolin Meets with British Ambassador to China

**Wang Fan**



On 28th July, President Li Xiaolin of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries met with Ms Barbara Woodward, British Ambassador to China in the ambassador's residence. The two sides have extensively exchanged views on the Second China-UK Regional Leaders Meeting, the two countries' all-dimensional exchanges and cooperation and hotspot issues of common concern.

President Li thanked the British Embassy in China for its support to the CPAFFC. She is ready to work with the UK to promote mutual understanding and mutual learning and deliver more practical cooperation results in all sectors.

## Vice-President Xie Yuan Meets with Apple's Vice-President Ge Jun

**Jiang Yingshan**



Vice-President Xie Yuan met with Vice-President Ge Jun of Apple Inc. on Aug 9. He introduced some of the organization's brand projects, saying that both China and the United States should enhance cooperation based on mutual trust. He expressed hope that Apple would continue its contribution to supporting China's development, environmental protection and the philanthropy cause.

Ge Jun said that Apple attached great importance to its development in China. As a people-oriented corporation, Apple has been practicing zero emissions in all its production facilities as well as those of its suppliers. The company is looking forward to enhancing its cooperation and exchanges with the CPAFFC. Apple will play a more important role in environmental protection, culture, education and the philanthropy cause in order to promote China-US people-to-people diplomacy.

## Vice-President Hu Sishe Attends the Opening Ceremony of the 5th Beijing Cup International Schools Football Tournament

**Sun Yutian**



The 5th Beijing Cup International Schools Football Tournament kicked off in Beijing on the morning of Aug 15. CPAFFC Vice-President Hu Sishe and Zhang Yanjun, a full-time vice-president of the Chinese Middle School Sports Association, attended the opening ceremony and delivered speeches.

Hu said in his speech that sports — the bridge between nations — offer an important platform to facilitate cultural and people-to-people exchanges. Football, in particular, is popular among people across the world, especially teenagers for its unique charms. By hosting this tournament, we aim to promote the development of teenage football and boost understanding and friendship among teenagers from different countries.

## Vice-President Lin Yi Attends “China Arab Friendship Youth Ambassadors Program 2016”

**Gong Xu**



The opening ceremony of “China Arab Friendship Youth Ambassadors Program 2016” was held in Beijing on July 20. Lin Yi, vice-president of CPAFFC; Mona Saad, chief coordinator of Arab China Friendship Association Federation; and youth representatives from eight countries, were present. After the opening, the Chinese and Arab youths had a friendship dialogue on subjects of mutual concern.

Around 50 youths from Palestine, Lebanon, Sudan, Algeria, Oman, Libya, Morocco and Egypt attended the activities. The one-week program commemorates the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Arab, and to enhance mutual understanding and friendship between Chinese and Arab countries’ younger generation.

## Vice-President Song Jingwu Meets with CLAIR President Okamoto Tamotsu

**Fu Bo**



Vice-President Song Jingwu met in Tokyo with Mr. Okamoto Tamotsu, president of Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR) on Aug 6, and said that although the bilateral relations still suffer from a sensitive and complex situation, exchanges between the two countries are still increasing. Song noted that Japan was the first country to establish friendship city relations with China. He expressed the hope that CLAIR could develop its advantages and work together with China to further promote pragmatic cooperation and youth exchanges.

## The 2016 China (Chengdu)-US Sister Cities Youth Debate Challenge Comes to a Successful End

**Hu Yang**



Between June 4 and 5, six teams recommended by Chengdu's international sister cities and friendly and cooperative cities — Phoenix, Honolulu, Louisville and San Francisco in the US — and 10 Chinese teams who finished in the top 10 in the Chengdu qualification match held debates on whether electronic reading will completely replace print reading. The participants fully demonstrated their the linguistic and thinking competence as well as the vigor and vitality of Chinese and American youths. The 2016 China (Chengdu)-US Sister Cities Youth Debate Challenge, was co-hosted by Chengdu and its sister cities in the US. Cui Tiankai, Chinese Ambassador to the US, sent a congratulatory letter to the event organizers. Raymond Greene III, US Consul General in Chengdu, made a visit to the debate venue himself, where he watched the debate and conveyed best wishes from US Ambassador to China Max Baucus.



# The 4th Round-Table Summit of the Global CEO Council Held in Beijing

**Research Center for People-to-People Diplomacy of the CPAFFC**

Premier Li Keqiang met with 15 CEOs from 15 world-leading companies at the 4th Round-Table Summit of the Global CEO Council, initiated and hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and held at the Great Hall of the People on June 7.

The CEOs expressed their views and offered suggestions on innovation-driven growth in China, green development, the Belt and Road Initiative and other issues, based on the theme set for the round-table summit — “The 13th Five-Year Plan: Opportunities and Challenges to Multinational Corporations”.

The summit posed this question: After more than 30 years of rapid growth, how should China steadily and effectively deal with the problems, confusions, challenges and opportunities in an international economic environment that is complex and unpredictable?

The year 2016 marks the beginning of China's 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20), which aims at building



**Premier Li Keqiang meets world-leading CEOs**

a comprehensively well-off society.

Li noted that the current recovery of the world economy is weak, and international trade growth is slowing. China's economy is also facing many difficulties and challenges. But hopeful prospects outweigh the difficulties, he

said. China's economy is undergoing transformation and upgrading, with the service industry and domestic spending contributing more than half of economic growth. The potential of the communication, health services, sports and other new consumer

markets is tremendous, Li said, and provides new market opportunities for both domestic and international investors.

Li stressed that, as the largest developing country in the world, China has huge development space, as well as market potential, and China's door to the world will be opened even wider. China is willing to share development opportunities with companies and investors all over the globe, so as to achieve mutual benefits and win-win results.

The CEOs were unanimous in expressing their belief that the opportunities presented by China's economic development outweigh the challenges. The country continues to be a hot spot for investment. Multinational corporations want to participate in China's innovation and green development for win-win results, the CEOs agreed.

#### About Global CEO Council

The Round-Table Summit of the Global CEO Council has been held annually since its founding in 2013 by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. The council consists of 15 CEOs from important industries leading the world economy. Its aim is to make friends and promote cooperation for peace and development. Premier Li Keqiang has met and exchanged views with members of the council for four consecutive years. ■

## Impressions of the Global CEO Council

**Liu Lang**

After long flights, 15 members of the Global CEO Council arrived in Beijing from all over the world on the morning of June 7. Later in the day, they would have a face-to-face dialogue with Premier Li Keqiang on the theme "13th Five-Year Plan: Opportunities and Challenges to Multinational Companies" – which was set for the council's fourth Round-Table Summit.

It has never been easy to coordinate time between Chinese leaders and so many CEOs from world-leading corporations. In fact, the date for the summit had been changed three times, and was finally confirmed just two days before. All of them welcomed the opportunity to meet the Chinese premier.

Hamid R. Moghadam, chairman and CEO of Prologis, who has participated the summit four times, said, "I always plan ahead each year for the summit and certainly understand the possible changes. It is extremely important to exchange views with the Chinese premier."

Rajeer Suri, president and CEO of Nokia, commented: "There is no comparable country like China whose national leader could arrange his very busy schedule every year to meet and directly exchange views with executives of multinational companies. This truly indicates the openness and confidence of China."

Upon arrival in Beijing, the CEOs gathered on the top floor of the Grand Hotel Beijing. Looking at the axis line of the Forbidden City on the open terrace, they could feel the pulse of an ancient yet modern and dynamic China. The reception staff was particularly careful in arranging the working lunch. They decorated the dining tables with some Chinese displays, including small figurines of monks—some of them with closed eyes and peaceful smiles, some in kung fu postures—along with small bamboo slips with snippets of writing from traditional Chinese classics, including the *Analects of Confucius* and *The Art of War by Sun Tzu*. Stylish purple clay

teapots added charm.

The magic of the delicate and agreeable Chinese decorations immediately caught the imagination of the CEOs and turned this group of global wealth managers into big kids. They reveled in their personal favorites, playing with the decorations in their hands. The table arrangements—which served in their own way as ambassadors of Chinese culture—vividly told Chinese stories that will travel with the CEOs to their homes.

Aside from enjoying Chinese culture at the luncheon, the CEOs also polished their speeches. Everyone hoped to express views to the Chinese premier in the most accurate words possible in limited time.

June 7 also happened to be the first day of China’s national college entrance examination, or *gaokao*, and traffic was heavy along Chang’an Boulevard. The CEOs traveled in heavy traffic from the Grand Hotel Beijing to the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank and then to the Great Hall of the People.

When they arrived at the Great Hall, Premier Li Keqiang warmly welcomed them, shook hands with each and stood for a group picture. Li responded to the well-prepared speeches in an insightful and strategic manner. After an hour of dialogue, the CEOs had a clear picture of the 13th Five-Year Plan and full confidence in their business prospects in China. ■

## Global CEO Council’s First Rendezvous with AIIB

**Wang Hefei**

**F**ifteen CEOs from world-famous companies connected with the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank on June 7, through an exclusive dialogue with the bank’s president, Jin Liqun. It was a key moment at the 4th Round-Table Summit of the Global CEO Council in Beijing. The group was formed to find out more about cooperation opportunities in China.

### **China Track begins.**

**“AIIB was initiated by China, but it is not a Chinese bank, and it does not serve only China’s interests.”**

When the idea of setting up a new bank was proposed by Chinese leadership, it was immediately questioned by those who worried that AIIB would be a unilateral organization

dominated by China and would threaten existing multinational development banks.

“It is understandable that misunderstandings and controversies arise when a big nation like China initiates such an international organization,” Jin said. “However, it is necessary to reiterate that China’s intention in setting up the AIIB is to have the international community come together to push for regional and global integration, and to contribute to regional connectivity through infrastructure investment, thereby reducing poverty and facilitating peace and prosperity across the whole world.”

With regard to the relationship of AIIB and other multinational development banks, Jin said that, just as AIIB has no intention to upend the



CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin and bank's President Jin Liqun with 15 world CEOs

international financial order, it also doesn't want to threaten other banks. AIIB will be run at the highest standard in a responsible manner, Jin said.

"Many European countries have chosen to join AIIB, with 30 more countries in the process of applying," Jin said. "They would not have made such a commitment if they were not comfortable with how AIIB operates."

He added: "From the very outset, AIIB has been trying to learn from other MDBs and build up long-term partnerships. Recently, AIIB has signed memorandums of understanding with the Asian Development Bank and the European

Bank for Reconstruction and Development to co-finance projects."

**"AIIB will operate in accordance with the best international practices, and will try to broaden the definition of infrastructure."**

AIIB invests in a wide range of projects. Recently, its board of directors approved four projects, including Bangladesh's upgrading and expansion of its electricity distribution system, Indonesia's national slum-revamping project, Pakistan's national highway construction and Tajikistan's

Dushanbe-Uzbekistan border road improvement.

How does AIIB determine whether a project is within its investment range? Asked that question from Klaus Kleinfeld, chairman and CEO of Alcoa, Jin first reviewed the experience of China and many Asian countries in which the economy benefited from infrastructure development. He explained that best practices can be found in the experience of those developing countries since World War II, and that's the reason for establishing an organization dedicated to infrastructure investment.

### **AIIB's business covers infrastructure and other production sectors.**

“By other production sectors, we mean all production sectors—healthcare, education, environmental engineering,” Jin said. The CEOs appeared to be largely in agreement. Jin went on to say that the AIIB has the courage to explore all possibilities to develop the economy and achieve social benefits, and it will try to design projects in an innovative way in the future. This means multi-national companies will have more opportunities to cooperate with AIIB.

Talking about whether the AIIB has geographical restrictions, Jean-Pascal Tricoire, chairman and CEO of Schneider Electric, asked whether the immediate beneficiaries of the Belt and Road Initiative are mainly those along the routes. Jin said the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development provides a lesson. It suffered a bottleneck after 15 years of operation because of its narrow coverage area, he said, adding that AIIB will not only cover emerging markets that join the bank but also welcome all nations' projects, so long as they are beneficial to Asian development.

“If we combine efforts, we will make a difference in the world.”

Jin said the AIIB hopes to leverage every CEO's knowledge and experience, and wants to cooperate with them in the future.

“This meeting is a wonderful opportunity for us to have such

a dialogue and to exchange our thinking,” he said, noting that the AIIB has a global procurement policy, meaning it can work with any company in the world regardless whether its home country is a member of AIIB or not. In the future, he said, “we should forge a community of common destiny” mindset, sharing development opportunities and creating a better future together.

Group Chief Executive Bill Winters of Standard Chartered PLC, the largest foreign bank in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, raised a question on the private sector's involvement in AIIB. Jin responded that the AIIB is open to all possibilities, though it tends, at the current stage, to favor projects guaranteed by sovereign credit, since the current short-term goal is to strive for high ratings from the three largest international rating agencies. In the future, however, it will try to accept more private projects and others not guaranteed by sovereign credit.

**“AIIB will not be a shooting star but a brilliant and dazzling fixture in the universe. It will not vanish in the dark sky.”**

When AIIB was founded, it was frequently questioned about its governance, Jin said. Will this bank be dominated by China? Will it fit into the MDB family? All those questions are quieting down, he said, but some people are still unsure that AIIB will honor its promises and implement all

the policies it has announced.

“My answer,” Jin said, “is a definite yes, but I am not anxious to convince you right now. Five months into operation is too short a time to be convincing.

“Let me tell you, the youngest member in this MDB family is robust, healthy and time will be the best answer to those queries.”

China Track was coming to an end. Fifteen CEOs had received firsthand, comprehensive information about the AIIB, as well as about future cooperation opportunities, and five companies immediately expressed their willingness to collaborate.

The CEOs soon departed for the Great Hall of the People. They were looking forward to their fourth in-depth dialogue with Premier Li Keqiang on the Chinese and world economy.

### **About China Track**

During the annual Round-Table Summit of the Global CEO Council, China Track is held to help business leaders, who play critical roles in world economic development, to understand Chinese culture, history, political and social systems and Chinese leaders' concepts and strategies for governing the country. It is also a forum to discuss paths and methods for win-win cooperation. The Global CEO Council's “Close Encounter with AIIB” is the second lecture of the China Track series. ■

# CEO VOICES

## Research Center for People-to-People Diplomacy



**Dr Dieter Zetsche, chairman,  
Daimler AG**

China has been playing an important role in developing the world economy. In the first quarter of this year, China's economy maintained a steady growth rate of 6.7 percent, which is quite remarkable. I firmly believe that the Chinese government will continue to drive the economy onto a track of healthy growth through restructuring, so as to continuously improve people's well-being.



**Andrew Mackenzie, CEO, BHP  
Billiton**

China is one country, one time zone, one race, one party, and their degree of cohesion because of that has allowed them—ever since Deng Xiaoping decided they were going to catch up—to get there.

**Mark Parker, chairman and  
CEO, Nike Inc.**

Nike sees strong momentum in China and very healthy long-term growth in this important market.



**Frans van Houten, chairman and  
CEO, Royal Philips**

China is now the second-largest market and a home market, like the Netherlands, for Philips globally, becoming a key innovation and operation center for Philips value creation.

China's population is deeply passionate about sports and the culture around it. Led by mobile, Chinese consumers are among the most connected in the world. With high expectations for premium personal products and services, their demand for innovation plays right into Nike's strengths. Our digital platform is doing quite well in China, and consumers are voting every day. We continue to lead as the region's most coveted sports brand. We see significantly more opportunity still ahead over the longterm.



**Matthias Muller, CEO,  
Volkswagen AG**

China has become the second hometown of Volkswagen AG.



**Merlin Swire, CEO, Swire Group**

Swire is proud to have operated in China for 150 years, and we believe that our long-term outlook and focus on quality will enable us to flourish in this dynamic market. We are confident in China's future.



**Hamid R. Moghadam, Chairman  
and CEO, Prologis**

Prologis is optimistic on the future of China's economy. Its long-term, stable and healthy development trend will not change. We have full confidence in China's economic growth. The Belt and Road Initiative makes our business development in China once again meet the opportunity.

# Rainbow Bridge in Zun Yi

**Liu Lang**

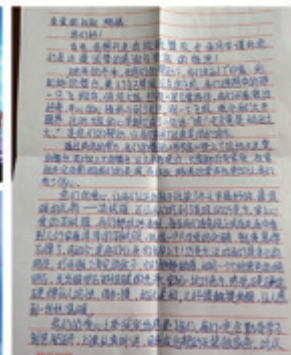
## A thank-you letter from the students of Zunyi Houshan Ethnic Primary School

On June 12, Ms Xu Ni, headmaster of Zunyi Houshan Ethnic Primary School, shared her students' letter of thanks during the Rainbow Bridge ceremony in Zunyi, Guizhou province.

"It was the first time for our students who were born and grew up in mountains to leave home for Beijing on Jan 23, 2016," she said.

"It was an unforgettable experience for them to walk into the auditorium of the National CPPCC. After giving their stage performance. *Impressions of Rainbow Bridge*, they expressed their excitement and appreciation in the letter:

"It was our first time to come to Beijing; our first time to wear jackets that could only be seen on TV; our first time to taste the smooth chocolates, which again could only be imagined



from TV. Indeed, thank you very much, Rainbow Bridge Project, for offering us so many first times!”

**Creative leadership inspired by  
LEGO Serious Play**

Sponsored by Standard Chartered Bank, a program called “Training County Mayors for Creative Leadership” was held from June 14 to June 17 in Zunyi, attracting 40 local county mayors. Mr Wang Ligen, chief trainer for LEGO Serious Play, led the mayors to think out of the box and break boundaries through interlocking LEGO blocks. After this fun and unusual training experience, the mayors all felt they had a better understanding of innovation for county planning.

**About the Rainbow Bridge Project**

The Rainbow Bridge Project, created by the CPAFFC in 2012, is a charity program to connect less-developed rural areas of China with multinational corporations. Over the last four years, the project has reached to 88 counties in Hubei, Shaanxi, Gansu, Jiangxi and Guizhou provinces. More than 60 Fortune Global 500 companies have taken part in about 60 sub-projects, including child and senior care programs, libraries, computer programming labs, an English teacher training program, a rural youth leadership training program and more. Some 300,000 people immediately benefited from the project.

# International Students’ Visit to Zunyi with Rainbow Bridge Project

**Jia Jipan**

**Zunyi in the eyes of**

**international students**

“Study Abroad in China: Findings and Thoughts”, a project based on the Golden Key Project, was carried out in May and June. Fourteen students from foreign countries were invited to visit poor rural areas covered by the CPAFFC’s Rainbow Bridge Project, which is designed to give international businesses a link to rural China. Upon landing in Zunyi, the students were

awed by its beautiful landscapes and commented on the stunning views.

When visiting the Museum of the Zunyi Conference, Feuba Hermann from Cameroon paid his respects at Premier Zhou Enlai’s former residence. Zunyi Conference, held on Jan 15, 1935 in the Guizhou city, was a milestone meeting in the history of the Communist Party of China.

“Premier Zhou was admired by Africans, and we all still remember his visit to 10 African countries during his



**Foreign students studying in Zunyi**



trip,” Hermann said.

### **A get-together of international students and local trainees**

Alexandra Pappa from Greece, who has been in love with Chinese martial arts since childhood, performed an eight-part exercise for Chinese trainees during the party. She joked that “We Greeks thought every Chinese would be good at martial arts, which turns out to be not so true. When I came to China, I found that not so many Chinese know how to do it at all.”

### **International students at Disney English Training Classroom**

International students vividly presented their own countries in English to local English teachers during the training session. They had a lively and fun time together.

In a short time, international students fell in love with Zunyi and the local people.

### **About the Golden Key Project**

Initiated in 2015, the Golden Key Project aims to help foreign friends gain a deep understanding of the Chinese political system, social system, history and culture, as well as economic development, via in-depth visits, studies, field trips, discussions and exchanges. By doing so, foreign friends can develop a better understanding of a real, comprehensive, open, developing and friendly China. And through them, the stories of the Chinese Dream can be told to the world.

# Tang Xianzu and Shakespeare: Cultural Giants of East and West

**Professor Zou Yuanjiang  
Wuhan University**

In the early years of the last century, Aoki Masaru, a Japanese drama history expert, for the first time compared Tang Xianzu and William Shakespeare from an international perspective. Tang was born in 1550, 14 years before Shakespeare, but they died in the same year, 1616. Masaru notes in his *History of Chinese Modern Drama*:

“They both were drama giants, born in the same historical period. What a coincidence! Tang was famous not only for his great achievements in dramatic, but also for his commendable personality and integrity, which is reflected in his drama works. And that’s why Chinese people love his works so much.”

Indeed, Shakespeare and Tang were both great men of their era, a time during which “humanity experienced the greatest progressive revolution”. And as Friedrich Engels said, “It’s an era that needs giants and creates giants who have great thinking and personality and who are passionate, versatile, and knowledgeable.”

Tang and Shakespeare both sang praises to the dignity, value and strength of humanity, becoming the soul of the Western Renaissance and

the Asian humanistic enlightenment. Their artistic charm make them “belong not to an era but to all centuries”, the poet Ben Jonson said.

The footsteps of both Tang and Shakespeare are tinged with the “social throes caused by the collapse of old beliefs and the immaturity of new ideas”. Through the delay of Hamlet’s revenge, Tang’s confusion about Confucianism’s call to “cultivate one’s moral character” and the Taoist concept of the “spiritual tour”, we can see the sublime tragedy that transcends the limitations of their own era. Tang and Shakespeare are both advocates of new ideas and rationalism and creators of a new humanistic spirit. By chanting “the beauty of the world” and “love above everything”, the two giants ushered in a tidal change in thought toward modern times.

Both Tang and Shakespeare were enthusiastic in highlighting human emotions. They both believed what German philosopher and anthropologist Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872) would summarize three centuries later: “A body without spirit is animal; a spirit without flesh is God. It takes both spirit and flesh to become



The CPAFFC and a municipal delegation from Fuzhou takes part in the parade marking the 400th anniversary of the death of Shakespeare

human.” In the mid-Ming Dynasty, and in a society where profit worship became fashionable, Tang soberly put forward the idea of “looking at human emotions from a different perspective”. Shakespeare also repeatedly reminded people that “As surfeit is the father of much fast, so every scope by the immoderate use turns to restraint.” (*Measure for Measure*). This undoubtedly reveals their pursuit of new rationality.

Tang and Shakespeare both were extremely talented dramatists, poets and masters of language. Reading their works or watching theatrical performances will make us exclaim that they really represent “shining genius in every sense” (Victor Hugo). We even strongly feel that their works of genius “infinitely extend our life” (Goethe).

Shakespeare wrote 37 dramatic works. Tang Xianzu only wrote four — *Linchuan Four Dreams*. But each one of the four is much longer than any of Shakespeare’s plays. *The Peony Pavilion* has 55 dramatic pieces. There are 53 in *The Purple Hairpins*, 44 in *The Nanke*

*Dream* and 30 in *The Handan Dream*.

In 1982, Jiangsu province’s Kunqu Opera Theatre staged four pieces from *The Peony Pavilion*, which lasted for two and a half hours. It takes more than 20 hours to perform all 55 pieces. Note that the Kunqu Opera originated in the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) and achieved dominance around 450 years ago in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Back then, the performance often took a day or even several days, and the audience had to bring enough food to make it to the end. In Shakespeare’s time, theaters in London opened at 2 o’clock in the afternoon, and the performances lasted about two and a half or three hours. For example, *Romeo and Juliet* has five acts and 24 scenes. But the length of it is equivalent to only about four pieces of *The Peony Pavilion*. In this sense, we can say that Tang’s *Linchuan Four Dreams* is as great a masterwork as Shakespeare’s, displaying a very rich and broad theatrical range.

Shakespeare wrote not only narrative poetry like *Venus and Adonis*

and *The Rape of Lucerne* but also many lyrical poems. His 154 sonnets are still popular today. Tang, from the first five-character poem he wrote when he was only 12, to the last one penned a day before his death at the age of 67, had written more than 2,730 poems over 55 years, not including more than 30 odes. We can see that Tang and Shakespeare perceived the world—and their lives—with poetic wisdom, creating a poetic way of life.

Drawing on the literary achievements of previous dynasties, Tang created his own poetry style. His poems are beautifully worded and rich in meaning. Some of them were widely known and have been famous through the ages. Shakespeare is also known for his beautiful language and rich vocabulary. Generally speaking, an educated person can only master a 4,000-word vocabulary. Shakespeare used more than 15,000 words in his dramatic works. His vocabulary has become an indispensable part of the English language. And Shakespeare is, by far, the most quoted writer in many quotation books. For example, in *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (1953), Shakespeare takes up 65 pages.

It’s clear that both Shakespeare and Tang were great masters skilled at describing human feelings through beautiful language. “Language is the house of Being,” German philosopher Martin Heidegger wrote. Thus, the house built by Shakespeare and Tang through language provides dignity, holiness, beauty and warmth to existence, bringing hope to desperate eyes and joy to the crying heart. ■

## 300 Photographers Focus on Seeking “Mr Tang” in Le’an County

**Fan Qiang**

This year marks the 400th anniversary of the death of Tang Xianzu, the iconic dramatist of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), and the 80th anniversary of the heroic Long March, which gave rise to modern China. On July 7, the launching ceremony of a commemorative journey—called the Dream-Seeking Journey to Fuzhou—took place in Liukeng, Le’an county, Fuzhou, Jiangxi province, Tang’s homeland, with the goal of creating a national photography collection honoring both Tang and the Red Army of East Jianxi province. It would follow the Army’s footprints on the desperate march that began in October 1934 and ended one year later, while documenting anniversary events. More than 300 photographers and photography enthusiasts from across the country attended the launch.

The Fuzhou government and China Photography newspaper jointly organized the photography collection activities to further dig Tang Xianzu elements out of Fuzhou; to publicize the city’s beautiful ecological environment, profound cultural heritage and inspiring revolutionary history, and to promote the development of Fuzhou’s cultural tourism industry.

At the launching ceremony, the photographers took in the *Charm of*

*Ancient Villages of Fuzhou* photo exhibition, whose theme was “Building Fuzhou into a photography base for Chinese traditional village culture”. The group then went to Liukeng village and the Niutian Ancient Camphor Forest scenic spot to document the cultural elements of Tang Xianzu.

To commemorate the Tang Xianzu anniversary, Fuzhou organized a series of activities, including the creation of a photography collection. The event will last until October. Afterward, the best photographs will be recognized.

Fuzhou was home to many celebrities and gifted scholars in ancient times, such as Wang An-shi, Tang Xianzu, Zeng Gong, Yan Shu, Yan Jidao and Lu Jiuyuan. There are more than 1,000 century-old villages and towns within the jurisdiction of Fuzhou city. Liukeng village in Le’an county is an outstanding example,

renowned at home and abroad. It is an important national cultural relics protection unit, and is among the first group of famous Chinese historical and cultural villages recognized by the government. Since the Five Dynasties (907-960 AD) and Southern Tang Dynasty (937-975 AD), Liukeng has been famous not only in Jiangxi province but also across the country for its splendid imperial examinations, numerous officials, political worship, economic prosperity, architecture, beautiful art and long tradition of large families. It is the epitome of China’s feudal patriarchal society in ancient times. In recent years, Fuzhou has steadily increased its efforts to protect and develop its ancient villages and towns, and actively promote the development of the cultural tourism industry by spotlighting those places for photographers and other visitors. ■



Camphor trees in Ushita (Photo by Zhou Muyang)

# A work from Tang Xianzu's hometown

## The Dialectal Version of *Yu Ming Tang* in Rehearsal

### Ming Hua

To offer a convincing performance at the 3rd China (Fuzhou) Tang Xianzu Art Festival, the actors and actresses at the Fuzhou City Culture and Art Development Center engaged themselves in intense rehearsals of the dialectal version of *Yu Ming Tang* (also known as *Linchuan Four Dreams*). The adapted version was produced in Fuzhou, homeland of Chinese literary giant Tang Xianzu, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of his death and his contribution to culture. Professor Cao Lusheng of Shanghai Theatre Academy wrote the script based on Tang's life and works. Cao sketched Tang's life with four dramatic excerpts: *The Purple Hairpins*, *The Revival of Du Liniang for Love*, *The Nanke Dream* and *The Handan Dream*.

The entire show lasted two hours, with more than 30 actors involved in the performance. Actor Li Jinfu, 53, was the eldest. He left the troupe many years ago and was invited to return as the lead actor in *The Nanke Dream* and *The Handan Dream*. His performance was more than an hour long and involved many difficult dramatic skills. Li explained the challenge:

"This dialectical version of *Yu Ming Tang* is a redo of the original, with its own characteristics. It's quite a difficult and challenging job. We started rehearsals in May to give the audience an excellent performance on the 400th anniversary of the death of Tang Xianzu. It's really hard work for us. I lost 10 pounds last month."

Zhang Lei, the show's executive director, said that this version of *Yu Ming Tang* was performed in an old local dialect, Haiyan tone, which combines traditional performing forms with

other ones. The stage design and lighting were modern.

The play also borrows elements from Fuzhou local melodies and Nuo Opera

"Because this play commemorates 400 years of the death of Tang, we wanted to highlight the local cultural characteristics of Fuzhou," Zhang said. "According to experts' studies, the original script of *Linchuan Four Dreams* was written for Haiyan tone. So we decided to perform it in that dialect. In Tang's homeland, we wanted



Stage scene of Tea-leaf Picking Opera "Peony Pavilion" (photo by Wu Shangyuan)

to perform Tang's famous work in an authentic way to show our greatest sincerity and respect."

An opera version of *Yu Ming Tang* and a musical titled *Tang Xianzu* will be performed at the Tang Xianzu Art Festival in Fuzhou. At the festival, the University of Leeds will perform *The Nanke Dream*, adapted from the perspective of 21st century British students. A Spanish Flamenco troupe will perform excerpts from *Don Quixote*, the classic work of Miguel de Cervantes.

Early in April, delegations from the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Jiangxi Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Fuzhou Municipal Government went to the United Kingdom to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the deaths of Tang Xianzu and William Shakespeare, and performed excerpts from *The Peony Pavilion* in the style of tea-leaf-picking opera, as well as a Nanfeng Nuo Opera dance and a Jinxi hand lion dance at Shakespeare's birthplace garden, along with the *Tang Xianzu All Life Exhibition* at Stratford Library.

The graceful Du Liniang and the elegant Liu Mengmei (the heroine and hero of *The Peony Pavilion*) touched the hearts of the foreign audience with their beautiful singing and exquisite dancing. The traditional opera performances broke regional and language barriers and received warm applause and praise from the audience in Shakespeare's hometown. ■

## Fuzhou Enters International View

Ning Huang

Fuzhou, Jiangxi province—known as the “land of talent” and “home of culture”—is connected with many historical celebrities and well-known scholars. With its abundant natural resources, it has also been called by local residents the “granary of Jiangxi province”, “land of tangerine”, “land of white lotus”, “land of Ma-Chicken” and “land of watermelon”. With picturesque scenery and fresh air, Fuzhou leads the allegedly top 50 “oxygen bar” cities of the Chinese mainland. As a historical “land of talent”, Fuzhou gave birth to the profound Linchuan culture.

In December last year, during their visit to Britain and Spain, a Fuzhou government delegation signed agreements to jointly commemorate the 400th Anniversary of the deaths of literary giants Tang Xianzu, William Shakespeare and Miguel de Cervantes in their birthplaces. Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire, United Kingdom; Cervantes was born in Alcalá de Henares, Spain.

In April this year, a Fuzhou delegation paid another visit to Britain and Spain, taking with it the brilliant

culture and operas of Fuzhou. Today's Fuzhou, with its rich natural resources and profound historical culture, is beginning to attract the attention of the world.

### Fuzhou, a brilliant land of traditional Chinese operas

Culture is both the calling card and the soul of a city. Fuzhou has the rich cultural soil to foster learned scholars and great works. The poet Tang Xianzu, for example, is an outstanding representative of Linchuan talent and culture, and his *Linchuan Four Dreams* is a world-renowned masterpiece.

Fuzhou, which is also known as a “land of opera”, is home to a variety of folk art forms, including the tea-leaf-picking opera (in Haiyan tone dialect), the Nuo Dance and the Meng Opera. In colleges, high schools and primary schools in Fuzhou, it's common to have professional actors teach basic acting skills to stimulate young people's interest in traditional Chinese opera

and display the unique charm of the theatrical art of Fuzhou.

Fuzhou features many genres of opera. With more than 400 years of history, the tea-leaf-picking opera is the perfect combination of folk tunes and colored lanterns with strong local characteristics. Known as the “living fossil of ancient Chinese opera tones”, Guangchang Meng Opera in Haiyan tone is featured with powerful, loud music and passionate and imaginative performances able to intoxicate an audience. Yihuang Opera, the first opera genre to stage Tang’s *Linchuan Four Dreams*, features distinct performance styles and exquisite tunes. It radiates the brilliant light of Chinese Opera history. It originated from the NanfengNuo Dance of the Han Dynasty (202 BC-220 AD) and is known as the “living fossil of ancient Chinese dances” for its primitive dance movements.

In order to bring the study of Tang Xianzu and the Linchuan culture

into international view, Fuzhou created the International Center for Study of Tang Xianzu, for which it gathered the wisdom of domestic and international experts. Last April, Fuzhou performed Tang’s classical repertoire and some intangible cultural heritage art forms on the stages at Shakespeare’s former residence, at his daughter’s former residence and at the University of Leeds. Excerpts from *Linchuan Four Dreams* were performed in the forms of tea-leaf-picking opera, Yihuang Opera, and Guangchang Meng Opera, giving the audience a taste of authentic Fuzhou traditional culture. Fuzhou also cooperated with the Sunshine Media Group in creating a resort-style live performance—*Dream Seeking in the Peony Pavilion*—in the Menghu Lake Scenic Area. Rock gardens, courtyards, bridges and pavilions served as the backdrop for the performance, and cutting-edge technology was used to create the sounds of nature, including wind and bird songs, giving the

audience a fully immersive experience reflective of Tang’s words: “What should I do facing such beautiful scenery, and whose courtyard is this that offers joy and entertainment?”

### Aroma of Ink Drifts Across Land of Talent

Since ancient times, Fuzhou (called Linchuan long ago) has always been known for its cultural wealth. As early as the Tang Dynasty (618-907), Wang Bo, a famous poet, in his masterpiece *A Tribute to Prince Teng’s Tower*, expressed his heartfelt love for the city with such words as, “It is also like the feast at River Ye where Cao Zhi composed the poem in praise of the lotus flower. Present are many talented scholars who are as gifted as Xie Lingyun of Linchuan”. Xie (385-433) was known for his poetry depicting landscapes.

“Linchuan talent” is a proud part of the Linchuan culture. Liuken Village of Le’an is an ancient village dating back 1,000 years. It was home to numerous high-level officials and scholars in ancient times. From the Song Dynasty (960-1279) to the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), more than 2,600 candidates from Linchuan (Fuzhou) successfully passed the highest imperial examinations. Since 1949, nine scientists from Fuzhou were elected as academicians of the Chinese Academy of Sciences or Chinese Academy of Engineering.

Celebrities in Fuzhou are not only numerous but splendid in



Fuzhou municipal delegation takes a photo with mayor of Alcalá, Spain

achievement. More than 100 people from Fuzhou are included in the *Dictionary of Chinese Celebrities*, including Yan Shu, a Ci writer in the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127); Wang Anshi, the great reform leader of the Northern Song Dynasty; Zeng Gong, a prose writer, historian, and politician in the Northern Song Dynasty; Lu Jiuyuan, a new Confucian in the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279); and Tang Xianzu, a dramatist in the Ming Dynasty. They not only made outstanding contributions to the development of Chinese culture but were praised worldwide.

Because of the area's cultural heritage and tradition, many in Fuzhou seem to have a "talent complex". There is a social climate of respect for teachers and education in Fuzhou. Two high schools often create "miracles" during China's college entrance examinations: Every year, 25 percent of the students admitted to Tsinghua University and Peking University, China's top institutions, from Jiangxi province are from those two high schools. In recent years, Linchuan No 1 High School has produced eight top scorers in the college entrance exam.

Focusing on integrating cultural elements into urban construction, Fuzhou has developed many scenic spots branded as Linchuan culture—for example, the Celebrity Sculptures Park, Nixian Pavilion, Dream Garden, Tang Xianzu Memorial and Yulong Longevity Palace—highlighting the charm of the "land of talent and home of culture". In the 66.7-hectare

Celebrity Sculptures Park, there are life-size statues of 66 historical celebrities from Fuzhou, including Wang Anshi, Tang Xianzu, Zeng Gong and Yan Shu. These sculptures are integrated with the squares, trails and gardens, giving visitors a strong feeling of the profound Linchuan culture. The 49.9-meter-tall Nixian Pavilion by the Fuhe River, together with Yellow Crane Tower, Yueyang Tower and Pavilion of Prince Teng, are called the Four Great Towers in southern China. Moreover, the History Memorial Hall, Hall of Fame, Chuihong Pavilion, Sunset Pavilion, Bell Tower and Drum Tower help reproduce Fuzhou's Song Dynasty folk customs. Standing on any of these towers, one has a panoramic view of the beautiful river.

### **Fuzhou, a glamorous green city**

Fuzhou is often associated with green hills, clear water and blue sky. Last year, it topped the list of 50 Chinese mainland "oxygen bar" cities rated and nominated by a Beijing-based unofficial organization, the "Standard Ranking Research Institute, scoring high in terms of green coverage, per-capita green area and annual days of good air quality. The ecological environment of Fuzhou is envied by residents of many heavily polluted cities. With forest coverage of 64.5 percent, and urban green coverage of 46.46 percent, Fuzhou is branded as a national forest city and garden city, attracting many tourists every year.

In Fuzhou, green is the dominant

tone that never fades. It is surrounded by Dajue Mountain, Magu Mountain and Junfeng Mountain, and the Fuhe River runs through it, which gives the city charm and spirituality. Xihu Lake and Menghu Lake are like mirrors, reflecting the city's beauty. Riverside Park, Fuhe Botanical Garden, Rushui Forest Park and Fengggang River Wetland Park form a wide landscape belt. The age-old camphor forest near Liukeng village stretches for several kilometers, radiating an intense fragrance. Zixi county, with forest coverage exceeding 87 percent, is home to 926 species of rare animals and plants. Yiqian town in Guangchang county, located at the headwaters of the Fuhe River, boasts thousands of hectares of lotus, making it the world's largest lotus lake. The emerald lotus leaves reach as far as where water and skies meet, and lotus blossoms bathing in sunshine exhibit a distinctive dazzling pink. The magnificent scenery is unforgettable.

Following the water ecology concept, Fuzhou is currently developing 36 special-feature villages and towns along the Fuhe, fusing tourism development with the environment, history and village culture. In the near future, it will be possible to enjoy the beautiful lotus lake in a gaily-painted pleasure boat. A visitor could then sail downstream to Jinxi to experience the woodblock printing of the Song and Ming Dynasties in ancient-styled bookstores, and watch the old movie *Peony Pavilion* before traveling to Xianie village to watch the whole porcelain-making process at Baihu Kiln. ■

## Interview with Vijay Gokhale Indian Ambassador to China

Staff reporter

*VOF: On April 14, 2016, the meeting of BRICS Friendship Cities was held in Mumbai. More than 75 delegates from the BRICS countries attended the opening ceremony. So far, there are 10 pairs of friendship cities (including states in India and provinces in China). Mr Ambassador, may I ask your views on the exchanges between the existing China-India friendship cities? And what is your expectation on the establishment of friendship cities between our two countries in the future?*



**CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin meets Vijay Gokhale, Indian Ambassador to China**

Vijay Gokhale: The government of India attaches high importance to developing relations at the subnational level. India and China have taken several initiatives in this regard. The first States/Provincial Leaders' Forum was held in 2015 and was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Premier Li Keqiang. It also saw participation from the governors of Chinese provinces, chief ministers of Indian states and mayors of cities from the two countries. This forum provides a

platform for direct exchanges between our states, provinces and cities.

The sister city/sister province arrangement is another important initiative that we have been encouraging as a means to enhance cooperation at the local level. As you mentioned, we have established two pairs of sister states and eight pairs of sister city relations over

the last three years.

This mechanism has been useful in sharing experience in areas such as urban development, infrastructure, etc., and also in facilitating contacts at the provincial and municipal levels between India and China. There is interest from both sides in more such partnerships, and we look forward to deepening



ing cooperation in this area.

***VOF: The China-South Asia Cultural Forum was founded by CPAFFC, together with Chinese and foreign universities and relevant research and academic institutions, in commemoration of the 110th anniversary of the birth of Tan Yunshan in 2008. It is a platform for cultural and academic exchanges between China and South Asian countries, aimed at enhancing mutual understanding and deepening friendship. The 2nd forum was held in New Delhi. The 5th—Exploring Cooperation Across the Himalayas—concluded in Chengdu at the end of 2015. Mr Ambassador, what are your expectations for the China-South Asia Cultural Forum?***

Vijay Gokhale: We appreciate the efforts made by the CPAFFC in promoting cultural and academic ties between China and the countries of South Asia. We believe that such interactions serve to bring our people closer and foster mutual understanding.

***VOF: The future of friendship between our two countries rests with the youth. China and India have decided that from 2015 to 2019 they will exchange 200 young people each year. Mr Ambassador, to further enhance China-India friendship in the future, how can more favorable conditions for exchanges be created***

***between young people?***

Vijay Gokhale: We are two large neighbors with civilizational linkages spanning centuries. Recognizing that people-to-people contacts are essential to further mutual understanding and to provide a social foundation for our partnership, our two countries have decided on several measures, one of which is the exchange of the 200-member youth delegation that you referred to.

We greatly value this initiative. I believe, as future leaders, interactions between the youth will help in promoting friendly relations. Our delegations in the past have included students, young scholars, journalists, athletes, civil servants, etc. Visiting China has helped them broaden their understanding of the country as well as the bilateral relationship. I am sure China's delegations traveling to India have had similar experiences.

***VOF: 2015 was the Year of Indian Tourism in China, while this year, 2016, is the Year of Chinese Tourism in India. Now, many Chinese people are choosing India as their destination, and Indian people also like visiting China. Mr Ambassador, how can China-India tourism be promoted further?***

Vijay Gokhale: I just mentioned the importance we attach to people-to-people contacts. We believe that tour-

ism can play a major role in this regard. The "Visit India" year was promoted in China in 2015 and the "Visit China" year is being promoted in India now. We have also taken steps to facilitate travel by Chinese tourists. For instance, we have started issuing e-tourist visas to Chinese tourists. In order to promote an understanding of each other's countries, which in turn would push tourism forward, we entered into a memorandum of understanding on co-production of movies. The first movie, *Xuan Zang*, [was released] on April 29. Two more co-produced movies are in the pipeline. We hope that these will provide a window into India and Indian culture for Chinese people and encourage more travel.

***VOF: Mr Ambassador, could you please talk about your experience and the things that attract you in China?***

Vijay Gokhale: This is my third tenure in Beijing. Further, I have been dealing with China in different capacities at the Ministry of External Affairs in India also. We admire the economic development that China has achieved over the last 30 years. India-China relations have also developed significantly in the past few years. It has been just over three months since I took charge as India's ambassador to China. I look forward to a fruitful tenure in China and to further growth of our bilateral relations. ■

# A Lifetime of Belief Bridges East and West

**Zhou Wei**

**Beijing Foreign Studies University**

We are seated in the auditorium at Beijing Foreign Studies University on May 28, 2016. Holding hands and standing face-to-face in the spotlight on stage are Isabel and David. “I think we need to pack up,” Isabel says. David asks: “For England?” Isabel replies: “No, for Nanhaishan.”

On hearing these words, the audience bursts into applause. Then more applause comes when Jia Wenjian, vice-president of the university, presents a bouquet of flowers to the real Isabel, now 100 years old, who is seated in the audience.

This was how the play ended. Titled *David and Isabel's Choice*, it was the final short play of a joint youth drama festival — China-Britain Meet in Drama — organized by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Beijing Foreign Studies University and Edinburgh Napier University of the United Kingdom.

Sitting with the audience and watching my own play being performed

on stage, I recalled the process of writing and casting with pride and a sense of fulfillment.

It all started in October 2015 when I was asked to write a short play about David and Isabel Crook, two of the first international experts to work at Beijing Foreign Studies University, then called the Central Foreign Affairs School. I was both excited and nervous to be given the task. I considered it a great opportunity to repay my alma mater, BFSU. But I was worried because I was fully aware of the important role David and Isabel played in shaping this tiny school into what it is today. How could I present their rich lives in a 20-minute play?

I decided to enlist some help. Since the project aimed to promote friendship between Chinese and British college students, I invited Tian Ran, a senior in the university's English Department, to work with me. I also invited Zhang Ying and Wu Yingjie to assist in the production of the play. Zhang is an experienced stage designer and Wu is a performance art director

at Beijing Union University. We were classmates and good friends at the Central Academy of Drama, where we pursued our PhD studies. We were in the process of producing *Tea*, an American play that I had translated into Chinese, when I was asked to write the short play. When I briefed my friends about the new project, they showed great interest and were happy to help.

The following five months were devoted to interviews of Isabel, readings about the Crooks' lives and drafting the play. I conducted several interviews with Isabel, but the first proved crucial. It took place on the morning of Nov 27. Tian and I met Isabel and her son, Michael, in her apartment on BFSU's West Campus. Our talk was random and pleasant, shifting from the Crooks' way of addressing each other at home to the student-teacher relationship at the Central Foreign Affairs School, where they had started their teaching career. The focus was on how it happened that the couple were invited by Wang

Bingnan, a central government foreign affairs official, to teach at the Central Foreign Affairs School at Nanhaishan.

That first interview provided me with a clear picture of the young David and Isabel. I could imagine David as an ambitious journalist and Isabel as a promising scholar in anthropology. Both were firm believers in communism and harbor deep affection for China. They devoted their lives to helping the new China train future diplomats.

Between my heavy teaching workload and Tian Ran's upcoming BA thesis, we somehow managed to finish reading David's autobiography and *David and Isabel Crook in China*, a collection of essays written by their friends and colleagues. We also read the two books written by the couple about their experience working at Shilidian, or Ten Mile Inn village, in Hebei province where they observed the land reform movement led by the Communist Party of China.

Based on my research, I quickly wrote an outline for three theatrical scenes, with Scene 1 focusing on their decision to stay in China in 1948, Scene 2 describing a teachers' meeting and Scene 3 presenting David's English class.

Scene 1 was completed with the help of Tian in January. It was a draft script of about 900 words. Since Tian needed to focus on her BA thesis, I completed Scenes 2 and 3 on my own. By Feb 6, just before Spring Festival, I had three scenes ready.

After I put them into Draft 1 in March, I passed the script to Isabel,



Stage photo of *David and Isabel's Choice*

Michael and two professors, Zhang Jian and Mei Renyi. Isabel and Michael offered more historical details—for instance, how David turned down Liao Chengzhi's invitation to work at Xinhua News Agency.

Zhang suggested that I focus on Scene 1, and Mei offered more details on how to characterize the couple, while Zhang Ying and Wu Yingjie offered some professional advice on the structure of the play. Taking their suggestions and the time limit for the play into consideration, I revised Scene 1 by adding some dramatic conflicts and reducing the number of characters to three—David, Isabel and Wang Bingnan. The focus became how they accepted Wang's invitation to work at the Central Foreign Affairs School. The script went through 13 revisions before

we did the first rehearsal in May.

Casting turned out to be an equally challenging task. I invited Zhang Yuexuan, a junior English major to play Wang Bingnan in January. Zhang has some experience as a student actor but lacked experience in playing a man much older than himself. As for the foreign actors, my plan was simply to find some international students at BFSU. This soon proved impractical, as most of the international students were from Asian countries. Those from English-speaking countries are usually short-term exchange students who only stay for one or two months to learn Chinese. Therefore, we decided to put off the casting until spring semester. The ideal requirements were that the actor should be British and the actress Canadian.

The first round of casting was not fruitful: No suitable students turned up to audition. Thinking our requirements may have been too strict, I changed them to any international student who can speak good English, regardless of nationality. Inquiries were made at BFSU's School of Chinese Language and Culture without any results. Then I thought of Beijing Culture and Language University, where the majority of the students are international and come to learn Chinese. On May 8, I emailed Professor Lu Wei, deputy dean of the university's Foreign Languages School and a close friend of mine, explaining our requirements for the actors. I got her reply the next day, saying a young Irish teacher, Roisin Timmins, seemed to meet the requirements for Isabel. Overjoyed at this news, I contacted Roisin. She called me on March 18, and we scheduled an interview for the next day.

Roisin is a beautiful young woman, over 170 centimeters tall and in many ways a perfect match to the young Isabel. Zhang Ying and Wu Yingjie took an immediate liking to her. We had a pleasant conversation about her life in China. When she mentioned that her father is a member of the Communist Party of Britain, I felt a secret joy surging over me. I could detect echoes of the Crooks in her family values. After I briefly introduced the Crooks to her and explained the requirements for the actress, Roisin almost instantly agreed to play the role.

Finding the right David took more

time. With Roisin in mind, I tried to find an actor who was slightly older and taller so that together on stage they would resemble the real David and Isabel. I interviewed several English-speaking students. No one was right for the role. After the date of the performance was finalized on May 28, I became increasingly worried. I discussed the problem with Wang Zhanpeng and Ju Dan, two colleagues who were responsible for the project, and for awhile we even thought of hiring a professional Chinese actor to play David. However, we gave up the idea after figuring it would be about as difficult to train him to speak fluent English as to find an English-speaking actor.

I found the right David by a stroke of luck. As I was racking my brain, I received a call on April 7. The caller introduced himself as Abdiel LeRoy and said we had met some years ago when he and several English actors had come to BFSU to present some scenes from Shakespeare plays. I remembered the pleasant show in my class. Abdiel asked me if he could come again to lecture on a book he had just published. As we emailed back and forth concerning the venue and time for the lecture, it suddenly occurred to me: Why not invite Abdiel to play David?

After I explained the project to him, he said he would like to read the script first. I sent him Draft 9 on April 13. That was just two days before our first production meeting. At the meeting, we all felt the urgency of

finding the right actor to play David. I had not yet received a reply from Abdiel.

I decided to make a last-ditch attempt to fill the role with an actor from BFSU and asked Tian Ran to design a poster. Just two days later, Abdiel emailed me saying he was interested in playing the role.

We scheduled an appointment on April 23. This meeting was more like a reunion between old friends than an interview. We happily recalled our first meeting in 2010 and our lives after that. Abdiel told me that he was currently working at CCTV. After I explained the terms in detail, he gladly accepted the role. He also offered to polish the language of the play.

Compared with the initial difficulties of writing and casting, rehearsals were exceedingly smooth. As a mature Shakespearean actor and director, Abdiel offered some constructive ideas on the acting and stage movements. Wu Yingjie's concept of presenting the play as realism echoed the content, and Zhang Ying's period costumes added a final perfect touch.

When Isabel and some of her friends saw the technical rehearsal on May 21, she was delighted. "I saw a young and slender Isabel on the stage and felt much relieved," she said.

The title of the play was revised three times. The original title was *Red Star*, since I had intended to highlight the Crooks' belief in communism. After I passed the script to Zhang Jian, he suggested changing it to *David and*

*Isabel in China*. I used that title until Draft 13. However, both Michael and I thought it was too broad a topic for such a short play, which focuses on a single turning point in their lives—specifically why they decided to stay in China in 1948. Then I suggested we change the title to *David and Isabel's Choice*, which would keep the audience in suspense. That's the title we used for the final draft, Draft 14.

The dress rehearsal and performance fell on May 28. Everything went smoothly except that we lost an important property—a glass bottle—for the performance. It was used in the dress rehearsal in the afternoon but was apparently misplaced after someone removed it from the stage. When Tian Ran told me in a panic half an hour before the official performance that she couldn't find the bottle, I asked her to immediately buy a new one from the campus store. Nobody was aware of this mishap except Tian and me.

This project has proved fruitful in many ways. It was a learning experience for me. I have achieved a profound understanding of David and Isabel. It was a team effort both on stage and off. I worked closely with Isabel, Michael, Tian Ran, and later Abdiel on the script; and Wu Yingjie, Zhang Ying and Zhang Yuexuan discussed Shakespeare with Abdiel during rehearsal. These friendships formed off-stage are a continuation of the friendship begun by David and Isabel Crook and further evidence of the success of the China Meets Britain in Drama project. ■

## Foreign Faces in *Thunderstorm*

Stories of a Delegation from Edinburgh Napier  
University of UK

**Wang Fan**

As Lu Shipping tears up a \$5,000 check offered by Zhou Puyuan and storms off in a huff, the classic Chinese play *Thunderstorm* comes to a close at the Beijing Foreign Studies University Auditorium.

After playing only two scenes, the actors—students from Edinburgh Napier University in the United Kingdom—won enthusiastic applause for their perfect interpretation. These students, together with those from Beijing Foreign Studies University, had staged a remarkable show as part of China Meets UK in Drama, a youth cultural exchange project launched by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.

In Chinese, the term “theater” is expressed as *xiju*, a combination of operas from southern China and the plays of northern China. The expression didn't find its way into the lexicon

of the performing arts until the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Theater has many forms, the most common being drama, opera, dance drama, musical play and puppet show. Different civilizations have given birth to diverse theatrical forms, including the Western drama, Chinese theater arts, Indian sanskrit drama and the Japanese *nō* drama and kabuki.

After the show, with a touch of pride and excitement, the students from the UK told me about their love of drama.

Every year, the United Kingdom organizes various art festivals, including street shows that stir students' interest in drama. Some began learning about drama as early as senior high school by taking courses recommended by their teachers. They were told that drama can improve a person's communication skills. It requires

the players to study literature, performance, stage design and music. They must act in cooperation with other actors, under the watchful gaze of an audience.

Alex Card, the actor who played Zhou Puyuan in *Thunderstorm* had an even more extraordinary experience in drama. He intended to major in something else in his university studies, but one of his teachers couldn't bear the thought of Alex's acting talent going to waste and convinced him to take up drama in college.

Four years of education provided a profound understanding: With drama, you can experience different personalities. It consists of stories that distill the essential moments in life and explore intricacies and complex emotions. Drama proves to be a superb form of communication, not detached from real life but rather amplifying it.

The British program leader, Iain Davie, has a deep understanding: "Drama is life without the boring trivialities," he said.

However, when asked about their understanding of Chinese drama, the British students seemed somewhat shy, even a bit perplexed and embarrassed. Lisa Robertson, who played the character Lu Shiping, said that before the exchange program she had only seen pictures of elaborate costumes that reflect a long Chinese tradition. It was only after she came to China that she discovered the amazing, delicate texture of Chinese drama.



Publicity photo for *Thunderstorm*

Many cultural elements at deep levels have been passed on by drama—elements that might otherwise have died off. Andrew Sim, the actor who played Zhou Ping, said he had only seen Chinese dance drama at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, said to be the largest arts festival in the world, and was impressed by its grand scenes, complex plot and elaborate stagecraft. He had thought there were only one or two Chinese dramatic styles, not knowing that there are nearly 100 in traditional operas alone.

Card said that before he came to China he always thought that

most Chinese drama was based on mythology, so he expected lots of masks. But he learned through the exchange that Chinese drama is close to people's daily lives. The performances are professional, fluent and accurate in detail.

Gabrielle Kitson, who was born into a drama family, played the role of Fanyi this time. She found Chinese drama to be a new experience. She had been told that China had fantastic opera, but she had never seen any of it.

Unfamiliar with Chinese drama as they were, the students accepted the invitation of the CPAFFC asking them

to perform two scenes of *Thunderstorm* for the China Meets UK in Drama section of the China-UK Youth Drama Exchange Project.

Robertson told me that they were confident because they had carefully rehearsed two Shakespearean comedies, *Measure for Measure* and *The Merchant of Venice*. But time was short. They hurried to research related materials online and found, to their great surprise, that *Thunderstorm* was one of the most popular plays in China. They had never heard of it, nor could they find any English materials about it.

They began to study the scripts trying to understand the emotions and thoughts of each character, so as to do justice to this Chinese home treasure. Program leader Davie was also pleased with what the play brought to him. He wanted the students to try it. He found that these students, who had never before performed a Chinese drama, quickly grasped their roles with an understanding rarely seen in his 15 years of teaching.

Excited by their first taste of Chinese drama, they visited the National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts, where they discovered connections between Chinese and British forms of drama. In the rehearsal room, students learning *dan* (female roles in Chinese Opera) were dancing to a Chinese song called *Pusaman*. Students learning *Sheng* (male roles) were carefully performing every motion and facial expression. A military comedian's skillful performance and

an impressive martial arts scene in the opera *Stealing the Silver Jar* proved to be eye-opening for the British students, who frequently burst into applause and cheers.

In the classroom, the students got acquainted quickly. They took pictures and exchanged contact information.

Davie noticed that although the Chinese and British dramas differ in technique and circumstances, the fundamental thread is the same: They both convey people's emotions and break lines into small units to express the feelings intended by the playwright. In performances, the students would meticulously polish the details of every moment.

When the time to go home drew near, the students were reluctant to part, as if they still wanted to see more of China's cultural relics and historical sites, try more of its cuisine and learn more about its history and culture. Previously, China was only a remote geographical concept to them; now it was a place they would always care about.

Gabrielle Kitson joked: "What are we going to eat back home after we've had so many good things here? Our stomachs are spoiled. Before I came, I thought Beijing was a big city like London. But I found that people here are warmer and have bigger hearts."

Andrew Sim expressed similar feelings. "I went for a walk one evening, and there was a dance gathering in a plaza," he said. "I was really impressed that it seemed like an organized community event. That

doesn't really happen back home. It may happen, maybe in a hall, and you have to pay for it. But here, people just join in and dance to the music. I really love this kind of community spirit."

Robertson agreed, saying, "The old buildings on the streets are wonderfully decorated, and you can see history through them. And there is a feeling of peace about the Temple of Heaven that was stunning. I had been told that China is beautiful, but now I've seen it."

"The architecture really impressed me," said Alex Card. "You could see the attention to detail and how well it's maintained. These buildings are massive. But every single inch of them is handcrafted and beautifully expressed. One of the main things I look for when I go to any city is similarities to Newcastle, my hometown. And I found similarities here, mainly from the people. I feel so relaxed—like home."

Before leaving, Davie told me that *Thunderstorm* was a great piece of drama and an interesting story. It's also good material to train with, he said. After going back to Britain, he said, he would add it to his course and perhaps have students perform a full version. He also wanted to know about other good Chinese dramas, so he'd know what is worth "stealing" and carrying back to Britain.

His words amused me. Cultures become more radiant only when they learn from one another. So feel free to take Chinese culture back with you, no strings attached. ■

# A Grand Theater of China-UK Youth Drama Exchange

**Hao Xiaosong**

The term “drama” originates in ancient Greece, meaning action. As a major player in the history of Western drama, the United Kingdom produced many great playwrights, including William Shakespeare, during the reign of Elizabeth I in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Chinese drama consists of both traditional and modern forms. The traditional Chinese Opera has a long history and comes in diverse forms, with prominent representatives such as Guan Hanqing in the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) and Tang Xianzu in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). The modern drama was introduced into China in the 20th century, and a galaxy of playwrights emerged, including Lao She, Xia Yan, Wu Zuguang and Cao Yu.

The year 2016 marks the 400th anniversary of the deaths of both William Shakespeare and Tang Xianzu. With the China-UK Youth Exchange Program choosing drama as its second-season activity, the CPAFFC team joined hands with Edinburgh Napier University and Beijing Foreign Studies University to launch an exchange project—China-UK in Drama. The

Chinese and British students worked together to stage *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare and *Thunderstorm* by Cao Yu, along with two other newly created dramas.

Since the launching ceremony at the end of 2015, the Chinese and British partners have prepared with script writing, rehearsals and publicity. The official performances were staged on May 28. The most eye-catching were the Chinese version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* using Chinese students and the English version of *Thunderstorm* using British

students.

Early in the morning of the big day, there was a busy scene in BFSU's auditorium, under a banner hung high and proclaiming “China Meets UK in Drama—China-UK Youth Drama Exchange Project”. Acoustics and lights were being tested; students and staff were making final preparations; photographers were taking snapshots of the action.

Four students and their program leader, Iain Davie from Edinburgh Napier University, interacted with students from BFSU before the



**CPAFFC Vice-President Song Jingwu (third from left, first row) and the acting staff**



performance. Davie gave an impressive lecture on Shakespeare's plays in which he said that the most difficult part for British people was the language itself. Shakespeare's language had seen a major transition from the English of the Middle Ages to Early Modern English, so his use of many words was often different from that of today. To faithfully replay Shakespeare's works, actors must devote a great deal of time to discussing the words and referring to the dictionary to find out what Shakespeare really meant. Davie added that an actor must have confidence and be connected with the role to be played.

In response to a question by a Chinese student on how one can get "connected" with a story that happened centuries ago if one has little knowledge about that time, Iain answered that even though one might not know specifically what a king's

or queen's life was like, he must have emotions like love, hatred and jealousy, which are shared by mankind in all times.

At the beginning, the British students had planned to stage two Shakespearean classics—*Measure for Measure* and *The Merchant of Venice*. But our project was aimed at promoting China-UK youth drama exchanges. Since the Chinese students would stage plays by Shakespeare, we asked the British side if they could play a Chinese piece, such as *Thunderstorm*. It was just two weeks before the final performance, and we sent them the English scripts of Act I and Act II of *Thunderstorm* downloaded from the internet. Unexpectedly, we got a positive reply from Iain immediately. We were excited at this new development, as it would bring more luster to the exchange project.

It was a bold undertaking for British students to attempt to play *Thunderstorm*. Adjustments were made. Instead of complex scenes and props, only a chair and a sofa would be on the stage. Without traditional Chinese costumes, the British students would perform in black suits and long skirts.

The students played with great confidence, not in the least discouraged by the lack of scenery and dress. My eyes were glued to the characters Zhou Ping and Fan Yi, who were arguing vehemently on stage. Their performance carried the audience away. Ms Wu Yingjie, director of *David and Isabel's Choice*, who sat beside me, praised them continually: "Bravo! That's it." The meeting of Zhou Puyuan and Lu Shiping in Act II was also soul-stirring. Lisa Robertson, the actress playing Lu, gave vivid expression to Lu's grievances and outbursts against what she had to endure as a secret lover and housemaid of Zhou for 27 years, as well as to the character's misery and helplessness. All the audiences were deeply touched. Some called the performance "excellent" and "not merely a scene of bickering but rather of a fierce conflict of emotions". A storm of applause rose from the audience when the curtain fell.

It was the first time for British students to stage *Thunderstorm*. They had overcome many difficulties in rehearsal, including the poor English script downloaded from the internet. They looked around in haste for a better version, since the final performance



Stage photo of A Midsummer Night's Dream

was drawing near. To everyone's relief, the book *Thunderstorm* in English was finally discovered in the National Library of Scotland.

Another difficulty was the pressure of the four students' coming graduation. They were busy with various job interviews, as well as rehearsals for two other plays. But thanks to the strong skills they had developed over years of professional-level training as performing arts students, their rich stage experience and good teamwork, they were ready in little more than a week. In their words, they enjoyed the rehearsing, and it was a matter of pride. Program leader Davie found *Thunderstorm* interesting and was ready to stage the entire play if an opportunity presented itself.

The BFSU students also made great effort in rehearsing *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *A Promise of Loyalty* and *David and Isabel's Choice*.

Act II of the Shakespearean comedy was staged based on the Chinese edition translated by Ms Shao Xueping, a teacher at BFSU who was also the director. Respecting the traditions of Elizabethan times, the characters were all played by men from different schools of the university. It was not easy to organize and coordinate the 24-member crew, the largest of the project. The humorous performance that evening had the audience in hysterics. The exquisite costumes tailored especially for the play were also impressive.

*A Promise of Loyalty* is an original drama created by the freshmen of the

School of English and International Studies at BFSU. It tells the story of Hans, an old soccer fan, who has cancer and is confined to bed. He persists in coming to the field to cheer for his favorite team and finally witnesses the victory. Although these young actors were not highly skilled, their sincerity and naivete touched the audience.

*David and Isabel's Choice* is based upon the real-life story of David and Isabel Crook, two of the first international experts to work at Beijing Foreign Studies University, then called the Central Foreign Affairs School. David and Isabel, who had been in China for several years helping to cement the Communist Revolution, were invited by Mr Wang Bingnan, deputy-director of the Central Foreign Affairs Office, to stay in China to help train diplomats for the newly founded nation. However, Isabel was about to return to England to complete her PhD courses, while David was an ambitious journalist. What should they do? As firm believers in communism and having a deep love for China, the couple sacrificed their own careers and chose to stay.

Casting for this play turned out to be challenging. British nationals were specially invited from Beijing Language and Culture University and China Central Television to perform. It is worth mentioning that Abdiel LeRoy, chosen to play David, loves drama and often performs in drama clubs in his spare time. Playwright Zhou Wei said finding the right David was a stroke of luck. At the same time, Roisin

Timmins, who would play Isabel, was also an excellent match. The real-life Isabel, who was 101 years old, came to provide personal guidance during rehearsals. She thought highly of the performance.

Another key role in the play is Wang Bingnan, who was president of CPAFFC from 1975 to 1986. Wang persuades the couple to stay in China. In order to reconstruct life in China's liberated areas in the 1940s, the crew was picky about the scene, props and costumes. Isabel offered the typewriter once used by her husband, which was too precious to be used in rehearsals but showed up in the first performance. Gray uniforms, an old desk, a bookcase and old-fashioned travel trunks brought the audience back to Shilidian village in 1948. When the curtain fell, CPAFFC Vice-President Song Jingwu and Beijing Foreign Studies University's Party Vice-Secretary Zhao Min presented flowers and gifts to the real-life Isabel. The audience burst into sustained applause in tribute to the Crooks, who dedicated their lives to the lofty cause of China's revolution and education.

When the two-and-a-half-hour performance ended, excited actors and staff posed for group photos. The China-UK Youth Drama Exchange Project was a result of collective wisdom, including idea formation, naming, project approval, launching and formal performances. It was gratifying that our efforts were rewarded so warmly.

Although drama, a traditional art,

might not be as popular as modern arts such as film, it has unique charm. The power of drama comes from its faithful reflection of real life. Audiences, seeing live actors speaking and performing not far away, feel immersed in the scene. Dramatic actors in this demanding art form can only rely on the delivery of their lines, facial expressions and body movements to portray a character's personality and fate—and they must do it right the first time, rather than depending on multiple camera shots, film editing or visions created by high technology. Both the Chinese and British students challenged themselves to bring the classic plays to life.

Performing well-known plays from the other nation was also a way to show their intercultural understanding. Their experimentation with drama is a pursuit of goodness, beauty and truth. The spiritual wealth they gained outweighs all the improvements in their performing skills. Both Chinese and British cultures celebrate good things and denounce evil, which can be seen in all the plays mentioned here.

As Iain Davie said in his speech at the opening ceremony: "Stories are important for societies because we live in a somewhat chaotic world. The good guy does not always win. Love does not necessarily conquer all. If you work really, really hard, you might not get where you want to be. And so in our world of chaos, we look for order. We search for patterns to create some kind of understanding of this chaos. And that's what stories do." ■

## China Steadfastly Safeguards Peace and Stability in the South China Sea

WU SIKE

After three years, the dramatic arbitration on the South China Sea issue choreographed by the Philippines approaches its end. Since the United States inflated the South China Sea issue at the 2010 meeting of foreign ministers of ASEAN member states, and later announced its rebalancing to Asia Pacific strategy, tranquility in the South China Sea has been shattered by the commotion surrounding so called "freedom of navigation," "militarization," and the latest "arbitration". The region is now a focus of media attention. What, as some foreign friends have asked me, exactly is up in the South China Sea?

### China's indisputable sovereignty over the South China Sea islands

China was the first country in the world to discover, name, administer, and develop the islands in the South China Sea. Successive Chinese governments have exercised jurisdiction over these islands and adjacent waters through such means as

administrative management, military patrols, production and business operations, and rescue activities at sea. During WWII, Japan seized the Xisha and Nansha islands. They were restored to China after the war in compliance with the Cairo Declaration and Potsdam Proclamation. China stationed troops and built military and civilian facilities on the islands, so exercising legitimate and de facto sovereignty over them. In the decades leading up to the 1970s, it was widely recognized in the international community that the South China Sea islands belong to China, and not a single country raised objections on this account. As to the Philippines, the scope of its territory is defined in the 1898 Treaty of Peace between the US and the Kingdom of Spain (Treaty of Paris) and other pacts. They clearly specify 118 degrees east longitude as the western limit of Philippine territory. China's islands and reefs in the South China Sea are all located west of that line. In blatant disregard of this fact, the Philippines has occupied, step-by-step, China's islands and reefs ever since rich oil and natural gas reserves

were detected in the region in the late 1960s, thereby giving rise to the South China Sea issue.

To cloud the matter, the Philippines played the role of victim, and decried China's legitimate action of erecting justified defense works on its own territory as militarization of the South China Sea. It then exhorted external forces to increase military deployments in the region and finally unilaterally initiated an arbitration action in The Hague. The Chinese government has every reason to object. First of all, it has the right to reject and not participate in arbitration under international law, which stipulates that choosing the accepted means to solve disputes is the sovereign right of the concerned countries. China and the Philippines have already agreed, in bilateral and multilateral documents, to resolve disputes in the South China Sea through negotiation. However the Philippines breached these agreements, and contravened its obligations to China under them by unilaterally initiating the arbitration, so violating China's right to voluntarily choose the means to solve the disputes.

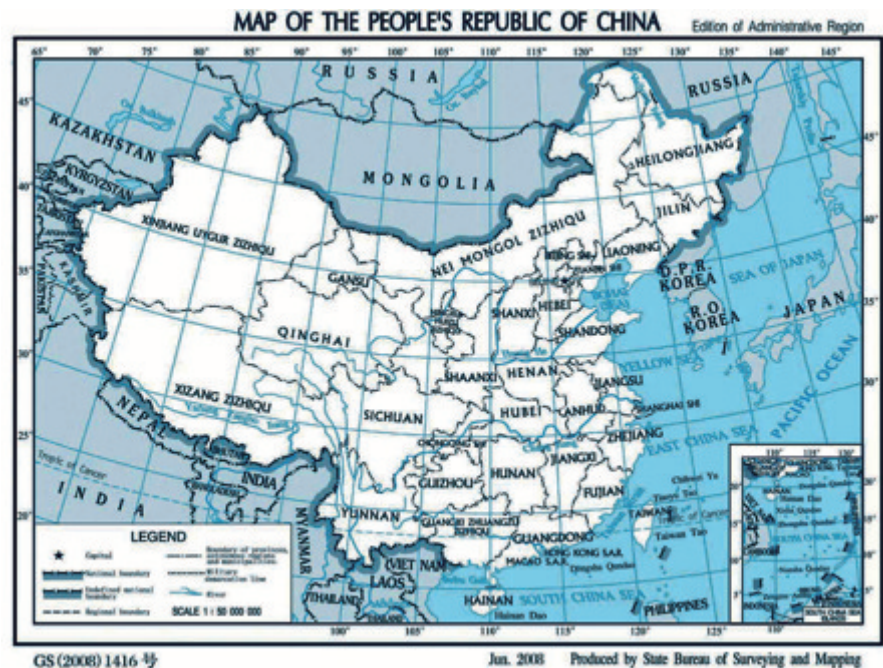
Since the 1970s, the Philippines has carried out illegal occupation of or made claims over certain Chinese islands and reefs in the South China Sea, and has also conducted unlawful activities such as natural resource exploitation of them and in adjacent waters. These actions violate the UN Charter and relevant international laws, and grossly infringe on China's sovereign rights and interests. The

Chinese government categorically opposes these activities, and has repeatedly taken up the issue with and made protests against the Philippines.

### China's stance on arbitration

Ever since the Philippines initiated the arbitration on the South China Sea issue in 2013, politicians and scholars of certain Western countries have publicly made predictions on the arbitration result, and underscored its binding force. China made it clear from the very beginning that it would not accept or participate in the arbitration, thereby exercising the right accorded to it by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and defending the authority

of international laws. The dispute between China and the Philippines over the South China Sea is in essence a dispute about territorial sovereignty over certain islands and reefs in the area, and maritime delimitation, an issue over which the arbitral tribunal has no jurisdiction. In an attempt to circumvent this jurisdictional hurdle, the Philippines cunningly packaged its case, in hundreds of pages, in such a way as to appear ostensibly concerned about the interpretation or application of the UNCLOS, rather than about the sovereignty over those maritime features. But by demanding a ruling on the compatibility of China's maritime claims with the UNCLOS provisions, it actually intends to negate the rights and interests of China. Nevertheless, no packaging, however contrived, can



conceal the very essence of the subject-matter of the arbitration, namely, that of territorial sovereignty over certain maritime features in the South China Sea. Anyone with a basic knowledge of international laws understands that disputes over the sovereignty of islands and reefs do not fall under UNCLOS jurisdiction. The preamble to the Convention refers to: “the desirability of establishing through this Convention, with due regard for the sovereignty of all States, a legal order for the seas and oceans.” It is thus apparent that “due regard for the sovereignty of all States” is the prerequisite to application of the Convention to determining the maritime rights of the states that are parties to it. The declaration on optional exceptions that China made in 2006, in accordance with Article 298 of UNCLOS, excludes disputes

concerning maritime delimitations, and military and law enforcement activities from the dispute settlement procedures provided for in the UNCLOS. Over 30 countries have made similar declarations, including four permanent member states of the UN Security Council, other than the US, which has not ratified the UNCLOS. The declaration made by China conforms to relevant international laws and prevailing international practices.

The Philippines, however, before exhausting all possible bilateral consultation and negotiation avenues, arbitrarily and unilaterally initiated an arbitration, running counter to the widely accepted international rule of bringing a matter to arbitration with the prior consent of all parties concerned. On issues concerning territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and

interests, China has been consistent in its stance that any dispute should be solved peacefully through negotiations between the countries directly concerned.

A consensus was moreover reached between China and the Philippines to address the South China Sea issue through friendly consultation and negotiation. Besides, the Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea jointly signed by China and ASEAN member states in 2002 stipulates in Paragraph 4 that “the Parties concerned undertake to resolve their territorial and jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means ... through friendly consultations and negotiations by sovereign states directly concerned.”

In essence the subject-matter of the said arbitration is that of territorial sovereignty over certain maritime features in the South China Sea, which is beyond the scope of the UNCLOS, and therefore not covered by the interpretation or application of the Convention. Even assuming that the subject matter of the arbitration did concern the interpretation or application of the UNCLOS, it has been excluded by the 2006 declaration filed by China under Article 298 of the Convention, due to its being an integral part of the dispute over maritime delimitation between the two states. China has explicitly excluded such disputes from the applicability of any compulsory procedures under the Convention. International judiciary and arbitrary organizations should respect the declarations on optional exceptions that



**Chinese officers patrol the Yongxing Island of the Xisha Archipelago**

countries have made pursuant to Article 298 of the UNCLOS, and support concerned countries in peacefully solving sovereign and maritime disputes through friendly consultations according to bilateral agreements and the DOC. Certain countries outside the region that claim not to take sides in the dispute over the South China Sea, meanwhile, have taken it upon themselves to meddle in the issue. They send planes and fleets to the region of contention, and meanwhile direct groundless accusations at China. Such deeds only embolden certain countries in the region to take reckless action, thereby escalating the situation.

#### **China adheres to peaceful consultation**

China resolutely defends the peace and stability of the South China Sea. Having a long peace-loving tradition, the country is adamant in its policy of neighborliness and commitment to solving international disputes through friendly consultations. The Belt and Road Initiative it proposed in recent years is another attempt by China to develop friendly cooperative ties with other countries in efforts to achieve mutual benefits, win-win results and common prosperity. It also propounded the “dual track” approach to the South China Sea issue — namely, disputes should be addressed by countries directly concerned through friendly consultations and negotiations. China and ASEAN member states can then jointly maintain



**Yang Yujun, spokesman of the Ministry of National Defense, stressed in a May press conference that China would not accept any result of the arbitration unilaterally initiated by the Philippines**

peace and stability in the South China Sea, so complementing and supporting each other in the effective control and proper handling of specific aspirations. This overture by China has been widely endorsed by ASEAN countries.

The arbitration initiated by the Philippines will not alter the historical fact and reality that China has sovereignty over the South China Sea islands and adjacent waters; nor will it undermine China’s resolve to defend its sovereignty and maritime rights and interests. China will not budge on its policy and stance of solving these disputes with the parties directly concerned, and to work with regional countries to defend peace and stability in the South China Sea. It should be clarified that the ruling by the arbitral tribunal in October 2015 on

the jurisdiction and admissibility of the South China Sea is null and void, and has no binding effect on China. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs made clear China’s position soon after the ruling was made. The tribunal circumvented the fact that the South China Sea dispute is in essence a territorial dispute over certain islands and reefs, and maritime delimitation, and willfully expanded and abused its power by hearing the case at the Philippine’s request and assuming jurisdiction. Such action dangerously lowers the bar for UNCLOS signatory countries to enter compulsory dispute settlement procedures, and betrays the tenet and goal of the Convention, compromising its authority and integrity.

Worthy of attention is that the tribunal ruling deliberately deprecates

the role and authority of the DOC. Signed between China and the 10 ASEAN member states, including the Philippines, the DOC is a guideline document for and the fruit of endeavors by China and ASEAN to properly handle the South China Sea issue. Such a ruling by the arbitral tribunal can in no way dissolve disputes and check contentions, but will instead undermine the joint efforts by China and other regional countries to defend peace and stability in the South China Sea.

Since its founding in 1949, the People's Republic of China has, in the spirit of peaceful coexistence and trustworthiness, successfully delineated with its neighbors over 90 percent of its total borderlines through peaceful consultations and negotiations. In the case of the South China Sea, the solution lies in the "dual track" approach that China advocates. Peace and stability in the region calls for joint efforts by China and ASEAN member states. Producing a plan acceptable to all parties concerned in an issue as complicated and sensitive as that of the South China Sea is not easy. But whatever ruling the arbitral tribunal might yield, it cannot change the facts. Rather than making positive contributions to the issue's possible solution, it further complicates, expands, and escalates the contention, thereby exerting a negative effect on any endeavor to put the situation under control and find a solution. This is not the scenario that China wishes to see. China and the Philippines are permanent neighbors. The only way they may solve the dispute in the South China Sea is

to return to the negotiation table and stay in talks until a mutually accepted scheme emerges. We have noticed that certain people of foresight and insight in the Philippines are now aware that bilateral negotiations are the key to the solution. As to China, we have always kept the door to negotiations open.

To fully implement the DOC, China and ASEAN countries have held consultations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea, and an early harvest has been reaped. The parties have adopted the List of Crucial and Complex Issues and List of Elements for the Possible Outline of a COC, thus marking a new state of COC consultations that covers complicated and sensitive issues. China looks forward to teaming up with ASEAN countries in properly handling the South China Sea issue through a dual track approach, and to unwaveringly maintaining peace and stability in the region. Justice is self-evident. So far more than 40 countries and regional organizations have explicitly expressed their support for China in the arbitration case. Among them are both ASEAN members and countries outside the region. In May 2016, the seventh ministerial meeting of the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum adopted the Doha Declaration. The declaration emphasizes that Arab states support China in peacefully settling territorial and maritime disputes with concerned countries through friendly consultation and negotiation, in accordance with bilateral agreements and the relevant regional consensus. It also stresses that

the rights to which sovereign states and state parties of the UNCLOS are entitled in independently choosing ways of dispute settlement should be respected.

What's more, several countries, including Sudan, Mauritania, and Yemen, have made clear their support for China's justified stance on the South China Sea issue by issuing statements or delivering speeches at the meeting. Even in the West, many experts on international law have made serious, just comments from the legal perspective that endorse China's jurisprudential argument. They agree that the award of the arbitral tribunal is not legally binding. This testifies once more to the fact that China's stance on the South China Sea issue is widely supported, that its approach to solving disputes through friendly consultation and negotiation is broadly welcomed, and that its efforts to work for win-win results that benefit all parties concerned are appreciated worldwide. It will not take long for the hurly-burly of the arbitration farce to settle. China, the Philippines and other claimants in the South China Sea issue will, sooner or later, return to the negotiation table, and seek a solution acceptable to all through consultation and negotiation on an equal basis, which is the only right approach. A staunch force in defending world and regional peace, and a responsible country, China will, as it always has, work with other countries to bring peace, friendship and cooperation to the South China Sea waters. ■

*From China Today*

# G20: China's Part in Global Economic Growth

HE YAFEI

The 2016 G20 Summit will be held in the Chinese city of Hangzhou under the theme of “Building an innovative, invigorated, interconnected and inclusive world economy” and with the goals of transforming growth patterns in innovative ways, improving global economic and financial governance, promoting global trade and investment and nurturing inclusive and interconnected development.

China's hosting of the G20 Summit has attracted world attention for two reasons: First, the G20 stands at a critical juncture in transforming from a crisis-response mechanism to a long-term economic governance mechanism. Second, against the backdrop of the global economic downswing, people hope that China and other G20 participants will devise new ideas and plans to foster sustainable development of the world economy. The world places high hopes on China because the world has encountered bottlenecks in promoting economic growth and reforming global economic governance, and also because China has achieved spectacular results over the past few years.

At a time when China is assuming the G20 rotating presidency, countries around the world are pondering

the question of what China can do for global economic growth. This also poses a severe challenge for a China which has entered its “new normal” stage. As the most authoritative platform for leaders to liaise with one another and coordinate the financial sector, this year's G20 Summit will seek solutions to sluggish global economic growth.

What then is amiss with the world economy? President Xi Jinping shared his views on this question at the 2015 G20 Antalya Summit as follows: First, although the world economy no longer teeters in crisis, the economic recovery base is weak nonetheless, while impetus for growth remains elusive. Second, progress in reforming global economic governance has been uneven, and thus international economic and trade rules are mired amid profound changes. Third, as the main body for world economic coordination, the G20 is confronted with great difficulties in managing macroeconomic policies.

These perspective assessments by the Chinese leader regarding the current world economy are likewise the main considerations prompting this year's G20 Summit to focus on the theme of “Building an innovative, invigorated, interconnected and inclusive

world economy.”

Innovative economic development concepts are of utmost importance. An ancient Chinese axiom says that “Nothing can be accomplished without strong determination”. The economic development concepts of “innovation, vitality, interconnection and inclusiveness” conform to China's new development concepts of “innovation, coordination, green development, opening-up and sharing” proposed during the Fifth Plenum of the 18th CPC Central Committee, all of which serve as indicators that China stands of the forefront in formulating global economic development concepts.

China has contributed more than 30 percent to global economic growth over the past several years, thereby entrenching the country as the engine driving global growth. G20 members and other economies around the world expect China, through the G20 Summit in Hangzhou and other meetings, to play a leading role in uniting other G20 members to formulate new solutions to facilitate global economic growth and strengthen macroeconomic policy coordination in a bid to resolve the deep-level conflicts currently confounding the global economy.



### Enhancing communication and coordination

Countries around the world today must adjust their economic structures to tackle the problem of economic imbalances. Globalization and global value chains have bonded nations into a community of shared future and common interests. Restructuring and promoting growth are no longer the isolated behaviors of a single country. It is critical for the G20 to play a leading role in bolstering coordination of macroeconomic policy among the major economies. First, efforts must go toward establishing a ministerial-level mechanism for macroeconomic policy coordination and joint-action and, especially, to enhance communication and coordination of financial, fiscal,

monetary and trade policies. To better ensure the implementation of decisions by G20 leaders, the delegation of certain powers of coordination and supervision to the consultation mechanism of G20 finance ministers and central bank governors should be taken into consideration.

The G20 members must further adopt a holistic view of the world economy, render their macroeconomic and financial policies more transparent, and fully consider the impact of their policies on other economies to avert adverse “spillover effects.” For example, when the Federal Reserve raises interest rates and adjusts the US dollar exchange rate against other currencies, the Fed can notify G20 members and world financial centers in advance via coordination with the Financial Stability Board, an

international body created by the G20. Second, efforts should also be made to help developing countries enhance their capacity to deal with such financial and economic risks as those brought by fluctuations in bulk commodity prices and sudden outflows of liquidity stemming from a stronger dollar, so as to forestall a severe impact upon and consequent damage to their national economies.

Developing countries now account for half of global GDP and contribute over 50 percent to world economic growth, yet remain subordinate in decision making or when expressing their opinions within the global financial and economic system. The fluctuations of international capital markets and bulk commodity prices in general can engender huge risks that medium-sized and small countries find difficult



President Xi Jinping attends the 10th G20 Summit in Antalya, Turkey, in November 2015

to cope with on their own.

The G20 Summit is expected to focus on how to help developing countries enhance their capability to avert and resist risks. From 2009 to the present, the US has implemented quantitative easing, a policy that has pumped US \$6 trillion into its financial system. The European Central Bank and the Bank of Japan both continue to implement policies featuring excess money supply. Currently, as the US economy has gradually stabilized, the Federal Reserve is likely to raise interest rates, a move that in all likelihood will lead to a periodically strong dollar. The financial risk posed thereby may substantially harm emerging economies and developing countries.

As the “guiding committee” of the global economy, the G20 is expected to help developing countries build a firewall to cope with financial and economic risks. As the rotating president of the G20, China will prioritize this issue on the agenda.

### **Spur impetus to economic growth through innovation**

New impetus to galvanize the world economy should derive from technological innovations, but attention must also rest on preventing the development of automation and artificial intelligence and the use of robots from impacting the employment of those doing repetitive work. China in particular must stress this issue when designing the agenda for this year’s G20 Summit. Reliance on innovation

in technology and production models is needed in China’s industrial restructuring and upgrading. Efforts must not only target stimulation of overall demand, but also improvement of aggregate supply by developing new technologies, products, energy sources and business models, the better to attract consumers and explore new markets. The market must also be given free rein to ply its function of determining resource allocation. At the same time, the governments of various countries must actively exercise effective macroeconomic regulation and control, as the coordination of the “invisible hand” of the market and “visible hand” of the government will reciprocally ameliorate one another’s workings.

A retrospective of the world economic development and China’s reform and opening-up of over 30 years demonstrates that innovation is an inexhaustible source of dynamism for sustainable economic growth. The motive force of economic growth must come from innovation and from a new round of technological and industrial revolution. Xi Jinping has stressed that we are in the midst of a new industrial and informatization revolution and that, accordingly, we must clearly comprehend the current situation and achieve growth through innovation, new technologies, new types of business and new models of production and business, a view that also holds true for world economic growth. Innovation’s two major goals are to reform the economic system and mechanism and to spark technological

and industrial revolutions. It presents an effective means for the Chinese economy to maintain medium- to high-speed growth under the current “new normal” stage by promoting innovation as a propellant, exploring new dynamism for growth and persisting in the reform of the economic system and mechanism, a path that may also prove effective in lifting growth for other G20 members.

Representatives of industrial and commercial concerns within the G20 member states harbor the deepest understanding of economic development and growth. They will participate in G20 activities through the Business 20 Summit. Other events affiliated with the G20 Summit include the Youth 20, which brings together young leaders from across G20 countries, and Think 20, comprising think tanks, academics and researchers representing G20 Summit countries. These participants will offer their advice and suggestions for promoting world economic growth.

China must plan in advance in order to present pragmatic plans to the summit. For example, business representatives and youth leaders can discuss how to avoid the pitfalls associated with capital and unemployment. It is axiomatic that some Asian and Latin American countries fell into the middle-income trap as a consequence of improper policies. Consequently, when their industrialization attained critical mass, they hadn’t yet resolved problems relating to capital and unemployment. First, national savings mainly

transformed into labor and resource products for export, and the capital needed for industrial upgrades was thus absent. Second was the difficulty experienced by low-end labor in gaining reemployment in the course of industrialization.

Indeed, China's experience in this regard is well worth sharing with other G20 members. Developing countries such as China, India, Brazil, Indonesia and Turkey can learn and draw experience from each other on similar issues. China is not a resource-exporting country, and its industrialization level is uneven in different regions. Its medium- to low-end labor can be absorbed internally by developing service and manufacturing industries. However, the situation may be quite different in countries reliant on resource exports.

### **Providing new ideas for achieving balanced development of the global economy**

China is gearing up for the summit, its focus on transforming growth patterns in innovative ways, improving global economic and financial governance, promoting international trade and investment and furthering inclusive and interconnected development. It may thus manifest its willingness to enhance exchanges and share experience in economic and financial governance with other G20 members. Its hope is that the G20 may lead world economic growth in the

spirit of win-win cooperation.

China has contributed to fueling global economic growth during the most difficult time for the world economy. In 2015, the Chinese economy rose by 6.9 percent. Although growth has slowed, China's economic structure had been optimized, with the proportion of tertiary industry hitting 50.5 percent, 10 percent higher than that of secondary industry. End-user consumption contributed as much as 66.4 percent to total GDP growth. Efforts such as streamlining administration and delegating power to lower strata, as well as lowering taxes and slashing various administrative fees have further stimulated enthusiasm for mass entrepreneurship and innovation. In China, an average 12,000 new businesses register each day, 53 percent of them engaging in new types of business and adopting new business models.

As a large responsible country, China wants to provide new ideas and new dynamism to boost the balanced development of the global economy, with the Belt and Road Initiative as an important trial in this regard. Practical measures adopted include: 1. Establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, whose aim is to contribute its share to building infrastructure in countries along the Belt and Road using China's development experience, accumulated technology and capital, and so boosting regional and cross-regional economic development; 2. Advocating new models for bilateral and multilateral cooperation while elevating international cooperative

capacity. For example, efforts can be made to encourage government and private capital to invest in the construction of industrial parks incidental to cooperation with countries along the Belt and Road. Those efforts demonstrate China's resolve to shoulder its responsibility to participate in global governance. China's five-year plans, a series of economic growth initiatives, have lasted the longest of any country in the world, having been implemented for a total of 60 years. As of 2016, China started to institute its 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20), which covers areas such as agriculture, industry, service industry, urbanization, resources and environment, technology and education, public service, social management, culture, economic reform, and opening up to the outside world.

The G20 meetings encompass a summit of leaders, meetings of coordinators, ministerial and vice-ministerial meetings, and meetings of experts and professional working groups. These will all serve as platforms for cooperation and set the foundation for the implementation of a global economic coordination system. China's experience stands as an example worthy of reference in devising the G20.

The 2016 G20 meetings can be an important occasion for China to share its development experience. We therefore hope that China's achievements and experience will contribute to stimulating global economic growth. ■

*From China Today*

## Story of an Old Friend

**Du Wentang**

**B**rigitta Zeumer, an old friend of the Chinese people and a famous painter, died not long ago in Cologne, Germany. I was shocked at the news, since not long before, she had written to me that she was feeling better and planned to visit China to experience its changes and development and renew old friendships. I planned a warm reception and a series of meaningful activities for her. Sadly, the reunion was not to be.

Zeumer (1939-2015) enjoys a great reputation in German art circles. Decades ago, when visiting China, former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl took some of her paintings as gifts to Chinese President Jiang Zemin. Some of her paintings were collected as treasures in art galleries. Her works were shown in countries in Europe, America and Asia, and were publicly regarded as masterpieces representing contemporary Germany along with their own uniqueness. In the early 1990s, China's Ministry of Culture held a grand art exhibition for Zeumer at the Imperial Ancestral Temple.

In the 1930s, Lu Xun and people in cultural circles overcame a number of difficulties to hold a personal art exhibition for German artist Kaethe

Kollwitz. More than five decades passed before the 1993 exhibition for Zeumer, which marked the second time in history for a German artist's works to be exhibited in China. It was hailed by the German media as an unprecedented event with special meaning and influence. That was the first for her in China, and she was filled with both excitement and worry — over whether her paintings would be understood and accepted by the general public. The exhibition was a huge success. Audiences from across China encircled her passionately, giving congratulations and thanks. They

left the guestbook filled with sincere compliments, praising her works as both novel and friendly and fusing Chinese and Western beauty. Zeumer signed autographs and stood for photos. She felt at home surrounded by fans. The language barrier could not prevent hearts from being connected through art. She rejoiced in finding so many aficionados in China.

Zeumer broke from traditional Western painting in her themes, artistic concepts and skills. Her paintings have neither the solemnity of classicism nor the colorfulness of romanticism, but they are not purely oriental. In



**Brigitta Zeumer**

layout and choice of hue, her paintings seem to have incorporated the bold freehand brushwork of traditional Chinese painting. But they are different from Chinese paintings, as they lack the mutual contrasting and merging between man and scene common in Chinese landscapes.

Westerners sometimes view her paintings as unique and alien; however, Asians, especially the Chinese, see the connection of heart and nature. There are no high mountains, grand valleys, spectacular waterfalls or gentle springs — not even people, villages or cottages in her works. Often seen in her paintings is a vast plain bathed in dim light under a crescent, a few light clouds flowing over the horizon, some indistinct arcs partly hidden in the clouds resembling mountain ridges and a dark red in the distance suggesting a sunset.

The Tang Dynasty poet Bai Juyi wrote: “The music dies down in hidden grief, leaving silence to reveal more than speech.” Zeumer’s works have the same artistic effect. Their simplicity and purity create a dream-like world, attracting the audience to further study the connotations of the painting, explore the wonderland hidden behind and experience the infinite philosophy of life that dwells in her work.

Zeumer, influenced in her childhood by her family, developed a strong interest in Asian culture and an intimate feeling about that remote and foreign land and its people. That’s why she dedicated herself for decades

to promoting friendly relations with China, which is heartily appreciated in the country’s diplomatic and cultural circles. In the past few decades, she was always an important guest specially invited to the meetings for visiting Chinese leaders or other VIPs. She took this both as an honor and a responsibility, which was true in both Bonn and Berlin times. She developed deep friendships with people in the diplomatic and cultural circles of China.

I was a friend of Zeumer’s for many years, and I am deeply moved by the selfless help she has provided to the Chinese people, some of whom only had a nodding acquaintance with her. Whenever she learned that someone was in difficulty, she would spare no time or money to offer a helping hand. She once told me that she regards it as good luck to make

friends with the Chinese, for “having a new Chinese friend would mean a sum of cultural wealth added”. Such a life philosophy — taking it as a pleasure to help everybody else — is vividly demonstrated in the paintings of her middle and later years.

Now she has left us suddenly, and I’ve lost a close friend. Recalling her deep love of China and selfless friendship to me, I regret that I gave her too little in return and have not studied and introduced her enough. I only wrote a short essay — *Mirror of the Heart: A silent but strong call*— which was published in the 1990s in Guangming Daily. After that, I had the idea of writing more about this most respectable, kind and gifted friend. But with limited knowledge and talent, I delayed the writing until today, leaving myself a permanent regret. ■



A Painting by Brigitta Zeumer

# Pierrette Djouassa, the President of the Gabon-China Friendship Association

**Fang Ying**

“Although this is my seventh visit to China, it still looks new to me—as surprising as I found it the first time I was here—as it is changing so fast! But when I meet my Chinese friends, I feel I’ve come home.”

Those were the words of Pierrette Djouassa, president of the Gabon-China Friendship Association, to the Chinese receptionists upon her latest visit in April at the invitation of the CPAFFC.

That strong feeling is deeply rooted in the friendship between the two countries. Djouassa has said many times that the China-Gabon friendship has been deep for a long time, and the leaders of both sides have been attaching great importance to bilateral relations. Former president Omar Bongo and President Ali Bongo are good friends of China. Under the guidance of these two presidents, the GCFA has been working hard to strengthen the friendship between the two countries. Djouassa devotes virtually every minute to the promotion of China-Gabon relations. She says she wants to live up to the expectations of both the president who appointed her

and the people of China and her West African nation.

Approved in 2004 by the former president, Omar Bongo, the GCFA aims at enhancing friendship and achieving win-win cooperation with China. The first president of GCFA was Jean Ping, former chairman of the African Union and the then minister of state for foreign affairs. Members of GCFA, including President Ali Bongo and Guy Ndama, the former president of the National Assembly, are all elites of the country and all very friendly toward China.

Djouassa succeeded Ping as the president of the GCFA in 2008, when

she was serving as procurator-general of the Supreme Court. She had served before as minister of justice and keeper of the seals. Having retired from the government, Djouassa currently serves as chairman of the Transport Company of Gabon and as an honorary professor at China’s National Prosecutors College. As a veteran member and leader of the GCFA, she has spared no effort to develop the organization and the friendship between China and Gabon. She once said: “Whatever positions I occupy, I always pay attention to China — and be concerned about the interests of Chinese enterprises and citizens in Gabon.”



**Pierrette Djouassa (center left) pay a courtesy call to CPAFFC Vice-President Lin Yi**

During the April visit, Djouassa visited Huawei Technologies Co, China North Industries Corp and many other Chinese enterprises. She marveled at the high technologies developed by the Chinese companies, calling them “eye-opening” and “inspiring”. She said it was an unshakable duty for GCFA to support Chinese companies. As a messenger between the two countries, the GCFA will report regularly to the Presidential Palace of Gabon and make suggestions. It stands ready to arrange bilateral cooperation at any time.

After her latest visit, Djouassa determined to send her son to study in China despite the fact that many children of the African upper class are sent to Europe or the United States. China will certainly win the future of the world, she believes.

Gabon will have its national presidential election in the second half of this year. Asked whether the result will influence the work of the GCFA, Djouassa answered resolutely that regardless of the result, the GCFA will continue to function as always, and the friendship between Gabon and China will never change.

With increasing numbers of Chinese doing business in Gabon, the GCFA president has been paying ever-greater attention to their safety and interests. She is in charge of drafting laws related to the repatriation of Chinese citizens and setting up arbitration between the two countries. When serving as procurator-general, she reported to President Bongo immediately when she learned that a

female Chinese prisoner happened to be in a local prison when it was set on fire by arsonists. The president granted a special amnesty to the woman.

Djouassa believes that Western countries want Gabon to be independent politically but dependent on the West economically. China, on the other hand, pursues a win-win relationship with Gabon, she said. Chinese companies invest in various sectors of the country, contributing to its goal of becoming a “newly rising country by 2025”. Therefore, she is willing to help the Chinese in Gabon, who turn to her for any problem they encounter. Decades of efforts to promote the China-Gabon friendship and help Chinese companies invest in her country have proved her special feeling for China.

When a CPAFFC delegation visited Gabon in 2013, Djouassa showed them pictures taken in China. She said with tears in her eyes: “I felt like a princess in China. That’s the best experience I’ve ever had in my life.” Her words moved every Chinese guest. Whenever put in charge of receiving Chinese visitors, she makes meticulous arrangements personally to ensure that nothing goes wrong.

Fascinated by Chinese culture, Djouassa has collected many examples of porcelain and tea ware in her home. Her love for China shines through whenever she mentions her visits to various provinces and cities in China.

“The biggest treasure of China is the people’s wisdom and courage,” she said. “I love the country from the bottom of my heart.”

Djouassa speaks highly of Chinese companies’ infrastructure construction in Gabon, especially roads.

“I hope all roads in Gabon will be built by Chinese companies,” she said.

She said the roads in the country used to be built by Europeans, which was time-consuming due to the country’s heavy rainfall and the need for detours around the mountains. The roads had to be repaired frequently because of quality problems. It had been thought by local people that they would never have good roads because of the poor natural conditions. Then the Chinese workers came, and the climate and geological difficulties to build high-quality roads in Gabon were overcome, setting an example of cooperation between the two countries.

“Hoping that all roads will be built by Chinese companies” is a concept now embedded in the population.

Impressed with Chinese companies’ technology and capabilities, Djouassa spares no effort to help them invest in Gabon. She recommended local companies for cooperation, helped establish links between Chinese companies and local institutions and even made suggestions about cooperation directly to the president.

Once, when a Chinese company encountered problems investing in Gabon, Djouassa facilitated communication between the ministers of relevant departments, and finally won the approval of the president—all because she believed the project would benefit her country. ■

# Deepen Traditional Friendship between China and Montenegro and Promote the Building of “One Belt and One Road”

**Sichuan People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries**

At the invitation of the Sichuan People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, an eight-member delegation from the Montenegro-China Friendship Association visited Sichuan province from April 26 to 30.

It was the first time MCFA had sent a delegation to Sichuan. The team comprised the mayor of Budva, the mayor of Zabljak, the president of the MCFA and representatives from various circles, including culture, economics, trade, media and medical science. During the stay in Chengdu, the delegation made an official visit to the SPAFFC meeting with its officials. SPAFFC President Zhao Ping briefed the delegation on Sichuan’s rich tourism resources, convenient transportation and ever-improving conditions for opening-up and cooperation, as well as on SPAFFC’s functions, responsibilities and main activities currently underway. Zhao reported that the SPAFFC had successfully held its first “Friendly Sichuan” activity in the Public Institution Museum and Gallery of Budva in 2015. A year

later, the MCFA delegation—Budva Mayor Srdjan Popovic, Zabljak Mayor Veselin Vukicevic and friends from cultural, media and medical circles in Montenegro—visited Sichuan, opening a path for friendly exchanges between Zigong and Budva and promoting practical cooperation between Sichuan Museum and the Public Institution Museum and Gallery of Budva. Zhao said that on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the establishment of China-Montenegro diplomatic relations, the delegation’s visit would further enhance mutual understanding between the two peoples and promote exchanges and cooperation between Sichuan and Montenegro.

MCFA President Samir Hadzic noted that his organization, founded in April 2007, was the first friendship organization established in Montenegro, with the aim of promoting mutual understanding, exchange and cooperation between his country and China. With help from the Chinese Embassy in Montenegro, MCFA has carried out fruitful people-to-people friendship activities and established

working relations with the CPAFFC, the SPAFFC and the Shanghai People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. Meanwhile, MCFA has been making friendly contacts with dozens of cities in Montenegro and is committed to promoting friendship-city exchanges, as well as pushing and helping Chinese enterprises to invest in Montenegro.

Tara River Canyon Bridge, which appeared in the famous former Yugoslavia film *Bridge*, was located in the city of Zabljak, of which Vukicevic is the current mayor. He introduced the city’s rich tourism resources—its mountains, lakes, forests and valleys—and expressed hope of developing friendship-city relations with cities in Sichuan. President Zhao recommended Jiuzhaigou county, Sichuan’s World Natural Heritage site, to Vukicevic. They both agreed that the two cities, as UNESCO World Heritage sites, have some similarities that provide a good foundation for friendship exchanges.

On April 29, Zhao and President Samir Hadzic of the MCFA officially signed a letter of intent on exchanges, under which the two sides would



actively promote cooperation in such fields as culture, education, science and technology, sports, health, economics and trade. Both sides will visit the other and hold exhibitions and seminars to promote the One Belt, One Road concept and help implement the 16+1 regional cooperation between China and countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

During the stay in Zigong, the delegation visited the Zigong Lantern Festival & Trade Corp, learned of the company's experience in organizing overseas exhibitions and explored some specific cases. They expressed their intent to introduce Zigong lanterns to Budva and to organize a marine lantern festival and a summer lantern carnival. Mayor Popovic invited technical groups from the company to conduct a field study in Budva as soon as possible to explore the feasibility of organizing exhibitions there. The delegation also visited the Zigong Salt Industry Museum, the Shenhai Salt Well Relic and other places, all of which gave them a comprehensive understanding of Zigong's long history, rich natural resources and profound cultural deposits.

On April 27, Zigong Mayor Liu Yongxiang met with the delegation, and Deputy Mayor Zhang Bang managed the discussion. Liu introduced Zigong's economic and social development in his speech. Secretary-General Xiang Qionghua of the SPAFFC attended.

Mayor Popovic introduced the general situation of Budva. He said, Budva is the most prestigious tourist city in Montenegro and accounts for

half of the nation's tourism revenue. Under the Chinese government's One Belt, One Road Initiative, China Road & Bridge Corp is building an expressway that runs north-south through Montenegro. Popovic told the Chinese guests that his city attaches great importance to maintenance and renewal of the city's infrastructure and invests a huge amounts of money to improve the tourism infrastructure every year. He promised a careful study of how Budva could be part of a lantern festival, and he invited engineers from Zigong Lantern Festival & Trade Corp to visit the city as soon as possible. He expressed hope that Zigong lanterns would push the city's tourism development to a new high.

Biljana Brajovic, director of the Public Institution Museum and Gallery of Budva, introduced the city's profound cultural tradition and rich cultural relics from its 2,500-year history spanning multiple interwoven civilizations. She recalled an exhibition of calligraphy and paintings from Sichuan held in her city last year. Titled *Friendly Sichuan, Whispering Flowers Along the Silk Road*, the exhibition was sponsored by the SPAFFC at the museum. Brajovic expressed her willingness to help introduce Zigong's cultural works to Budva for exhibition and exchange, so as to further increase the popularity of Sichuan culture in Montenegro. In addition, the two sides had an extensive exchange of views on cooperation on elderly health, organic food, culture, tourism and sports

After the meeting, mayors Liu and Popovic signed a letter of

intent on establishing a friendship-city relationship between Zigong and Budva.

The delegation also visited the Sichuan Museum. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the establishment of China-Montenegro diplomatic relations. The Sichuan Museum plans to organize a number of cultural relics including facsimiles of ceramic figures, calligraphic stone rubbings and portrait-painting bricks that reflect the social life of the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220) to be exhibited in the Public Institution Museum and Gallery of Budva for two months. After detailed discussions between the two sides, a formal agreement on exhibition cooperation was signed by the delegation and the Sichuan Museum.

The SPAFFC delegation made a successful visit to Montenegro last year, and the MCFA delegation was invited to Sichuan this year, giving them an opportunity to learn firsthand about the province's cultural and natural excellence and to experience the hospitality of its people. Their visit strengthened working relations between the SPAFFC and MCFA, advanced friendly exchanges between Zigong and Budva and promoted practical cooperation between the Sichuan Museum and the Public Institution Museum and Gallery of Budva. It opened a new chapter in celebrating the 10th anniversary of China-Montenegro diplomatic relations, deepening the traditional friendship between the two countries and promoting One Belt, One Road. ■

# Memory of Japan Visit 50 Years Ago

**Wu Ruijun**

My career as a “people-to-people diplomat” began 51 years ago when I graduated from Peking University and landed a job with the Chinese People’s Committee for Safeguarding World Peace, or Heda, as it was commonly known at the time. Since then, I lived, worked and grew up—literally and politically—on the organization’s garden-like campus in Beijing, devoting my prime years to the cause of developing nongovernmental diplomacy.

I worked for 38 years promoting friendly exchanges between Chinese and Japanese people, but what remained most deeply etched in my mind was my first visit to that neighboring country to the east.

In March 1966, at the invitation of the Japan Asia-Africa Unity Committee, Heda sent a 7-person delegation to Japan, headed by Yang Shuo, a well-known writer who died under persecution during the “cultural revolution”. I was in the team as interpreter and secretary. At the time, it was rare for an ordinary Chinese person to go abroad on business trips. I was lucky to be given the opportunity since I had hardly

commenced my employment and thus was envied by my young workmates. I told myself I must accomplish the task perfectly to show that I had performed my duty well. “Giving a good performance”—meaning to perform to the leader’s satisfaction and appreciation—was a common aspiration of young employees at the time.

China and Japan had no diplomatic relations in 1966, and there were no direct flights between Beijing and Tokyo. We had to go to Hong Kong to apply for visas at the Japanese consulate, and that meant a flight to Guangzhou. I was very excited, as this would be my first time on an airplane.

The next day we took a train to Shenzhen, where we went through the usual exit formalities. After a walk on the bridge spanning the border river, we got on a train at Luohu and set off for Hong Kong. After a three-day wait at a hostel run by Xinhua News Agency’s Hong Kong bureau, we received our visas. We learned that many other groups from the mainland had been denied visas even though they had waited many days.

However, bad luck struck too. The

day before our scheduled departure, a commercial flight from Hong Kong to Tokyo went missing near Mount Fuji in nasty weather, and the Japanese Air Force helicopter sent to search for the plane also crashed. Hong Kong newspapers were awash with reports about the accidents, triggering panic among passengers. My excitement for another airplane ride dimmed a little.

As the Hong Kong-to-Tokyo flights passed over Taiwan (cross-Straits relations were tense at the time) the head of the delegation contacted the airline company, asking it to promise in writing that if the plane was unable to land at Tokyo’s Haneda airport because of weather (Narita International Airport didn’t exist at the time), it would not be diverted to any airport on the island of Taiwan. Nowadays, 2 million mainland tourists travel to Taiwan each year. Recalling the past, I can see how far we’ve come.

After boarding the plane, the atmosphere inside the cabin was somber. People were nervous and depressed. Everybody sat silently, some with eyes closed. On the seat next to me was an American woman

who had just finished a global tour with her husband and was returning to the United States via Tokyo. Because of the accidents, the couple decided to split up and take different flights for fear that if they were unlucky enough to die in an accident together, their children back home would be orphaned.

When the plane touched the tarmac at Haneda, a wave of applause swept through the cabin. And at last we arrived in Tokyo, five days after leaving Beijing. Today, one needs little more than three hours to fly between the two cities.

Stepping out the cabin door, I saw a dozen or so people standing on a platform opposite us, waving red ribbons and singing a familiar song. I found they were the friends I had met in Beijing at the Chinese-Japanese Youth Get-Together.

Before I was employed by Heda in August 1965 I had participated in the gathering, which involved 500 Japanese youths who had come to China despite hindrances back home. Among them was a team of performance artists from the New Dramatists Federation for Breaking the (US-Japan) Security Pact. I was in charge of receiving them and was deeply impressed. They were enthusiastic and fashionable, singing and waving red ribbons wherever they went. In meetings with their Chinese counterparts, they told of how they set up the organization.

In 1951, Japan had signed a security agreement with the US to bind itself on Washington's war chariot. In 1960 the Japanese prime minister,

Nobusuke Kishi, and US President Dwight Eisenhower signed the New US-Japan Security Pact to further strengthen their military alliance. The move triggered massive protests from the Japanese public. Tens of thousands of people took to the streets in demonstrations against the pact. For several days, as many as 6 million people blocked Haneda airport to prevent Eisenhower's plane from landing, and he canceled the trip. Not long afterward, Kishi stepped down from leadership.

After learning that I would visit their country, all the Japanese friends I had made in China came to the airport to meet me. They grasped my hands and told me how they had loved China and how much they missed their Chinese friends. During our month-long stay in Japan, they would show up at the railway station or airport whenever I went to visit other places or when I returned to Tokyo, always with warm affection and singing. As a result,

every time the Chinese group got on a bus or walked out of a station, I always lagged behind.

Deeply immersed in joyful communication with my Japanese friends, I sometimes forgot my duty as the delegation's secretary and failed to take good care of the senior members, which was part of my job. This even caused some of them to worry about me, and it wasn't long before I was admonished for my inattention. My pre-visit determination to "give a good performance" went up in smoke.

Not long after we returned to China, the "cultural revolution" began. For six years, until 1972, I was stripped of any opportunity to work. That was when Heda merged into the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. In August of that year I visited Japan again, enlisted by the 208-member Shanghai Dance Troupe delegation headed by Mr Sun Pinghua, who was head of the China-Japan Friendship Association.



**Japanese protest in front of the National Diet building against the proposed revision of Article 9 of the Constitution and the lifting of the ban on the right of collective self-defense with allies.**

Exchanges between the two nations date to about 2,200 years ago when China was at the end of the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC). Chinese writing began to be passed to Japan. An old saying goes this way: “Before being exposed to Chinese culture, Japan was a pot of bean milk. Chinese culture was like the brine. Once touched by Chinese culture, the Japanese nation became bean curd, or tofu.”

With the Meiji Reformation in 1868, Japan turned to the West to learn its culture and hence made much headway in industrial and technological development. In the early 1900s, many Chinese revolutionary pioneers and intellectuals with lofty ideals went to Japan in an attempt to save the Chinese nation by following the Japanese model. More than 50,000 Chinese studied in Japan from 1896 to 1937. Dr Sun Yat-sen went to Japan 14 times as an exile. The Kyoto Arashiyama poems written in Japan by former Chinese premier Zhou Enlai when he studied there are widely known among Chinese people.

It has been rare in world history that any two nations have kept so long and so close a relationship as China and Japan.

The world is full of human activity. Wherever human hands reach, there is culture. Culture is the material and spiritual wealth created by the human race in its development. Cultural exchanges—usually with literature and the arts as primary vehicles—help people of different backgrounds and different countries communicate with

one another and build up mutual trust and friendliness. My love of literature, developed from childhood, led me to a particular interest in cultural exchanges between China and Japan. My job gave me opportunities to meet my idols—literary giants such as Ba Jin, Xie Bingxin, Cao Yu and Mao Dun, for whom I acted as interpreter and from whom I learned a lot. And my job as a receptionist for Japanese visitors provided opportunities to meet a number of lords of the Japanese literary world, including Nakajima Kenzo, Yasushi Inoue, Minakami Tsutomu, Kaneko Touta and Kondou Yoshimi.

Once I visited Inoue at his home. Seeing me, he exclaimed: “Here returns my daughter who was married off.” The Japanese friends who were present all looked at me with envy. Mr. Kaneko Touta was a well-known haiku poet and calligrapher. When I learned to write haiku, he taught me with great patience. On the eve of the last Spring Festival, I received a New Year’s greeting from him in his own handwriting. At the end of it, he wrote: “Let’s join hands to criticize Shinzo Abe, who never expressed remorse over the aggressive wars waged by Japan in the past.”

Last year marked the anniversary of the Chinese People’s War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. It was also a good opportunity for the two countries to open a new phase of relations by drawing lessons from history. The Abe administration, however, sticks to its erroneous stand by constantly challenging the historical facts in

blatant defiance of international law and justice. He makes it difficult for Sino-Japanese relations to return to normal.

Abe has repeatedly visited the Yasukuni Shrine in disregard of international criticism and the will of large numbers of people in his own country. He has denied that the Imperial Japanese Army forced women into sexual slavery during World War II, arguing that there is no evidence to support the allegation. He also tried to amend his nation’s Constitution to allow Japan to re-arm.

Almost immediately after he assumed the role of prime minister, Abe declared that amending the Constitution is a “major issue that has to be settled” during his tenure. That document, created after the end of World War II, is famous for its pacifist Article 9, which states that “the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. ...[and that] land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained.”

The country’s right-wing politicians have resented that language for a long time and want to repeal it. As a first step to that end, Abe banked on his ruling party’s majority to get a bill lifting the ban on collective self-defense — the notion that Japan can militarily assist its allies — passed in both houses of the National Diet in July. The change means that Japan has moved from “defense only” to “active offense”, stripping the Constitution of

its most striking characteristic. This development will undoubtedly foster uncertainty — and have a generally negative impact on regional security — in East Asia, as well as on efforts toward world peace.

Abe's actions have met strong opposition from various circles in Japan. Five former prime ministers— Tomiichi Murayama, Morihiro Hosokawa, Tsutomu Hata, Yukio Hatoyama and Naoto Kan—made joint statement critical of Abe, accusing him of ignoring the Japanese people's love of constitutionalism and asking him to withdraw the new security bill. It is pleasing that these five former Japanese prime ministers are all old friends of the CPAFFC. I had the honor of receiving Murayama and Kan several times.

In the summer of 1977, I met Murayama for the first time. He was then a congressman representing the Social Party. Once we went swimming at a beach in Qingdao. He accidentally dropped his dentures in the sea. The Qingdao Foreign Affairs Office sought help from a diver, who searched but failed to find them. When I told Murayama about the failure, he grinned broadly — and toothlessly — and said: "Leave it on the seabed as a permanent souvenir." The event became a standing joke between him and me. Once I visited him in his prime minister's office as a member of a Chinese delegation. He gladly recalled the event.

Doi Takako, the former speaker of the Japanese House of Representatives,

is a stateswoman I respect greatly. In August 1980, I accompanied her in a visit to Guilin in the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region. On the return to Beijing, a thunderstorm forced our plane to land in Zhengzhou, Henan province, instead. Takako, along with her secretary and I, spent the night at a small hotel near the airport. As it was hot, we had difficulty sleeping. So the three of us cooled ourselves with fans and chatted long into the night about topics ranging from Sino-Japanese ties to women's liberation. That was the beginning of our three-decade friendship. At the end of 2014, her secretary told me that before Takako died in September last year, she had been depressed because she was too feeble to do anything to stop Japan from turning right, which was marked by a wild expansion of right-wing forces. It saddened me to learn that the pacifist scholar-turned-politician had left this world with such a great regret.

After the security bill was passed by the House of Representatives on July 16 last year, famous figures from literary and arts circles launched a nation-

wide anti-Abe demonstration, which covered 29 prefectures and 110 cities. Many demonstrators held placards with words written by Kaneko Touta—"Zero Tolerance for Abe Politics"—and they were hung all over Tokyo. The leader of the campaign hoped that the placards would help the masses see through Abe's political nature. As the voice of protest has become ever stronger, college and high school students have joined in anti-security-bill organizations that have emerged at 90 universities. A "Mom troupe" consisting of more than 2,000 mothers also took to the streets carrying or holding the hands of their children or pushing strollers, loudly identifying themselves as "Moms Against War" and shouting slogans such as "No killing of kids".

On August 30 last year, people from more than 300 administrative regions across Japan took part in the "Million People Parade" to protest the new security bill. In Tokyo, 120,000



Japanese go to the streets holding banners proclaiming "zero-tolerance toward Abe politics".

people surrounded the National Diet building and the prime minister's house, requesting that the bill be abandoned and peace be returned to Japanese society. That was the largest anti-government protest the public has waged since the 1960 campaign against the US-Japan security pact. In the protest, youths and college students fervently voiced their opposition to war and their determination to safeguard the pacifist Constitution.

Since the end of World War II, Sino-Japanese relations have experienced ups and downs, twists and turns. Fortunately the efforts of nongovernmental organizations and friendly exchanges have been playing a positive role in helping restore and develop diplomatic ties between China and Japan. It has become a tradition that nongovernmental exchanges promote official contacts. We cherish the memory of our forebears who took great pains to develop nongovernmental diplomacy between the two countries.

I believe my fellow staff members in the CPAFFC will continue to collaborate with all insightful people from both countries to continue the tradition of nongovernmental diplomacy and work to put bilateral relations back on a normal track. As we look to the future, we should learn from the past. As a veteran who has devoted a large part of her life to people-to-people friendship between China and Japan, I sincerely hope that the two peoples will keep the past in mind and never again go to war with one another. ■

## Proposal for a Coordinated International Institute on Friendshipology

**Billy Lee**

Since becoming an active member of the South Bay Chapter of the US-China Peoples Friendship Association, I have contributed four articles to the *Voice of Friendship* magazine, a publication of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. Although the USCPFA focuses on friendship between the US and China, my deeper interest is learning about and promoting cross-cultural bonding and friendship worldwide — people-to-people and person-to-person.

My first article, "Homestay — Building Cross-Cultural Friendship" in March 2013, spoke of embracing visitors as friends by opening your home in welcome.

The second, "Meaning of Friendship" in September 2013, explained Harvard professor Rudy Tanzi's super-brain theory, which suggested that we can instruct our

brains to make us behave more kindly and more empathetically.

The third, "To Promote Friendship, Be a Friend" in March 2015, spoke about caring and respect vs. ignorance and arrogance.

The fourth, "A Special Workshop—To Promote Friendship" in September 2015, talked about the World Children's Festival of the International Child Art Foundation in Washington DC. It was held during the week of Independence Day in the United States, and the idea for a group of international students to create their own Declaration of Interdependence came alive with an urgent call for the creation of a Coordinated International Institute on Friendshipology.

Friendshipology simply means the study of friendship. It can, however, involve many different cross disciplines—history, religion, culture, sociology, philosophy, psychology,

anthropology, physiology, neurology brain science and more. Today's computer technology can help us extract essentials from big data very effectively with algorithms. The recent educational focus on emotional intelligence and emotion management are also teaching us new social skills. Beware: Study means gathering knowledge, but knowledge itself can be dangerous if abused.

A Coordinated International Institute has serious purposes. "International" emphasizes global perspectives, practices and inclusive collaborations. "Coordinated" suggests pulling separate efforts together to compare, and possibly to cross-fertilize. Today, scientists and scholars are doing multidisciplinary research in many different areas separately. More coordinated exchanges and collaborations seem to make good sense.

The establishment of the Coordinated International Institute will signify a recognition of the importance of Friendshipology, which in my opinion is still being largely neglected in the same way as environmental issues were neglected 40 years ago. Environmental issues were not taken seriously or studied holistically until prominent schools for environmental study were established.

There is another important dimension requiring coordination: the need to extend pure knowledge to the search for solutions, methodologies and practices that can transform our goals to habits. This is possible, according to

Harvard professor Tanzi's super brain theory.

In discussions about empathy—specifically, choosing empathy, harnessing empathy and then making choices—Stanford professor Jamil Zaki emphasizes the need to complete the three stages of empathy: first experiencing, or catching another's distress; second, mentalizing", or rationalizing the other person's feelings; third, "feeling compassionate", or being concerned and motivated to take action and help. Indeed, the ultimate purpose for a Coordinated International Institute on Friendshipology is to seek ways to help people with different backgrounds in our world to relate to each other harmoniously under different circumstances. In my simple mind, it's simply a matter of promoting good feelings.

Over the last decade, many remarkable studies, experiments and practices related to empathy and social emotional intelligence have been developed with help of advanced neuroscience technology. Stanford's Social Neuroscience Lab, led professor Zaki, has already been mentioned. Laura Delizonna's Wisdom Lab on mindfulness, at Stanford, borrows some ideas from Thich Nhat Hanh, a popular Zen Buddhist monk. Anabel Jensen, Karen Stone McGown and Susan Stillman's Six Seconds: Know/Choose/Give" emotional intelligence network has provided workshops around the world, including in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, in China. Six Seconds is affiliated with the Yale

Center for Emotional Intelligence. Two top high schools in the US—Gunn High in Palo Alto, California, and Phillips Academy Andover in Andover, Massachusetts—led respectively by instructor Ronen Habib and Tang Institute Fellow Andy Housiaux, have established special emotional intelligence training programs, as well as empathy and balance philosophies, for their school communities. Ashoka Foundation's Start Empathy Initiative is also noteworthy. It now has classrooms around the world.

All of these can give guidance to the proposed Coordinated International Institute on Friendshipology.

I also want to mention the launching of two very important centers in the US this past year:

The Berggruen Philosophy and Cultural Center at the Berggruen Institute in Santa Monica, planned a fellowship program that would send scholars from around the world to a US or British university for a year, followed by a year at Tsinghua University or Peking University in Beijing. The aim is to use the philosophy as an East-West bridge—to find solutions, not merely underline differences.

Yale University announced in February the establishment of the Schwartzman Center to advance intellectual work related to ethnic studies, along with intersectional race, gender and sexuality research and work with native and diasporic communities both in US and in other countries. It will sponsor conferences, colloquia, work-

ing groups and other programming and help support students and faculty building connections across the country and around the world.

As a retired architect, I sadly have no expertise on the actual forming of an effective educational organization. It would be wonderful if we could tie in the proposed Coordinated International Institute on Friendshipology with some organizations and scholars like those mentioned above.

Actually, the International Institute on Peace Education ([www.i-i-p-e.org](http://www.i-i-p-e.org)) could possibly be a model to follow. It focuses on the exchange of theory and practice in teaching peace education. Its stated three purposes are: 1) Development of substance for peace education; 2) Build strategic alliances; and 3) Encourage regional cooperation. It holds periodic international conferences at different locations around the world.

A dear friend of mine who truly understands my passion suggested that a good beginning might be a small Friendshipology foundation that would act as a resource center and clearing house, while promoting Friendshipology by seeding the world with dozens or hundreds of independent, local, indigenous clubs. A website to attract a kaleidoscope of different approaches to the common goal could be constructed as part of this effort. His advice sounds promising, but I will definitely need help from younger friends who are facile with contemporary media technol-

ogy to accomplish that.

I need help, advice and guidance. Right now, I can only make an urgent call: Let us no longer leave cross-cultural friendship to happenstance. Like the environment, the path to friendship needs to be better understood, nurtured and sustained. I wish we could create a world in which friendship truly has no borders. We should seriously work on this, just as we now work on many environmental issues without respect to borders.

We need to have people with will, influence and creativity from different parts of our world to step up and embrace this challenge—separately and together.

**Please contact me with ideas, comments and suggestions.**

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#### **About the author:**

Billy Lee is a retired architect. He is a graduate of Phillips Academy Andover, Yale College and Yale School of Architecture, and is a founding member of The 1990 Institute, a group whose mission is to broaden understanding and build trust between the people of the United States and China. He is an active member of US-CPFA South Bay Chapter ■

## China-]

China-Pakistan diplomatic relations are in their 65th year. Spread over more than half a century, relations have grown steadily in the fields of defense, economy and diplomacy. China has become a giant economic power, striding fast along a path to become a functional world power.

A recently published book by US scholar Noam Chomsky —Who Rules the World?— serves as ample testimony that after the completion of Gwadar Port in Pakistan, China will be able to expand its trade from Malacca, Malaysia, to the Gulf of Aden, and the sea will turn into an economic highway for emerging powers after long serving as the personal lake of the United States.

An overview of world geopolitics, particularly in this region, reveals that the US and NATO, bypassing Russia, are busy extending their influence in Eastern Europe. But now the scene is changed. China has established the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank to support the developing economies of the world. This bank has put a dent in the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, as Australia and Britain,



## China-Pakistan Relations Enter Golden Era

fed up with the US veto power in the affairs of those institutions, have joined the newly established bank.

China has developed a system to make the poor states of Africa independent and self-reliant, but the most recent move — and one of the wonders of the world — is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which will empower Pakistan in its region.

Opinions are diverse, but it is widely agreed that this giant leap will raise China to superpower status. President Xi Jinping visited Pakistan last year and announced a huge investment of \$46 billion for the corridor, known as CPEC.

The Malakand hydroelectric power project is a gift to the people of KPK, whereas China's Silk Road Economic Belt will make this region a hub of trade and economic activity. Joint development of the CAC/PAC JF-17 Thunder combat aircraft by the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex and Chengdu Aircraft Corp of China — and its manufacture in Pakistan — is a living example of faithful friendship.

Despite the many changes in both countries, their relations and friendship

have never seen any waning. One vision for the future is that in 35 years China and Pakistan will be celebrating their centennial of friendship, and China will have become a world superpower. All this will lend China in an enviable image in the Islamic world. When disputes have arisen in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Kashmir or any other place, China has consistently supported Pakistan. All ebbs and flows during the past 65 years of friendship have never seen trouble in their relations.

In the light of all this, it is now high time to venture forward on educational and cultural fronts. Chinese universities and training institutions should attract Pakistani students. Chinese universities should be established in Pakistan, as should Chinese culture and language centers. These steps will find maximum acceptance, as Chinese products from tires to machinery have already made their way to every home in Pakistan.

In early May 2016, China sent relief goods by rail to Nepal following the earthquake, which is a message to the world that China intends to link the

entire South Asia region, exceeding even European Union trade. It is also a message to India that it should abandon its policy of conflict and instead confront and explore potentials for improving the well-being of its people. Malaysia is also negotiating maritime issues with China, which will lead to development milestones.

Another encouraging aspect in China-Pakistan relations appears in shape of China study centers at the University of Peshawar and other universities in the country. China has announced it will give eight modern submarines to Pakistan in the biggest defense deal ever made with that country.

More than 150 companies are working on different development projects in Pakistan. Gwadar Port was handed over to China in 2013, and within one year China made it fully functional.

The Pak-China Society in KPK has worked to foster the Pakistan-China relations for four decades. More than \$90 billion worth of agreements were inked during the visit of the Chinese president last year. ■

# Accordion wind is blowing

## Impressions of Varuzhan Shanshiyev, a world champion from Ukraine

**Qian Guangjian**

I first encountered Varuzhan Shanshiyev at a concert celebrating Russia's May 9 Victory Day at the Central Conservatory of Music Middle School in 2003. The audience came alive when the host announced that he would play *Fighting Tiger in the Mountain*, a well-known folk song from the "cultural revolution" (1966-76). The music, adapted from modern Peking Opera, requires high-level skills to play. Accordion enthusiasts were proud to be able to play the music back then.

Everyone was surprised that a foreigner would be playing the song and held their breath.

The notes flowed from Shanshiyev's accordion like great rivers—overwhelming and spectacular. The composition has a lively, high-spirited rhythm, and he captured it perfectly. His right hand flew across the keyboard while his left created the main melody using the bass. His mastery was dazzling. The music vividly presented the tough and lonely story of the hero, Yang Zirong, roaming in forests and snow-covered mountains. The whole

piece was accurately played, with notes like floating clouds and flowing water, natural and smooth. Thunderous applause arose when it ended. From that day on, I couldn't forget the name Varuzhan Shanshiyev. It was etched in my heart.

I encountered Shanshiyev again in several Russian music salons and small-scale performances and was again deeply impressed by his natural figure, state-of-the-art skills, inviting music and gentle behavior. I was surprised to find that he speaks fluent Chinese. He always greets me warmly in Chinese.

When I asked about his Chinese name, he said it was Li Bai. Why that name? I asked. Shanshiyev answered: "I love drinking. Inspiration comes to me when I drink, and I play the instrument better." How romantic!

Li Bai was a Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907) poet known for his romantic poetry and love of liquor.

"Where did you learn Chinese? And how did you learn?" I asked.

He told me he learned the language by himself after coming to



**Varuzhan Shanshiyev**

China. He always carries a Russian-Chinese dictionary, memorizes words and sentences he doesn't know and asks a Chinese person for help. I took his number down for contact.

But Shanshiyev surprised me again. He creates text messages using pinyin and thinks and communicates like a Chinese. Some of the highly

educated among us don't know how to send short messages. And he is a Ukrainian! The Chinese and Ukrainian languages are a world apart. How much energy and time has he paid to achieve this? I don't know, but it's amazing!

Appreciating, collecting and playing accordion music have been favorite pastimes of mine since middle school. When I knew Shanshiyev had recorded an accordion music album, I asked him for it, and he agreed without hesitation and sent it to me quickly. A beautifully played Russian tango in the disc attracted me, and again I asked for the written score. He sent it to me, and I treasure it. I know many musicians will not send their scores to others for free. It touched me that I hadn't known Shanshiyev for long, and yet he gave me the score as a gift.

One day last year I watched some videos and read articles introducing Shanshiyev on the internet. He has won numerous Russian, German, Italian and other international accordion competitions and was invited to Germany, France and Italy for special concerts. He won top prize at the Zaporozhye International Accordion Art Festival in 1997; a gold medal at the Ukraine International Accordion Music Festival in 1999; first place at the Kiev International Accordion Competition in 2001; a gold medal at the Italy Florence International Music Festival-Accordion in 2002; and special recognition at the Spain International Accordion Competition in 2004. He was invited to be a judge and performing guest at the 2015

Asia Pacific International Accordion Art Festival last August. For all his achievements, he mentioned nothing about himself as world champion.

I cannot help but think of the celebrities who come out with dazzling lights and screaming fans, and who demand sky-high appearance fees. By contrast, Shanshiyev is a great artist. He competed in a foreign country for a decade through sheer wit. He is diligent, modest and gentle, often taking his German-made Hohner accordion to accompany singers at Chinese singing clubs. You can spot him in Jingshan Park, Hou Hai, dancing clubs and in Russian music fan circles, among other places. It's admirable that he never speaks of his achievements, even a little.

The year 2015 was Accordion Year for Chinese Youth. Concerts were held across China with enthusiasm. Shanshiyev attended more than 80 concerts, with some featuring him in solo performances and some set up for local youths. He hit the road with no delay from the foot of Mount Tianshan to the prairies of Inner Mongolia; from south of the Yangtze River to inviting Qingdao in the east; from well-known cities in Hubei and Hunan provinces to the Shenzhen special economic zone; and from China's icy north to its central region. He's visited nearly all parts of the country. Everywhere he goes, an accordion wind is sure to blow.

The music he played during the tour had attractive melodies and varied styles. There were difficult and world-renowned pieces such as

*Black Eyes, Csardas, The Gypsy* and theme music from the film *Schindler's List*. There was folk music in China, such as *At the Golden Mountain in Beijing, Grapes Are Ripe in Turpan* and *Give Me a Rose*. Music Shanshiyev composed when he lived in China, such as *Living in Shenzhen, Armenian Tango* and *Russian Gypsy Dance*, were unforgettable. Much of the Chinese music he plays is adapted to his own taste. His skills are splendid with a Chinese style, that presents a fresh environment to all.

In recent years, numerous concerts held in many localities have been aimed at popularizing accordion education among primary and middle school students.

During his tours around China, Shanshiyev uses vivid humor to answer children's questions. They must have gained a lot from the exchanges and surely were deeply impressed by seeing a world accordion champion up close.

Hearts beat enthusiastically for Shanshiyev among thousands of accordion fans. He said with evident emotion: "I feel that the accordion in China has a bright future and will soon surpass piano as it reaches out to the world. There are plenty of talented accordion players. I'll do everything I can to help you."

People from all walks of life have committed themselves to the accordion cause in China. And it is flourishing. When Chinese accordion players one day rank at the top of the world, it is only natural for us to recall Li Bai from Ukraine — Varuzhan Shanshiyev. ■

# A Better South China Sea

**Cai Baishan**

**Vice-president of Thai-Chinese Cultural and Economic Association**

## **Zhongnanhai in the eyes of a Thai**

Thailand-China relations can be traced back thousands of years, which makes the two countries not only intimate friends and relatives with shared origins but also good partners. There are no leftover issues from history between them, only friendship and mutual help.

Most Thais do not speak Chinese though they have Chinese ancestry. However, many Thais are familiar with the word “Zhongnanhai” and find it lofty and holy.

They were introduced to this word in the era of Chairman Mao Zedong. At that time, China did not appear frequently in international news, but the Thai people often heard that Zhongnanhai was the place where Mao welcomed many guests.

Located between Beijing’s

Beihai and Nanhai areas, Zhongnanhai has served as the headquarters of the Communist Party of China and the central government since 1949. Zhongnanhai also refers to the South China Sea in Chinese. In the eyes of the people of Thailand, this sea has a dual identity:

First, the South Sea is the Bodhimanda of Avalokiteshvara, an important Bodhisattva in Mahayana with believers around the world. The name Avalokiteshvara was first known in the Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907) when Tang Sanzang, portrayed in *Journey to the West*, brought back Tripitaka from India. With the masterpiece, Avalokiteshvara of the South Sea became famous.

Second, the South Sea is epicontinental, overlapping China’s continental shelf like Thailand’s Siam Gulf and Vietnam’s Beibu Gulf. Since the invention of maps, 中国南海, or the South China Sea, has appeared

on world maps of all kinds, including those of the Asian and Pacific countries. People have always referred to this sea area as the South China Sea. No countries or individuals have ever thought differently of the name or doubted China’s sovereignty over the area.

There is no need to mention any more historical evidence or history of marine navigation. For more than 1,000 years, the name South China Sea has been sufficient to prove to the world that the waters are an inalienable part of China and all the islands there belong to China.

## **Peace and development**

After World War I, the United States began to expand globally, and by the end of World War II, its military power extended around the

world. Its navy's Fifth, Sixth and Seventh fleets, covered three oceans touching every continent. Philippine waters were under the jurisdiction of the Seventh Fleet.

It was of strategic importance for the US to set up military bases in the Pacific beyond Hawaii's Pearl Harbor. Bases were established on Guam, Okinawa and other places, including South Korea, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand and Singapore. It has spared no effort to impose its military influence on Australia and New Zealand.

Before the end of the Vietnam War, the ownership of the islands in the Pacific Ocean and South China Sea had never been disputed. Pham Van Dong, the former prime minister of Vietnam once even publicly acknowledged China's sovereignty over the South China Sea. The area has enjoyed tranquility for a long time; the countries around it live in peace and harmony.

Yet border issues arise from time to time between neighboring countries. Since the international community, as well as individual countries, prefer peace and development and stand against conflict and war, bilateral negotiation has been the main way out.

There was once a maritime dispute between Thailand and Malaysia, but it was resolved through talks. Both countries believed the matter had nothing to do with anyone else and was their own business.

According to the Charter of the United Nations and the spirit of the Asian-African Bandung Conference, "the principle of non-interference in each others' internal affairs" is the soul of peaceful coexistence. Fairness never comes from heaven or the charity of certain countries but from the satisfaction of the countries involved.

For example, Thailand and China reached a mutually beneficial consensus through bilateral talks on jointly developing drilling platforms in disputed sea areas and dividing resources in a way satisfactory to both parties.

This is a perfect example of peaceful coexistence: Two countries combined their efforts to solve one problem through bilateral talks on the basis of mutual benefit and shared profit. Outside intervention brings only conflict and war, so the countries concerned should resolutely reject such attempts by unrelated countries or organizations.

### **The storm subsides**

The natural state of the sea is alternately calm and rough; sometimes there can even be a violent storm.

The situation in the South China Sea, in many other regions and even in the world is like that. A storm of the US returning to the Asia-Pacific might

be just around the corner. Its 25-year-long strategic disposition is quite similar to what it was like before the Vietnam War. Since the second half of 2013, US authorities have made public the latest arrangement of its military forces — 60 percent of its naval forces deployed to the Pacific region. The US strategic umbrella covers the southernmost point of the Malayan Peninsula and extends from the South China Sea across the Pacific Ocean to the coast of California. Execution of the plan has been underway since 2014, which coincides with the timing of its "rebalancing to Asia" policy statement. US military forces on Guam and Okinawa, and in South Korea, the Philippines, Australia and other places have all been adjusted accordingly.

For the Thailand government and its people, conflicts and wars are the last things we need. The government decided to change its important military airport, U-Tapao, into a commercial facility. As a result, the number of tourists has been surging in recent years—especially Chinese, thanks to incentive policies created by their government.

Disputes over the South China Sea arose after the US decision to refocus on the Asia Pacific region. Charges and demands for the sovereignty of islands by some ASEAN countries have been growing, which makes an unfavorable environment for the unity, solidarity and common interests of ASEAN. At present, the ASEAN community is

in a new era of accommodation, with 650 million people concentrating on developing their economy, society and transportation as well as sharing the prosperity brought by free trade zones. ASEAN holds a very clear position that it is committed to closely cooperate with both China and India in a triangular economic strategy. China has a population of 1.4 billion people, while India has 1.2 billion. The three regions together total 3.2 billion, nearly half the world's population.

As long as all the countries make joint efforts in planning and cooperation under such excellent circumstances, they could certainly create synergy that would lead the world to peace and development, and eventually to the greatest dream of Chairman Mao and the whole human race — eternal peace. Unfortunately, some ASEAN countries have been drawn into a violent storm inadvertently. Take the Philippines for example. Under the leadership of the last government, it handed the South China Sea issue to an international arbitral tribunal in The Hague under the delusion that the South China Sea area adjacent to China was its own and that China should lose its sovereignty and all the resources in these waters. However, in light of international law, China accepted neither the tribunal's legitimacy nor the result.

What's more, though many countries may recognize a court's authority, they may not be satisfied with — or simply do not follow — the

verdicts (the US, Russia and UK, for example). Relating to the tribunal of the International Court of Arbitration, besides the rule mentioned above, the court is also forbidden to pass judgment on any country's sovereignty or territory. To our disappointment, the tribunal's verdict on the South China Sea was not only one-sided and unfair but violated relevant regulations, which created a highly negative image of the court globally. Moreover, the tribunal — made up of members from NATO countries — acted beyond its authority when it ruled on sovereignty. Anyone with even limited knowledge of laws would definitely regard this result as a nullity with no legal basis.

Recently, at the ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Laos, certain countries even tried to put the South China Sea verdict into the joint declaration.

On July 30 we met with Lao leaders and were impressed by how the declaration was truly produced from its draft to the final script. Despite great pressure from the outside to have the arbitration result included, the general secretary, prime minister and minister of foreign affairs of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party made extraordinary efforts to coordinate the whole process. If handled inappropriately, it might have generated internal division among ASEAN countries and had an adverse effect on peaceful development. The new Philippine president and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi also stood

up to the pressure and made the best of the current situation. In the end, ASEAN and China reached consensus that the arbitration should be ignored for the sake of all parties' comfort level.

The successful announcement of the joint declaration has made it clear to the world that peaceful development is the mainstream concept that will be resolutely defended by ASEAN countries and China, which have the capacity to do so. That the ASEAN countries successfully dealt with this crisis presents an image of unity and solidarity when facing inner and outer relationships in the international arena. The world could see their devotion to peaceful coexistence on the basis of mutual benefits.

As the power of peace advocates grows greater, that of conflict supporters will grow weaker. Storms can occur on the sea, but they are not a permanent condition. People around the world are bound to enjoy life better together when the South China Sea is at peace.

The West puffs the wind of war to the world while the East blows the fresh air of peace and development in reply. The peace will eventually prevail.

Stormy waves set off the beauty of South China Sea and help the people here know how to better cope with future storms. Realizing how many benefits could be brought by a tranquil sea allows everybody to embrace an era of peace, hand-in-hand. ■



# China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development



(CFFPD) is a 4A-level national public offering foundation registered with the approval of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of the People's Republic of China. It was founded by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries on May 15, 1996.

The aims of the CFFPD are to safeguard world peace and promote common development. It serves for the national development and makes full use of rich resources in people to people diplomacy. The funds received by the foundation are mainly from enterprises, friendly organizations and

institutions and friendly personages at home and abroad. The foundation has carried out a series of programs on 6 themes, namely "Friendly China Program", "Youth Football Exchange Program", "Cross-Straits Culture exchanges Program", "Sustainable Development Program", "YuYing Education Program", "Future Belongs to Children Program". It has supported projects on nongovernmental diplomacy, education and training, environmental protection, culture and sports, medical care and health, helping the disabled and poor people, providing disaster relief etc.

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# China-Africa Youth Gala 2016 closes successfully in Guangdong

