



Arken Imirbaki, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, attended the 2nd US-China Subnational Legislatures Cooperation Forum.



Zhang Baowen, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, met with Sujata Koirala, former deputy prime minister of Nepal at the 2017 China (Anyang) International Conference of Chinese Characters.

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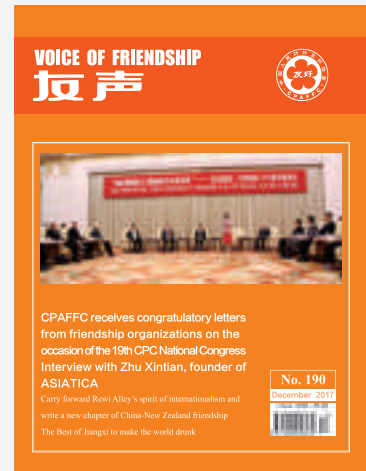
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**Front Cover:** On April 21, 2017, a symposium on “Carrying Forward Rewi Alley’s Spirit of Internationalism” was held by the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing in commemoration of the 120th anniversary of the birth of Rewi Alley.

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# CPAFFC receives congratulatory letters from friendship organizations on the occasion of the 19th CPC National Congress

**Staff Reporter**



On the occasion of the opening ceremony of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries received many congratulatory letters from organizations dedicated to friendship with China, including the US-China Peoples Friendship Association, Federation des Associations Franco-Chinoises (the Federation of French-Chinese Associations), Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher China-Gesellschaften (the Association for German-Chinese Friendship), Japan-China Friendship Association, Australia China Friendship and Exchange Association, Association of Arab-Chinese Societies, Austria-China Friendship Association and Nigeria-China Friendship Association, among others. In his letter, Alain Caporossi, secretary-general of the Federation of French-Chinese Associations, noted his reflections while reading the report delivered by Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, at the congress on Oct 18, 2017.

## President Li Xiaolin meets with Senegal's new ambassador to China

**Fang Ying**



On Oct 16, President Li Xiaolin met with Mamadou Ndiaye, the new ambassador of Senegal to China. Li congratulated Ambassador Ndiaye on his new job and recalled with pleasure her visit to Senegal in 2012. While briefing Ndiaye on exchanges between the CPAFFC and Senegal in recent years, Li noted that Senegal is an important partner for China in Africa, and the CPAFFC is ready to cooperate with the friendship organizations of Senegal and the embassy in China to promote pragmatic cooperation between the two nations' local governments, as well as nongovernmental communication between the two peoples. Ambassador Ndiaye thanked Li for meeting with him out of her busy schedule before attending the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China and wished the congress great success.

## Vice-President Xie Yuan attends 26th National Convention of USCPFA

**Wang Yang**



C PAFFC Vice-President Xie Yuan attended the 26th National Convention of the US-China Peoples Friendship Association from Oct 6 to 8 in Las Vegas, Nevada, and made a keynote speech at the opening meeting. On behalf of the CPAFFC, Xie extended condolences and sympathy to the victims and their families in the mass shooting in Las Vegas. He reviewed the work that the USCPFA had carried out to promote people-to-people exchanges since its founding and expressed hope to expand cooperation with the USCPFA in multiple areas.

The USCPFA was founded in 1974 with the purpose of promoting friendship and mutual trust between American and Chinese peoples. USCPFA has 33 chapters. About 50 members from 20 chapters attended the 26th National Convention. Diana Greer was re-elected as the president of the USCPFA at the convention.

## Wang Zhengwei attended the opening ceremony of the Tang Xianzu Drama Festival & International Drama Exchange Month

**Zheng Chen**



T he evening of Sept 24, the Tang Xianzu Drama Festival & International Drama Exchange Month saw a grand opening in the city of Fuzhou, Jinagxi province, which was organized by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the China Dramatists Association and the Jiangxi People's Government. Wang Zhengwei, vice-chairman of the CPPCC; Yao Zengke, deputy secretary of the Jiangxi Committee of the CPC; Hu Sishe, vice-president of the CPAFFC; Gu Liqun, deputy secretary of the Party Committee of the Chinese Dramatists Association; Xiao Yi, secretary of the Fuzhou Municipal Party Committee; Gahru, minister counselor of the Spanish embassy in China; and Karen Maddocks, consul-general of the United Kingdom in Guangzhou, attended the opening ceremony. British Ambassador to China Barbara Woodward sent a special video address.



## Vice-President Lin Yi visits Mongolia

**Wu Jiong**



From Oct 9 to 13, at the invitation of the Peace and Friendship Organization of Mongolia (PFOM), Vice-President Lin Yi led a CPAFFC delegation to visit Mongolia. Lin held a work meeting with Deleg Zagdjav, chairman of the PFOM, and signed a cooperation MOU between the CPAFFC and PFOM for 2018-20, which drew a blueprint for China-Mongolia people-to-people friendship work under the strategic synchronization of the Belt and Road Initiative and Road of Grassland of Mongolia. Lin also met Vice-Mayor Ankhmaa of Ulaanbaatar and Professor Chimedtseye, director of the Confucius Institute at National University of Mongolia, and visited the representative office of Bank of China in Ulaanbaatar to conduct in-depth exchanges on promoting China-Mongolia people-to-people friendship work on local government, youth, culture and charity work. Consensus was reached with the related counterparts. Lin and her delegation also made a courtesy call to Xing Haiming, Chinese ambassador to Mongolia.

## CPAFFC delegation headed by Vice-President Song Jingwu visited the Netherlands and Norway

**Sun Chi**



At the invitation of Vereniging Nederland-China and the Norway China Friendship Association, Vice-President Song Jingwu led a CPAFFC delegation to visit the Netherlands and Norway from Sept 16 to 23. Song attended the China Netherlands Friendship Cities Conference hosted by the CPAFFC and Vereniging Nederland-China, and delivered opening and closing speeches.

Song visited Norway and met with KS, mayor of Bergen, and with the Norway China Friendship Association. During the meeting with President Helgessen of KS, both agreed to promote friendship city ties between China and Norway, and seek both quality and quantity of growth.

## Secretary-General Li Xikui meets with Rotary International (China) delegation

**Jia Ji**



Li Xikui, secretary-general of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and director of the China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development, met with a Rotary International (China) delegation at the CPAFFC compound on Oct 12. Li expressed a warm welcome to the delegation and made an introduction about the main function and duties of the CPAFFC and CFFPD, and the roles both play in promoting cooperation between China and overseas NGOs. He also said that the two groups would like to further develop exchanges and cooperation with Rotary International. Zhang Shaoling, Chinese special representative of Rotary International (China), thanked Li for taking his time to meet the delegation. She said the CPAFFC has a great influence among overseas NGOs. She expressed hope of working together with CPAFFC and CFFPD in the future to develop new models of cooperation and exchanges.

## Setting sail on a long voyage for win-win cooperation

**Shanghai Friendship Association**



In September 2017, the Shanghai People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries successfully held a "Sail of Shanghai" touring exhibition of economic and cultural cooperation along the Belt and Road in three Baltic countries—Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Sail of Shanghai was formerly a joint delegation of Shanghai's private enterprises to the Albanian International Professional Exhibition in 2015. The SPAFFC participated in the program. Cooperating with the Shanghai Association of International Trade Services, the SPAFFC held an economic and trade exhibition in Albania and Serbia. In November 2016, the SPAFFC organized the Sail of Shanghai One Belt, One Road Cultural and Trade Exchange Exhibition in Eastern and Central Europe. The exhibition was held in the Balkan countries of Serbia, Albania and Slovenia along with other economic and cultural exchange activities.

## Bailu French Le Maison de Moret-Seine & Loing opened in Pengzhou, Chengdu

**Chengdu Friendship Association**



On the morning of Oct 12, 2017, a representative office of France's Seine-et-Marne department in the country's Ile-de-France region was opened in Bailu Music Town of Pengzhou, a county-level city under the jurisdiction of Chengdu. Appropriately, the street was French-styled, and melodious music filled the air. Jean-Jacques Barbaux, president of Seine-et-Marne, addressed the opening ceremony, announcing the establishment of Bailu Le Maison de Moret-Seine & Loing as the local office of Moret-Seine & Loing in Pengzhou. The office will send an official to work in Pengzhou and be responsible long-term for friendly exchanges and economic cooperation between Pengzhou and Moret-Seine & Loing.

## Countries' Contact & Peoples' Closeness from Shenyang to Tokyo (Twin City Exhibition) Exhibition Opened in Shenyang

**Shenyang Friendship Association**



This year marks the 45th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan, and next year will usher in the 40th anniversary of the forging of a peace and friendship treaty between the two countries.

To celebrate the anniversaries, the Shenyang People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Japanese consulate in Shenyang jointly orchestrated a Chinese calligraphy exhibition of works by Chinese and Japanese poets Wang Ning and Ishizuka Hideki.

The exhibition—Countries' Contact & Peoples' Closeness from Shenyang to Tokyo (Twin City Exhibition) Oriental Art Tour—opened at the Shenyang branch of Rongbaozhai on Sept 23, 2017.



# Dialogue: Chinese characters a bridge for China-Japan exchanges

**Jiang Feng**

On Aug 20, Jiang Feng, representing the People's Daily Overseas Edition and Jnocnews, a Japan-based Chinese language newspaper, interviewed CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin, together with former prime minister of Japan Fukuda Yasuo, at the Tkasaki municipal government offices in Gunma prefecture, Japan. The interview was conducted against a backdrop of a Chinese characters exhibition in the prefecture.

The touring exhibition—*Chinese Characters: A Legacy and Marvel Perfected Over Three Millennia*—was co-hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Art Exhibitions China and the Japan-China Cultural Exchange Association.



**CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin with Fukuda Yasuo**

## **A delight to meet old friend away from home**

**Jiang Feng:** Thank you for accepting the interview for People's Daily Overseas Edition and Jnocnews. This is not your first meeting, but must

be the first in Gunma prefecture. At this special moment, what would you like to share with us?

**Fukuda Yasuo:** I never expected I would meet President Li Xiaolin here in my hometown, Tkasaki, Gunma prefecture, let alone be given so much time to share ideas with each other. Today at

the opening ceremony of the *Chinese Characters* exhibition I said we were honored to welcome President Li, a heavyweight in China's diplomacy, to this city.

**Li Xiaolin:** Fukuda Yasuo is more than a former Japanese prime minister. More important, he is a Japanese states-

man who has made great contributions to the development of friendly relations between China and Japan. It is of great significance that we chose Gunma prefecture, Mr Fukuda's hometown, as the last stop of the *Chinese Characters* exhibition. The moment I learned that Mr Fukuda would be present at the opening ceremony, I decided that I must come. It is such a delight that this time I can meet my old friend away from home.

### A bridge for friendly exchanges

**Jiang:** Chinese characters have played an important role in the exchanges between China and Japan, and even among other Asian countries. President Li and Mr Fukuda, may I ask your views on the role of Chinese characters in contemporary Sino-Japanese relations?

**Li:** The current *Chinese Characters* exhibition is jointly sponsored by the CPAFFC and our Japanese friends. I believe the exhibition will surely be well received by Japanese people from all walks of life. This cultural product best embodies the cultural exchanges and friendship between China and Japan.

**Fukuda:** Chinese characters have played a unique role in the cultural exchanges and even the bilateral relations between Japan and China. On one hand, we should continue exchanges in the development of the Chinese characters culture. On the other hand, we can go beyond that and strengthen our exchanges in such areas as the Japanese tea ceremony and Kabuki. The Japanese tea ceremony originates in China,



CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin with Fukuda Yasuo (right)

while Kabuki has much in common with Beijing Opera. All of these are our shared cultural wealth.

**Li:** The exhibition has been held in five cities in Japan and attracted more than 200,000 visitors—convincing proof of its influence and function in enhancing people-to-people friendship. Among Asian countries, only China, Japan, Singapore and the Republic of Korea still use Chinese characters. Japan is the largest user of Chinese characters, second only to China. A Chinese visitor can know the meaning of shop names and trademarks in Japan even if he or she doesn't know a single Japanese word thanks to the ubiquitous presence of Chinese characters.

**Fukuda:** I agree. I always attach great importance to the role of Chinese characters in Asia and especially in relations between Japan, China and the ROK. Prompted by a Korean friend's suggestion, I once proposed making a list of the 880 most frequently used

Chinese characters in the three countries. However, the relationship between Japan and the ROK has turned sour, while China-ROK relations experienced setbacks, making it difficult to push forward my proposal. I think we'll have to wait. But I firmly believe that friendship and mutual understanding among the three peoples will be enhanced through the promotion of Chinese characters, which are based on a similar cultural foundation.

**Li:** The most important thing I want to mention is that Chinese characters provide a platform on which the people of China, Japan, the ROK and the rest of the Asia-Pacific can seek common development. For example, Mr Fukuda and I took photos today in front of the Chinese character “友” (friendship). We should be friends rather than enemies. The principal purpose of this exhibition is to review the past, watch the present and look into the future. ■

# The Seihaku Sai Festival

**Kobayashi Yoshiko**

In December 2016, the Seihaku Sai Festival featuring *dekayama*, or giant festival floats, was included on UNESCO's World Intangible Cultural Heritage list. Nanao city in Ishikawa prefecture, home to the festival, thus attracted worldwide attention.

Japan's north-central Honshu Island projects into the Sea of Japan, forming the Noto Peninsula. Since ancient times, Nanao—located on the central part of the peninsula—has had trade relations with Balhae on the Chinese mainland, and once flourished as the gateway to the island.

The birth of the festival is closely connected with Minamoto no Shitago, a provincial official—or *kokushi*—in ancient Japan's Noto province during the Heian Period (794-1185). In 982 AD, when he left for his assignment in Nanao, the *kokushi* made a special trip to Omi province (currently Shiga prefecture) to invite Sanno Shrine and Laird Shrine to take part in the sacrificial rite. Rituals were held according to the religious norms of the Hiyoshi Shrine, which worshiped a god named Oyamakui-no-kami, the patron saint of the palace when Emperor Tenji moved the capital to Otsu.

In the sacred ceremony, people place offerings on oak leaves to pray for peace on earth and a good harvest. In this collective dialogue with God, people expressed their wish to over-

come the harsh natural conditions by working together.

During the Warring States Period of Japan (1467-1615), massive floats were added to the festival—in the reign of Hatakeyama Yoshifusa, the seventh lord of Nanao Castle. Yoshifusa was actively committed to economic and cultural development. He invited cultural celebrities from Kyoto and introduced Renga and Waka poetry, books, records and tea culture, which were popular among the nobles of the time.

Although Nanao Castle later declined through wars, the float parade has been passed down in changing forms.

Each of the three floats stands 12 meters tall and weighs 20 tons. Each wheel measures 2 meters in diameter. The floats are arguably the largest of their kind in Japan. The boat-shaped one has a platform built on it completely in the original form for kabuki performance.

From May 3 to 5 every year, the festival is held over three successive days. In the late afternoon of May 3, all three floats are transported to the Laird Shrine. At noon the next day, a ceremony is held to dedicate offerings and pray for a good harvest in front of the floats parked in the shrine. Then the floats are moved to Sando (visiting path



CPAFFC Vice-President Hu Sishe (L.3, front row) with Japanese friends.



to the shrine) and the Shimenawa (an enclosing rope) is cut off by clergymen with Tachi, which signifies the conclusion of the sacred sacrificial ceremony and the beginning of the people's carnival.

Floats carry the local people's aspirations. At the beginning of each new year, the neighborhoods that keep the floats often have meetings with people from other blocks to discuss sharing the costs of the festival and other preparation work.

Instead of metal parts such as nails, the floats are assembled with cheap materials, including vines, artemisia and bamboo, which are easily available and can provide a buffer to the floats' movements. Given that they are too large to be stored whole, people take the floats apart after the festival and keep them in the warehouse to be reassembled the next year. It is increasingly hard to prepare the floats nowadays, not only because materials must be environmentally friendly but also because the original look of the floats and skills should be preserved to match the festival's fame as a UN world intangible cultural heritage.

Because the giant floats have no steering wheels or brakes, logs lubricated with grease are inserted under the rumbling wheels from different angles to change the direction of the vehicle and avoid houses, poles and advertising boards that may be in the way. To negotiate right-angle street corners, a wheel has to be removed to turn the four-wheeled float into a three-wheeled one. Tools and techniques vary in dif-



**The Seihaku Sai Festival**

ferent places to meet local weather conditions. It is an awesome scene when a fleet of floats, each weighing 20 tons, trundles steadily down the street.

We are proud of and grateful for our ancestors' wisdom and feel relaxed and rewarded after a year's hard work.

There is an interesting story about the three giant floats. Long ago, it is said, offering live human sacrifices was a common practice at Sanno Shrine in Nanao. The day before the sacrificial ritual, an arrow with a white feather vane would appear at the door of a house to show that the daughter of the family was chosen to be offered to the local demon. So when the sacrificial day approached, every family worried. A monk with great Dharma power in Echigo (today's Niigata prefecture) heard of that and remarked: "I once

routed three evil baboons. One of them ran away. Was it possible that it fled to Nanao?" The monk came to Nanao disguised as the girl to be sacrificed and hid himself in the cabinet of the shrine. As expected, the baboon appeared. A ferocious battle ensued and both died. The local people arranged a grand burial for the monk and made three floats to scare off the evil spirit of the dead baboon.

The float parade during the Seihaku Sai Festival is a time-honored folk activity developed by the people of the Noto Peninsula. We see it as more than a sacrifice and will pass on the fine tradition and culture of Noto from generation to generation. ■

*The author is a member of the P.E.N. Club*

# First Dialogue on China-German Historical and Cultural Cities held in Germany

**Wang Qing**

Cities provide room for political, economic, social, cultural and other human activities. They are the products of civilization's development. Human history stretching thousands of years has nurtured a number of renowned cities, thanks to their rich cultural wealth or because of some significant events that took place on their soil.

Some of these cities were once the capitals of dynasties; some were the political and economic powerhouses; some were places where major historical events occurred; some were noted for their invaluable cultural relics; while others were celebrated for their exquisite handicrafts. Today, these cities serve as a window for us to look back into history. With historical and modern elements integrated in one entity, they have become showcases of the world's diverse customs, religions and cultures.

These historical and cultural cities are facing challenges and opportunities in the course of their urban renewal. They need to think how to protect the historical and cultural relics while using their cultural resources to explore new approaches for urban development so that they will acquire new vitality amid a coordinated development of human needs and city development. This is a topic of common concern for every country, including China.

It was based on such considerations that the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the General Administration of Cultural Heritage Protection and Research of Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany, launched their Dialogue on Historical and Cultural Cities. The first session was held between China's Xi'an and Germany's Mainz on Sept 12 and 13 in Mainz.

## **A high-level event for cultural exchanges between cities**

Hu Sishe, vice-president of the CPAFFC and Wang Yongkang, Party secretary of Xi'an and a member of the Standing Committee of the Shaanxi Committee of the Communist Party of China, led a delegation to Germany for the dialogue. Attending various activities of the dialogue were Roger Lewitz, chairman of the Social Democratic Party and interior minister of Rheinland-Pfalz; Conrad Wolf, state minister of culture and education; Salvador Barbaro, state secretary of the Ministry of Culture; Thomas Metz, director of the General Administration of Cultural Heritage Protection and Research; Michael Eberlin, mayor of Mainz; Christopher Hitt, director of the economic promotion department of the Mainz municipal government; Wolfram Lebebo, mayor of Trier; Kurt Kast, chairman of the

Federation of German-China Friendship Associations; Wang Shunqing, consul general of China in Frankfurt; and with many other local dignitaries. CPAFFC Vice-President Hu, Xi'an Party Secretary Wang and Minister Ronald Wolf delivered speeches at the opening ceremonies of the Dialogue and Exhibition of Xi'an Archaeological Sites and Cultural Relics Replicas. Journalists from Rhine-Main TV, the Rhine Times, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Rheinland-Pfalz Zeitung, Wiesbaden Zeitung and RPR1 radio, and dozens of other German media outlets covered the event. Hu and Salvador Barbaro, state secretary of the Ministry of Culture, jointly chaired the news conference.

## **Encounter of occidental horse and oriental dragon**

During the dialogue, 26 replicas of cultural relics held by the Xi'an Museum were displayed at the Mainz State Museum. The exhibition was jointly unveiled by Xi'an Party Secretary Wang and Rheinland-Pfalz Minister of Education and Culture Wolf. The exhibition was scheduled to run one month at the museum, followed by tours to other museums across the state of Rheinland-Pfalz.

The exhibits were all handmade masterpieces. On display was a bronze figure, a replica of a Western Han Dy-

nasty (206 BC-AD 26) bronze statue unearthed in a Xi'an alley in 1964. The statue features a pair of huge ears, wings on its back and feathers on its legs. There is an idiom in Chinese: "Sprouting wings to ascend to heaven and become an immortal". The idiom originated in the imagination of ancient people as a way to morph into a higher plane of existence. Another centerpiece was a golden walking dragon, a cultural relic of the Tang Dynasty (618-907)—some 1,300 years ago. The dragon, with a protruding mouth, ferocious fangs, long and curled tongue, curly hair, serrated spine and forceful talons looks imposing and oozes an air of the powerful Tang.

The German visitors studied every exhibit with keen interest. They gave the exhibition an interesting name—"An Encounter of Dragon and Horse". The horse refers to the galloping golden horse statue above the main entrance of the Mainz State Museum. The encounter of the occidental horse and oriental

dragon bode well for the dialogue.

### **A high-caliber and professional forum**

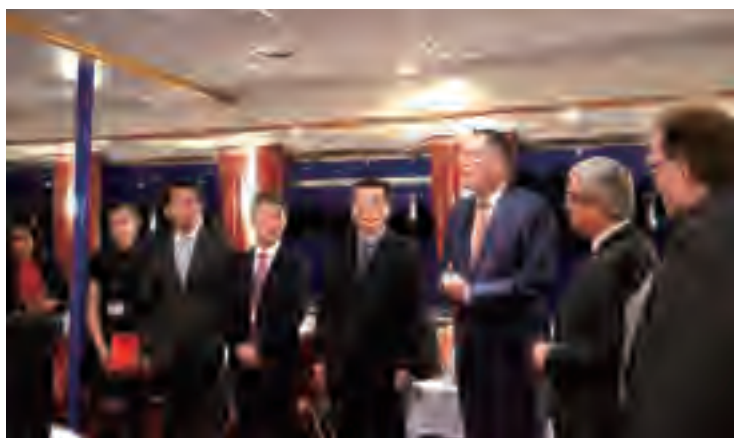
At the forum, scholars of history and culture from China's Xi'an and Germany's Rheinland-Pfalz discussed relations between city development and the protection of archaeological sites. The discussions centered on three topics—archaeological exploration of ancient sites, preservation of urban cultural relics and management and commercial operation of relics sites. The Chinese and German delegations were headed by Zheng Yulin, director of the Xi'an municipal bureau of cultural relics, and Thomas Metz, director of the General Administration of Cultural Heritage Protection and Research.

Experts on both sides also discussed the two cities' common characteristics and unique features, the protection and inheritance of urban cultural heritage and the development and sharing of urban cultural resources. During

the discussions, they emphasized the importance of cultural diversity and inclusiveness and equality between different cultures. The audience at the forum included historical and archaeological scholars, amateurs and related business representatives outside the delegation. They took part in the discussions and put forward constructive proposals about cultural development and museum operations in Xi'an and Mainz. They also made suggestions on both the form and topics for the next forum.

### **A multifaceted platform for demonstrating Chinese culture**

Participants of the dialogue in Germany also included folk musicians from the Xi'an Song and Dance Theater and some inheritors of intangible cultural heritage from Xi'an. The performance of Xi'an folk music and a show of paper-cutting, opera marks and dough figurines gave the German audience a taste of the distinctive charm of Xi'an's folk arts. Apart from performing in the dialogue sessions, the artisans also participated in the Wiesbaden International Summer Art Festival and International Art Week on Cathedral Square in Mainz. Their performances attracted a large number of German viewers. The melodious folk music performed by musicians from the Xi'an Song and Dance Theater intoxicated the audiences, while the dough figurine artists surprised the locals by molding their images out of dough on the spot. Their performances added luster to the Wiesbaden Art Festival and the Mainz Art Festival. The mayors of the two cities also took photos with the artists in front of their exhibition booths. ■



**Roger Lewentz, minister of the interior of Rhineland-Pfalz state and Michael Ebling, major mayor of Mainz, with the Chinese delegation**



# Exhibition of Chinese characters in Japan a great success

**Yu Xiaodong**

A large-scale touring exhibition of cultural relics entitled *A Legacy and Marvel Perfected: Chinese Characters Over Three Millennia* began in October last year in Japan and ran until September. It was co-hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Art Exhibition China, the Japan-China Culture Exchange Center and the Mainichi Shimbun newspaper, and jointly designed by the China Friendship International Art Exchange Association and the Japan KOUZAN Fine-Arts Company. From Oct 18, 2016 to Sept 10, 2017, the collection toured Tokyo, Kyoto, Niigata, Sendai and Takasaki attracting 230,000 visitors. JNOC News hailed it as "a great success".

## Leaders' attention

The exhibition received much attention from high-level leaders of China and Japan. Yasuo Fukuda, former Japanese prime minister, attended the opening ceremony in Takasaki. Hatoyama Yukio, also a former prime minister, made special visits to two ex-

hibitions—in Tokyo and Kyoto. Also attending, or making a special trip to see the exhibition, were Li Xiaolin, president of the CPAFFC; Hu Sishe, the association's vice-president; Cheng Yonghua, China's ambassador to Japan, and his wife, Counsellor Wang Wan; Liu Shaobin, the charge d'affaires; Guo Yan, the minister; Xue Jian, counselor with the rank of minister; Wang Jun, consul general; Chen Zheng, the cultural counselor; Wang Jun, director-general of AEC; Yoneyama Ryuichi, governor of Niigata; Murai Yoshihiro, governor of Miyagi; Osawa Masaaki, governor of Gunma; Yamauti Syuji, deputy governor of Kyoto; Aoyagi Masanori, former Japanese commissioner for cultural affairs; Harada Minoru, president of Soka Gakkai International; Takeda Yoshiaki, director of the Mainichi Shimbun; Yoshihisa Baba, president of Soka University; and foreign envoys to Japan, cultural officials and government officials.

The Chinese embassy also organized a special forum to study the exhibition. More than 80 embassy staff members went to the exhibition, setting

their own record for visits to an exhibition in Japan.

Chinese and Japanese visitors commended the exhibition, saying it was a representative work of Chinese culture spreading to the world.

CPAFFC President Li said: "This exhibition of Chinese characters is an important event in the cultural exchange between China and Japan. It sets up another golden platform to promote understanding and friendship between the two nations. It is the first time a systematic exhibition has been held in Japan to display old Chinese characters and also a constructive move to enhance understanding and friendly exchanges between the two countries.

"China and Japan are next-door neighbors. Long-term, healthy and stable development of bilateral relations are not only in the interests of both peoples but also helpful to regional peace and stability. This year marks the 45th anniversary of the normalization of Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations. I believe the exhibition will help the two countries further explore the rich cultural connotation of Chinese characters,

and will add new luster to their cultural exchanges.”

Harada Minoru, honorary curator of the Tokyo Fuji Art Museum and president of Soka Gakkai International, spoke passionately: “Chinese characters can open up the future and bring hope, happiness and peace to people, for Chinese characters carry the wisdom of the ancestors. I believe that every Chinese character displayed in this exhibition illuminates the friendship between China and Japan.”

The attention and praise from high-ranking leaders and other well-known figures greatly enhanced the exhibition’s fame and influence.

### A well-received theme

As CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin has said, “Chinese characters are the common cultural treasures of China

and Japan.”

Chinese characters are widely and frequently used in Japanese people’s daily lives. Moreover, Japan contributed many new words to the Chinese vocabulary in modern times. That’s why the exhibition of Chinese characters, cultural relics that embody the common wisdom of the two peoples, was so much appreciated and supported by various organizations in both countries. The exhibition resonated with visitors. Wherever it went, the exhibition received floods of praise and became a hot topic of talk among residents. Compared with other exhibitions of Chinese cultural relics, this one had greater recognition and more enthusiastic participation. JNOC News commented that “the exhibition had such a great social influence and obtained so much attention and admiration in Japan that it

marks an important breakthrough in the history of Chinese cultural exhibitions there.”

### Exquisite exhibits

The exhibition displayed 118 selected exhibits from 17 Chinese museums and research institutions, including 23 sets and 26 single pieces of first-class cultural relics. Among them were items from Shaanxi and Henan provinces, the birthplace of Chinese civilization, such as oracle bone scripts, bronzes, inscribed Terra-Cotta Warriors and inscription rubbings from the Qin and Han dynasties to the Tang Dynasty, all of which reflected the origin of Chinese characters. Exhibits also included masterpieces of painting and calligraphy from the Palace Museum, Liaoning Provincial Museum and Anhui Museum. There were also the famous “Notes on Inscribed Slips of the Qin from Liye” and the bamboo slips and silk books unearthed from the Mawangdui Tomb of the Han Dynasty in Hunan province. The exhibition was divided into two parts: “The history of Chinese characters” and “The beauty of Chinese characters”.

The first part revealed the evolution of the Chinese writing form, changing from oracle bone scripts and bronze inscriptions to large seal scripts, small seal scripts, cursive scripts and regular scripts. Exhibits in this part included many national-level treasures, such as Terra-Cotta Warriors with character inscriptions, E Junqi golden slab, Empress Wu Zetian’s golden slip for punishment exemption, among others.



The ribbon-cutting ceremony

The second part, “The beauty of Chinese characters”, displayed masterpieces of many famous calligraphers, such as Zhao Mengfu, Dong Qichang, Wen Zhengming and Deng Shiru. These were attractive to the Japanese audiences—people with discerning taste in culture and calligraphy.

### Kentoshi monument

The most sensational part of the exhibition was not the Terra-Cotta Warriors with Chinese character inscriptions—which were revealed to the outside world for the first time—but rather the epitaph on the tombstone of Ino Manari Kentoshi, the ambassador dispatched to the Tang, which was unearthed in 2004 in Xi’an and is now housed at Northwestern University. This tombstone is the only one of its kind to be discovered so far of Japanese students studying in China during the Tang Dynasty. Significantly, the two Chinese characters *ri ben* (Japan) on the epitaph are the earliest recorded evidence of that country’s name being written on any cultural relics.

The tombstone bears witness to the millennial friendship between China and Japan. A Japanese monk who saw the tombstone said: “There were Japanese students and also monks in the Tang Dynasty. Ino Manari was my great predecessor. Every time I think about Kentoshi, who risked his life on treacherous marine voyages to study in China, I am deeply touched. We should value the friendly relations between China and Japan. Culture is the bond that connects us.”

### Word creation by Wu Zetian, the worldwide legend

Wu Zetian was the only female imperial ruler in China and was also a prominent stateswoman who made great political and military achievements. She had many artistic and cultural accomplishments and was skilled at “hollow strokes”, a style of calligraphy. During her reign, she created about 20 Chinese characters. Although characters created by her are no longer used in China, she still has many followers in Japan. For example, the character 囡, pronounced “guo”, is a familiar word for Japanese people and was once used by a famous Japanese historian as his name.

The exhibition selected the Wu Zetian golden slip for punishment exemption because it has characters on it that were created by Wu. At the opening ceremony in Gunma prefecture, a member of the Japanese parliament was very excited to find the character 囡 in the display, because it forms part of his name. He said he could truly understand the inseparable relationship between Japanese culture and the culture of China’s Sui and Tang dynasties.

### Good timing

The exhibition tour took place in 2017, which happens to be the 45th anniversary of the normalization of Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations. For each anniversary, the two countries’ governments and nongovernmental organizations usually arrange commemorative

activities.

Former prime minister Yasuo Fukuda said: “This content-rich and sensational exhibition has come at the right time and has had great influence. What is more important is that the organizer of the exhibition is a major player leading and coordinating international cultural exchanges. That’s why this exhibition has become one of the most important events commemorating the 45th anniversary of the normalization of Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations.”

### Media support

Domestic media such as CCTV, Xinhua News Agency, People’s Daily, China News Service, Phoenix News and Guang Ming Daily—as well as Japanese media in the Chinese language—gave large-scale positive coverage to the exhibition from different angles. Outlets included the Japan Monthly of the People’s Daily Overseas Edition, JCON News, Chubun News, CCTV Daifu and Japanese mainstream media outlets such as Kyodo News, Daily News, Nagasaki News, Kochi News, Nishi Nippon News, Kyoto News, Nigata Daily, Kahoku News and Jomo News.

The media’s friendly reports and recommendations greatly publicized the exhibition. Many people, even if they could not come to the exhibition, could still feel its charm through the media reports. Even those who attended the exhibition benefited from the media coverage. Through those interpretations they acquired a deeper understanding



of the exhibition and developed a zeal to support cultural exchanges between China and Japan. It is justified to claim that the media helped create a friendly atmosphere to commemorate the 45th anniversary.

The success of the exhibition helped us understand some key principles:

**1. It is important to select the right theme.** We learned this from experience. At first, we didn't think there would be any major problems in running the exhibition, since Chinese characters are commonly used in both Japan and China. However, after some feasibility studies, we found that the greater the public's familiarity and identity with what they see, the lower its novelty and appeal. Therefore, we adjusted the exhibition's title to include "three millennia" and "art of Chinese characters". That enhanced the suspense and attraction. But choosing the proper title only set the right direction for the exhibition. It was ultimately the exquisite exhibits that were the key to its success.

**2. It is important to understand that even a small success requires a rich accumulation.** Accumulation is the foundation, while success is the target. This calls for a discerning eye. From the initial idea to the final show, sponsoring organizers continued to conduct extensive research and to collect exhibits. For four years—from April 2012 to October 2016—organizers explored 17 museums in six provinces to select artifacts one by one, fol-

lowing the principle of simplicity but full inclusion. They rummaged through countless books and relics to pick out articles that best reflect the evolution of Chinese characters, best represent the calligraphic art and best describe the cultural integration of China and Japan.

**3. Comprehensive coordination leads to success.** Presenting an exhibition is a systematic project for which good cooperation and coordination are essential. Timely and well-calculated communication is required for discussions with the exhibition's hosting and operating units; inviting and receiving relevant officials; receiving, transporting and arranging displays; storing precious exhibits; and seeing to a rational division of workload division and cooperation among staff members. Careless omissions or errors cannot be allowed in any link of the preparation process; otherwise, the quality and reputation of the exhibition would be affected. A debacle could even result. The complete success of this exhibition is the result of the joint efforts and close cooperation of all parties involved—people who truly achieved zero errors in planning, communication and security at every work post.

**4. Seizing opportunities gets twice the results with half the effort.** The exhibition took place on the 45th anniversary of the normalization of Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations, which created favorable conditions for the exhibition in public relations, soliciting outside support and organizing activities.

The exhibition was held in Kyoto at a time when the city had been chosen as this year's Culture City of East Asia. The coincidence added to the atmosphere of cultural exchange. The ancient Chinese listed the "right time", "right location" and "friendly partners" as the three favorable conditions, illustrating the importance of seizing opportunity. Choosing the best time for the exhibition was no small matter.

**5. Techniques used in the exhibition needed to be upgraded continually.** It provided abundant, diverse information about the experience of visitors—for example, how they interacted with "tablet rubbing" exhibit—to make the exhibition more attractive and increase participation. Methods used in the exhibition could not be set in stone. Rather, they need to keep up with the times, cater to viewers' psychological needs and arouse their interest.

After 5,000 years of a "baptism of fire" type of development, Chinese culture still shines with wisdom and traditional values. In the words of President Xi Jinping, China needs to "systematically manage the traditional cultural resources, making the cultural relics collected in museums, the heritage displayed on the vast land and the characters written in the ancient books come alive". We must take on the responsibility of bringing cultural relics to life, so that they can narrate the legends of China. ■

## Scenes from the memory of a native Beijinger

Chen Jun

Liao Zengbao, 72, was born in a *hutong* in Xijiekou, Beijing's Xicheng district. He has been witness to many of the city's vicissitudes. For him, the transitions are not historical tableaux but rather memories of his everyday life. An amateur painter, Liao has used his brush to recreate scenes from his life over the past few decades.

Under the theme "Beijing's Hutong Memory", dozens of Liao Zengbao's works went on exhibition recently in the Meiliyuan community

square in Haidian district. Depicting such aspects of Beijing life as *hutong*, temple fairs and the Meridian Gate of the Forbidden City, the paintings reflect Beijing's historical features at a certain time.

### Depictions of people's lives

Mrs Liu, 80, admired Liao's painting of the Jiangyangfang *hutong*. Portraying bygone scenes of the *hutong* (today's Xijiekou East Street), it brought back many memories. Liu

often walked past the *hutong* on her way to a nearby barbershop. Once, after suffering a bone fracture, she cut through the *hutong* to Jishuitan Hospital. "Many of the shops that used to be there are long gone," Liu said. The exhibition also includes paintings of Beijing's temple fairs; of the Rusticated Youth Campaign, when young people were sent to work in rural and mountainous areas; outdoor cinemas in the 1960s and 70s; and storing cabbages for the winter. All



Painting: The Forbidden City in Snow

show aspects of bygone daily life in Beijing's *hutong*.

Among Liao's works is a series of 18 oil paintings entitled *Changes to Shibei Hutong*. Originally located in Liubukou, one-third of it housed the quadrangle dwellings of magnates and merchants. The remainder was occupied by warrens of workers' family homes.

These paintings re-enact people's daily lives after the founding of the People's Republic of China. Urban development brought a mushrooming of new communities which completely changed *hutong* life.

"When I was at high school, we would go to harvest cabbages in the bitter cold winter weather. Even the ground was frozen. But winter in Beijing is much warmer now," Liao said.

#### Teahouse enlightenment

Having been born and raised in

Beijing, Liao has witnessed the city's extraordinary development. He has particularly profound memories of the capital's *hutong*. When he retired, Liao painted to record what he saw and heard.

Liao said the influence of famous Chinese novelist and dramatist Lao She is the main reason he uses *hutong* as a medium to reflect the city's changes. "I greatly admire Lao She. His drama *Teahouse* is still popular and will undoubtedly endure. A standard *hutong* seems to me the perfect showcase for Beijing's twists and turns," Liao said.

#### Learn more about Beijing's history

One particularly striking painting in Liao's exhibition is the long scroll portraying a typical Beijing temple fair. With the Huguo Temple Fair as the backdrop, Liao has recreated this vivid, colorful 1960s scene, featuring folk acrobatic performances, handicrafts,

and traditional snacks, in all its vibrant vitality.

Liao said snacks are the main attraction at temple fairs these days but go beyond traditional Beijing specialties to include Western favorites like pizza.

"I think the entire essence of temple fairs has changed," Liao said. "I wish more people could know what a real temple fair was like."

Liao intends to recreate bygone aspects of Beijing life for those who missed out on them. For instance, there used to be a huge vat of water in each household, replenished by the many water wagons rolling through the city. This feature of everyday life is not dissimilar to that of today, with large bottles of water delivered by tricycle. In earlier times, it was customary to keep a small crucian carp in the vat. Its health was an indicator of the water's quality.

"I hope through this exhibition people will see the contrast between Beijing's past and present," Liao said.

*Hutong* provide a unique view of Beijing and are carriers of its history and culture. Liao's exhibition also includes supplementary information about *hutong*, including photos of how they look now, if indeed they remain, to amplify the visual impact. "If the exhibition acquaints people with Beijing's history and how life progressed from liberation to the present day, then I ask for no more," Liao said. ■

*From China Today*



Painting: *Shibei Hutong*.



# Method and Reading: Reflections on Confucius and Chinese philosophy

Wolfgang Kubin

There are some scholars who claim Chinese philosophy isn't a genuine philosophy, and even if it is, they say, it is either too simple or too hard to understand. You will hear similar opinions not only in Europe but also in China.

In this article, I don't want to examine whether cases like these are only matters of opinion or fact. Instead, I want to highlight the problematic nature of the art of reading difficult Chinese texts. How do we read a Chinese text that doesn't really speak to us innately?

As is well known in modern hermeneutics, a work that doesn't speak to us is a dead work. Nonetheless, we also know that something we are not yet ready to comprehend or appreciate today might gain our fullest sympathy and attention tomorrow. How is this possible? And what exactly was it that happened to us in such cases between these two incidents in our life?

Let me use myself as an example and thereby reiterate. Due to my early readings of Hegel in Vienna (1968), the words of my first Chinese teacher in Muenster (1969) and my university years during the "cultural revolution" in Beijing (1974-75), I was not at

all interested in Confucius (551-479 BC). He appeared to me as boring, trivial and, in comparison to Greek philosophy, which I favored at that time, anything but philosophical.

Why is it then that I like to read Confucian Analects (*Lunyu*) today and often recite the words of the master, and even defend them, as a response to certain negative developments in Western modernity?

It all has to do with a certain primal experience. In May 1999, I was doing research on Chinese aesthetics. I bought a German translation of the French book *In Praise of Blandness: Proceeding from Chinese Thought and Aesthetics* by Francois Jullien. It opens more or less with the close revision of an inconspicuous passage from *Lunyu*.

In order to spare the readers the impression that he looks at Confucius with a lack of philosophical expertise, Jullien right from the beginning points out the true character of the essence of Chinese culture as he sees it: Something that lies in the middle and appears unimportant at first glance, but which is in fact truly essential.

Whoever takes Hegel's statement seriously that *Lunyu* is trivial should first properly study the Chinese spirit

before further debate, as the Chinese spirit defines itself quite differently from ours, namely through its withdrawal from the visible and the structured.

## Philosophy and death

Chinese people are quite right to be afraid of everything designed and modeled, because all that is designed and well-formed confines us to something specific. As the formed and defined version of myself, I am only what I reveal as my shaped self. This self is reduced to certain specific characteristics, but no longer implies the countless number of all possible options as a whole. That is, for instance, why fashion plays such an important role in the Western world, as it allows people to design and define themselves in a very individual way.

On the other side, something unshaped and shapeless is limited only to itself and its potential, but without being perceptible as something special. Thus, from outer appearances it could be many things; however, it prefers to be everything possible in its inner self.

According to Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) a human being should in general (objectively)

be what he is also for himself (subjectively)—which means, a person should define himself by what he feels deep inside as well as by his outer appearance, thus resolving the dichotomy of being.

As a consequence of this thought, the concept of self-realization appears as a new terminus in Hegel's works from 1816 onward, and becomes a whole new scheme.

This scheme, however, differs significantly from the Chinese concept of *xiushen*. This binomial, which can be translated as “cultivating of one's moral character”, is central to Confucianism. Originally, *xiushen* meant the cleansing of all evil in river waters. Confucius regarded this concept as a basis for personality development.

According to the classical work *The Great Learning*, one becomes a person by placing the act of physical cleansing in the context of the empire under heaven, the (vassal) state and the

family.

How much a cosmological concept like this takes away from a single person that which is a part of his individuality, in the view of the Occidental culture, becomes visible through a later key phrase from the Song Dynasty (960-1279): “Erase human desires and apply the heavenly principles”. This phrase goes further than the former requirement of Confucius, by stating that a human being has to “overcome itself, to reinstate the social norms, the rite”.

In all the cases named, what one gains is not one's very own unique form, but the form of being itself, the form of everybody and everything. In this way I am indistinguishable from other humans by my outer appearance. Instead I carry the reason for everything within my inner self. This is also why heaven, earth and humans can be understood as an internal-worldly trinity.



Confucius

This idea also explains why the former Chinese philosophy remained unspoken. Words form a text, and in this way narrow it down to a few possibilities. Plenty of words might seem to clarify a statement, but in fact they muddy it.

In the case of Confucius we have to mentally fill in further thoughts between the Chinese characters and by doing so upgrade the unspoken statements to something philosophical and eloquent.

For instance, let us take a closer look at the following example from *Lunyu* (IV.8):

The Master said: “If a man in the morning hears the right way, he may die in the evening without regret.”

What does Confucius mean by this statement? From the mouth of Socrates (470-399 BC) we are familiar with the idea that philosophizing means to learn to die. So why not take a detour via Socrates to understand his Chinese peer?

From the European perspective, we might as well ask: Why can a man, who hears about the right way in the morning, not die by noon? Whoever raises questions like this and thereby complements a minimalist saying, will truly start to philosophize. As a consequence, death will become an object of his very own thoughts, just like it became one in the mind of Socrates.

The French philosopher Francois Jullien has complemented another short and well known passage of the Confucian *Analects* in this style, which also deals with the subject of death:

The Duke of She asked Zilu about

Confucius, but Zilu did not answer him. The Master said: “Why didn’t you say to him, ‘He is simply a man, who in his eager pursuit of knowledge forgets his food, who in the joy of its attainment forgets all his sorrows, and who does not perceive that old age is coming on?’”

Zilu’s silence is characteristic, because a statement about the Master would have inevitably defined him as a certain something and singled him out as something in particular. However, Confucius himself does not seem to know difficulties like these. He talks about himself in dual images, which make clear what is important to him and what not. The images of eager pursuit and food, joy and sorrow, perception and age contrast with each other.

However, we do not know what exactly it is that the Master is eagerly pursuing or feels joy about. Here, as in many other passages in the *Analects*, there is no clear object following the sentence’s verb. Only the last verb “perceive” reveals an object: the coming on of age. As this verb is negated, the content of self-characterization seems to reveal a kind of calmness in Master Confucius. The search will only end after death, which, however, the Master doesn’t seem to fear at all.

What we deal with here is a phenomenon, an exercise, that plays an important role equally in Chinese and Western philosophy. However, this parallelism hasn’t been paid much attention to up to now. ■

*From China Today*

## Interview with Zhu Xintian, founder of ASIATICA

### Staff Reporter

*Zhu Xintian is a collector, archaeologist, art historian, painter, photographer and founder of ASIATICA. She has been committed to the study of Indian art and culture and published many books on her research.*

**VOF:** *As one of the founders of ASIATICA, what was your original intention in creating such a museum?*

**Zhu Xintian:** Thirty years ago, I taught relics and museum majors in the History Department of Hangzhou University. Apart from classroom teaching, I sometimes took my students to different places in China to look for relics that had survived the “cultural revolution”. Our department had a collection of cultural relics piled up in a toilet, and I often went there in my spare time to do the sorting. Squatting on the ground, I brushed away the dust on the objects and registered them one by one. Later, I designed display cabinets and

submitted the drawings to the necessary authorities. Finally, the museum of the history department came into being, and can be seen as the first museum I founded.

The way articles were displayed in China’s museums at that time was outdated. So I made up my mind to study abroad to bring advanced ideas back.

I first went to France in 1986 to study at Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Decoratifs in Paris, and then at Université de Paris VIII and Université de la Sorbonne. Given that people in France knew little about Asian culture and art, I held various exhibitions and gave lectures trying to change the situation.

Michel Postel, my husband and a renowned collector of Chinese and Indian artifacts, has been keen on promoting Asian art in the West. When he told me about his idea to found an Asian art museum in France, I gave him my full support. It was our com-





mon aspiration to build such a platform to enhance intercultural understanding. So my husband and I worked together to create ASIATICA. The new museum located in Biarritz, in southwestern France, opened to the public on March 5, 1999.

France, with its time-honored history and splendid culture, has rich experience and advanced facilities for running museums. There are thousands of museums in France, attracting numerous foreign tourists every year. Given this background, it isn't easy to establish an Asian art museum in this country. But once it is set up, the new museum will play a positive role in helping people in the West get acquainted with Asian art and culture.

Museums have the responsibility to protect mankind's cultural heritage, carry on cultural traditions and keep renewing them. They constitute an essential part of mankind's memory and reflection on history, as well as a vital link in the development of human civi-

lization. A museum not only carries the historical memory of a city or country but also provides food for thought on how we can avoid historical mistakes in the future. A good museum can serve as an attractive scenic spot for tourists, a giant data bank for researchers and a large classroom for students to acquire more knowledge beyond textbooks.

**VOF:** *You mentioned just now that France is a country with developed museums, including the Louvre and Musee d'Orsay. So how did ASIATICA manage to stand out from so many marvelous museums?*

**Zhu Xintian:** ASIATICA was built by revamping the building of a derelict French telecom factory, which made it different from any other museum. In such a space, we could not display the relics in the traditional way. Besides, due to the limited budget, it was impossible for us to have showcases tailored to the usual standards.

So, finally, we bought used showcases from Musee National des Arts Asiatiques-Guimet and the Department of Egyptian Antiquities of the Louvre. The showcases from the Louvre have a history of more than a hundred years.

To make room for the new museum, we first dismantled the telecommunication facilities in the factory. Sometimes I had to make the showcases myself to suit our Oriental antiques. I turned myself into carpenter, painter, fitter, sewing maid, mechanic, you name it. I also did a great deal of precision restoration of relics.

I think the different tones adopted in different sections of the museum also make it unique. Different colors have different symbolic significance. We painted the walls in different hues. For example, the walls of the Tibet section were painted orange-yellow, the color of a lama's kasaya. At the same time, matching colors are important. It means that the exhibition cards, display cabinets and pedestals need to be in harmonious colors. This design will help create a humanistic and religious atmosphere that will bring the audience back to a particular historical period. Many visitors told me that visiting the museum gave them an experience of drifting away from the earthly hubbub and having their soul purified. The method of adapting ambient hues to the themes I created has been applied in several museums in France, such as Musee Bonnat and Musee de Quai Branly.

**VOF:** Your husband Michel Postel, is a well-known collector, art historian and archaeologist. He has been dedicated to the study of Indian culture and has published many books on his research. Would you like to share with us his lasting tie with India?

**Zhu Xintian:** My husband is a World War II veteran. At the age of 17, he followed his father—a member of the French underground organization that fought the German occupation forces during World War II—secretly across the border to join General de Gaulle. Then he was sent to America and became a airplane pilot.

After World War II, my husband retired from the military, went back to his homeland and completed his education at HEC Paris. Influenced by Gandhi's doctrine of ahimsa (nonviolence), he went to India planning to set up a pharmaceutical company there, because the newly independent country was suffering a scarcity of medicine at that time.

After founding Franco-Indian Pharmaceutical, he developed an interest in India's history, culture and art. So he established an institute in his company dedicated to Indian research.

Later on, he published many books on his research. Antiquities of Himachal, the fruit of 20 years of hard work, reconstructs the lost history of that region with a host of archaeological evidence. *Ear Ornaments of Ancient India* has become an important reference for archeologists to identify

the age of Indian cultural relics. *The Queen's Stepwell at Patan*, from the perspective of architecture, iconography and mythology, has recreated the amazing historic site, which is thousands of years old. His collaborative works with other well-known archaeologists, including *The Religious Imagery of Khajuraho*, *Ganesha: The Enchanter of the Three Worlds*; and *Bastar Folk Art: Shrines, Figurines and Memorials*, have provided abundant archaeological data for Indologists. Also, he compiled several museum catalogs. It is worth mentioning that the *Queen's Stepwell at Patan*, in Gujarat, was discovered by Michel in the 1950s and is seen as one of the world's greatest archaeological finds of the 20th century.

Moreover, my husband has always been concerned about the poor people in India. Every year, he provided medicine free of charge for more than 100 health centers in the country, including the Mother Teresa of Calcutta Medical Center.

In 2016, Pranab Mukherjee, the 13th president of India, presented my husband with the Padma Shri Award in New Delhi in recognition of his great contribution to India's museums and archaeology.

**VOF:** Since the founding of ASIATICA, you have been committed to organizing exhibitions and contests on Asian painting, sculpture and photography every year. What is your expectation on people-to-people friendship between China and France in the future?

**Zhu Xintian:** I believe that true art and culture come from the people. The cultural exchanges among people from different countries are an essential part of the world's development and progress. Friendly people-to-people exchanges are a good way to help the world learn about China and its art and culture, as well as to promote world peace.

I have organized various exhibitions on Chinese paper-cutting, silk and embroidery, painting, calligraphy, porcelain and cultural relics. *The Chinese Folk Art Exhibition* and the *Buddha's Footprints* photo exhibition sponsored by ASIATICA and the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries are two good examples of cultural exchanges between the Chinese people and people around the world. The two exhibitions have opened a new window for Western friends to understand China.

A peaceful world can be seen in the colorful folk paintings; the festive atmosphere can be felt from the fine paper-cuttings; the philosophy of Buddhism can be understood from the photos of *Buddha's Footprints*. The two exhibitions have provided an opportunity for Westerners to get close to Chinese people's daily lives and learn about their cultural well-being.

I hope such friendly exchanges can continue. We expect further cooperation with the CPAFFC for more exhibitions and interactive events in the future. ■

# From where we start

## A story of President Li Xiaolin with Malta

**Sun Chi**

### One

On Jan 7, 1975, a grand welcoming ceremony was as held for Maltese Prime Minister Dom Mintoff at Capital International Airport in Beijing. It was Mintoff's second visit to China.

Known as the heart of the Mediterranean, Malta is so small a country that in most world maps it appears only as a tiny dot. But in China, Malta is widely known because Mintoff came to China just one month after the icebreaking visit of US President Richard Nixon in 1972.

Mintoff was the first Western European prime minister to set foot in China, and that step was immensely significant.

It was a risk for Mintoff to make the trip, but it proved worthwhile. Many years later, Reno Calleja, Mintoff's Chinese affairs adviser and president of the Malta China Friendship Society, told Voice of Friendship in an interview that aid from China had helped Malta greatly in its economic restructuring, to the extent that Malta had become an instrument of peace.

With the success of his first visit, Mintoff made his second trip an occasion of reunion with old friends, including Vice-Premier Li Xiannian. On the night of his arrival, Mintoff was welcomed with a banquet hosted by

Li in the name of Premier Zhou Enlai. Not many may remember what Li said to Mintoff at the banquet 40 years ago, but Mintoff never forgot Li's words.

More than 40 years later, a message related to what Mintoff heard from Li was passed to the friendship association.

### Two

In 2014, Clifford Borg-Marks, the newly appointed Maltese ambassador to China, called on CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin at the association's headquarters in Beijing. He came with a mission that every Maltese ambassador to China wishes to fulfill: inviting Madame Li to visit Malta.

The invitation can be traced back more than 40 years—or, to be exact, to the welcoming banquet given in Mintoff's honor upon his arrival. He was told by Li, the vice-premier, that all countries are equal regardless of their size. These words deeply touched him, as the prime minister of a small nation with only 300,000 people.

Ambassador Clifford recalled that Mintoff invited Li to visit Malta, and it was "a great honor" that the visit took place eventually. It would be another great honor if Madame Li Xiaolin could also visit Malta, an invitation that counts at all times.

Madame Li responded, in effect, I would very much like to go to your country, but now I am too busy to make the trip. I can only promise that one day I will definitely go.

Time flies. Another three years passed, and in May 2017, Madame Li finally fulfilled her promise.

Hearing the news, Ambassador John Aquilina, Reno Calleja of MCFS and the Chinese embassy in Malta all actively got involved in preparations for the visit.

They were doing everything to make sure Madame Li would meet the president of the Republic of Malta in the San Anton Palace, the same place where former president Li Xiannian met with Agatha Barbara, who was president of Malta in 1984.

### Three

President Barbara held a welcome banquet in the San Anton Palace for President Li Xiannian. She enthusiastically praised China's moral and material support for Malta at a most needed time. President Li received the Medal of Republic of Malta, the country's highest honor.

Xie Junzhen, a Chinese diplomat who worked in the embassy at that time, remembered that particular state visit vividly. He recalled that



President Li and his wife were frugal and considerate during their stay, leaving a deep impression on the Chinese embassy staffs and their Maltese hosts.

The visit was a huge success that promoted understanding and friendship between the two peoples and advanced bilateral relations. It would be remembered as one of the most important events in the history of the countries' relationship.

Events become past history the moment they happen, but the stories will be passed on. There was no doubt that Madame Li's visit would open a new chapter in this story, reminding the audience of the friendship that has never changed.

May was coming.

Yet, on May 1, word came from Malta that because of the domestic situation, a snap general election had been called for June 3. The election

day was only one week away from the planned meeting with the Maltese president. Would the visit be canceled or delayed? Madame Li reaffirmed that she would stick to the original plan for the visit.

#### **Four**

Learning of the decision, all parties involved in the preparations were excited but also worried. With election day approaching, any information about the itinerary would trigger concerns and conjecture at the Chinese embassy in Malta, the MCFS and the Maltese Embassy in Beijing. All parties awaited more news.

Finally, word came from Malta that on learning about the unchanged visit, President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca had decided to meet Madame Li at the San Anton Palace upon her arrival. As the place where then-President Li met Maltese President

Barbara, it was special and carried historical significance.

This was followed by another message: The prime minister and foreign minister would not meet Madame Li because they would be involved in pre-election campaigns.

However, several days later, a new twist surprised everyone. The prime minister's office contacted the Chinese embassy to express hope for a meeting with Madame Li.

The fact that the prime minister and foreign minister both managed to find time to meet with the CPAFFC delegation during the most heated days of an election campaign reflected how profound the China-Malta friendship was, and showed the importance Malta attached to its relationship with China—as well as its wish to develop people-to-people exchanges and local government cooperation.

On May 26, 2017, CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin met with Maltese President Preca in San Anton Palace, and met with Prime Minister Muscat and Foreign Minister Vella at the Prime Minister's office. During the meeting, Li recalled the 45 years of people-to-people friendship between China and Malta and briefed the host about Chinese President Xi Jinping's speech at the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation that had been held in May in Beijing.

In every high-level meeting, the hosts kept an open mind and the Chinese guests showed their sincerity and confidence. Both remembered the wonder of the past and looked forward to more wonders in a new era of time.



**CPAFFC president Li Xiaolin (L) met with President of Malta Preca**

One week after the visit, President Li sent letter to the Maltese president and prime minister to express thanks as well as to congratulate them on their success in the election. A letter of thanks also reached Reno, the president of the MCFS. He said he would put the letter in a frame and hang it on the wall beside a photo of Prime Minister Mintoff and President Li Xiannian.

That might be the best way to tell where we started, and where we are now.

### ENDING

This piece was completed two months after the visit.

It took me so long to finish the writing because there were so many illuminating ideas flashing across my mind that I didn't want to drop any of them. Also, there were many historical records to refer to. I helplessly fell into procrastination.

A movie came to my rescue. The blockbuster *Wolf Warrior II* moved me with its theme of patriotism, and one of the hero's lines touched my innermost heart—"Whoever inflicts harm on China will be dealt a harsh blow no matter how far away they are."

It suddenly dawned on me that I didn't have to include every spark of thought in my writing. One line may say it all: Whoever is friendly to China will be paid a courtesy call no matter how far away they are.

This is where we started, and how we ended up here.

This is the story of two generations across 40 years, and remains true forever. ■

# Seven visits in seven years: The Michigan governor and his China story

**Ba Cuicui**

"You are one of my favorite US governors," I said to Rick Snyder at the VIP lounge of Shanghai Pudong International Airport before he boarded the plane for home after winding up a nine-day visit to China. The Michigan governor was pleased by my words and took a photo with me with delight. What I said was not flattery but from the depth of my heart. Since Snyder took office in 2011, he has made a habit of visiting China every year. This year, his seventh consecutive visit (from July 31 to Aug 8), he came as the head of a delegation. I accompanied him to six cities during the nine days and was deeply impressed by the pragmatism and efficiency he demonstrated in his work, and was moved by his friendly feelings toward China and the Chinese people.

### Michigan: Birthplace of the automobile industry

The State of Michigan, an important industrial base, is located at the Great Lakes region of the midwestern United States, with Lansing as its capital and Detroit as its major city. The state is known as the automobile capital, as it is the birthplace of the industry and a major manufacturing base for cars

and trucks. The greater Detroit area is headquarters to the "Big Three" US auto giants—General Motors, Ford and Chrysler—as well as to Mazda and Volkswagen's North America Branch. The state has abundant agricultural, tourism, educational and cultural resources. It ranks second in the US in terms of agricultural diversity and has the second-longest waterline behind Alaska. It has famous universities, including the University of Michigan and Michigan State University, as well as cultural and sports groups such as the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the National Basketball Association's Detroit Pistons.

The economic development of Michigan once faced severe challenges as a result of the 2008 financial crisis. The Big Three suffered from a sluggish US mainland market. Detroit was hit badly and had to file for bankruptcy protection. The state also had to solve development problems such as traditional manufacturing industry upgrading and job creation.

Michigan and China enjoy a long history of exchanges and cooperation. Ambassador Leonard F. Woodcock, the first US ambassador to the People's Republic of China, was born in Michigan. In 1982, Michigan

established sister state/province relationship with Sichuan, which was among the earliest pairs of sister states and provinces between the two countries.

### **A forerunner and record-keeper**

Snyder assumed office in 2011 at a critical juncture in Michigan's development. He was re-elected in 2015. Before he became governor, he had worked as a university professor and an investment company manager. His connection with China began in his first term as governor. He set the precedent of an incumbent US governor to visiting China annually, and tops all governors in number of visits to China. He also made a special trip to Iowa to attend that state's welcoming reception in honor of Xi Jinping, who was China's vice-president at the time, when Xi visited that state in February 2012. He was also among the guests invited to the Third China-US

Governors Forum in Seattle in 2015, together with President Xi Jinping and Chinese provincial governors. Snyder was met by Chinese national leaders many times during his trips to China.

Under the leadership of Governor Snyder, Michigan now ranks in the top 10 US states in terms of economic performance, with a record-low unemployment rate. The city of Detroit had a rapid economic comeback. The state also enjoys fruitful cooperation with China. Many companies have successful investments in China, including General Motors, Ford, Dow Chemical, Whirlpool and other multinational companies. Chinese investment in Michigan has grown, bringing a large number of job opportunities to the state. The accumulated direct investment from China in Michigan in the past 10 years or more has hit \$2.5 billion. Last year, trade volume between Michigan and China reached \$13.14 billion, making

China the third-largest trading partner of Michigan, next to Canada and Mexico.

Snyder is proud of his commitment to developing a relationship with China, and the results that have been achieved. He said, "When I became governor, I came to realize that developing good relations with China is of critical importance to Michigan, and I decided to strengthen cooperation. That's one of the reasons behind Michigan's economic comeback. US-China cooperation is mutually beneficial. Both sides can benefit from developing trade, investment, and cultural ties with each other. I will do my best to improve US-China trade relations at the state level."

The governor places special emphasis on the significance of people-to-people friendship. He reiterated on many occasions that he traveled to China every year, not only to promote bilateral trade but also to resolve problems that have surfaced in cooperative efforts, so as to deepen understanding and friendship between the two peoples. He believed that if the two peoples can get along well with each other, and acquire mutual understanding on practical problems, then both countries will be better prepared against the common challenges of the world.

Snyder is a person of strong human feelings, having developed long-term friendships with many Chinese diplomats and officials, including CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin, Guangdong Governor Ma Xingrui and Hebei Governor Xu Qin.



**In November 2016, CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin presented Michigan State Governor Rick Snyder with the Outstanding Individual Award at the 3rd China-U.S. Sister Cities Conference.**

He also encourages the young people of Michigan to engage more in people-to-people exchanges with China. He took his youngest daughter, Kelsey, along with him on China visits three times. Kelsey loves Chinese culture and has been studying Mandarin for many years.

### **Advocate of provincial cooperation**

In the past seven years, Snyder left his footprints in the soil of many Chinese provinces and cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, Sichuan, Guangdong, Zhejiang and Liaoning. Michigan established joint working groups on trade and investment cooperation with Zhejiang, Hubei, Guangdong, Chongqing and Sichuan. In March 2016, the Michigan Strategic Fund approved a budget of \$5 million to set up the Michigan-China Innovation Center for the purpose of increasing Chinese companies' direct investment in the US.

Michigan and Sichuan province have enjoyed an active sister state/province relationship for 35 years. During Snyder's visit to China this year, Sichuan held a grand celebration to mark the 35th anniversary of the relationship. Wang Dongming, secretary of Sichuan Committee of the CPC, and Sichuan Governor Yin Li met with Snyder before the celebration. They spoke highly of the achievements made in the past 35 years of cooperation, and vowed to strengthen cooperation in areas of automobile manufacturing, information technology, agriculture, tourism, science and education. In his remarks at the celebration, Governor

Snyder said, "The real question of a successful agreement is what people think of it years later. Michigan and Sichuan are very similar in so many ways. We just happen to be separated by the Pacific Ocean. We are proud of the achievements made by the partnership, and want to thank the people who helped to twin the relationship 35 years ago."

Compared with the long-term Sichuan relationship, Michigan and Guangdong are young in the sister state/province relationship—just over one year. However, the relationship has generated significant vigor and energy. Snyder said Michigan is working hard to develop intelligent mobility and self-driving automobile technology, and would like to set up "M City"—an intelligent vehicles testing base in Guangdong. Michigan is also ready to strengthen cooperation with Guangdong in the auto industry, science innovation and cultivation of small and midsize enterprises. In May 2016, when Hu Chunhua, a member of Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and secretary of the Guangdong Committee, visited Michigan, the two sides announced the building of the Michigan-Shenzhen Innovation Center, aiming at expanding two-way trade and investment. On Snyder's trip to Guangdong this year, the two sides decided to accelerate the development of the center and deepen all-around cooperation in broad areas.

Thanks to the support of national leaders, China-US sub-national exchanges and cooperation has been booming in recent years. There are

already 48 pairs of sister provinces/states and 215 pairs of sister-city relationships established between the two countries. Both sides have strong willingness to deepen mutual cooperation. Snyder is a forerunner among US governors who came to a full awareness of the importance of developing partnerships with China and put it into action. To recognize his contribution to China-US sub-national exchanges, CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin presented him with the Outstanding Individual Award at the 3rd China-US Sister Cities Conference held in Nanchang in November 2016. In fact, there are many governors like Snyder in the US. The CPAFFC has hosted nine or 10 US governors annually in recent years. Among them were the governors of California, Arkansas, Iowa and Nebraska, all of whom have paid frequent visits to China. They may vary in personality but they share common characteristics of friendliness, pragmatism and cooperation.

Snyder is fast walker, and members of his staff often have to run to catch up with him. He sometimes thinks he won't slow down until the day he retires from work. Just as the latest mission concluded, the Michigan governor was already asking his staff to prepare for next year's trip to China. My colleagues and I are very much looking forward to this. We will warmly welcome Governor Snyder—an old friend of the Chinese people—when he steps onto the Chinese soil he is so fond of for the eighth time in the fall of 2018. ■



# The long-lasting traditional friendship

## Memories of the 25 years of diplomatic ties between China and Uzbekistan

**Hu Chunmei**

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the Republic of Uzbekistan. As a witness of the disintegration of the Soviet Union and a veteran on the front line of civil diplomacy, I saw and was personally engaged in the 25 years of friendship between China and Uzbekistan. I would like to take this opportunity to comb through the friendly and ever-deepening relations between both countries' friendship associations and in this way pay tribute to what the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Chinese Central Asia Friendship Association have done in facilitating the nongovernmental exchanges, local cooperation, people-to-people and cultural exchanges and other areas.

The Republic of Uzbekistan gained independence on Sept1, 1991. China and Uzbekistan established diplomatic relations on Jan2, 1992.

In late August 1992, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Chen Haosu, then vice-president of the CPAFFC, paid a visit to Uzbekistan and established contacts with the Uzbekistan International Association, predecessor of the Uzbekistan Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, thus laying the foundation for exchanges between the two sides. From then on, the two countries' foreign friendship organizations have kept in continuous contact and participated in and supported major activities in bilateral relations.

In the 21st century, the friendship associations of both countries became more closely linked. In 2005, the two countries signed the Treaty for China-Uzbekistan Friendly and Cooperative Partnership. In order to cement and scale up the good neighborly relations and cooperation between China and the five Central Asian countries,

including Uzbekistan, and enhance ties through civil diplomacy, the CPAFFC set up the Chinese Central Asia Friendship Association on Dec18, 2007 with the approval of the State Council. Zhang Deguang, former vice-minister of foreign affairs and first secretary-general of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, was elected the new association's president. The Uzbekistan Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries sent a special congratulatory letter. The ambassador of Uzbekistan to China and diplomatic envoys from Central Asian countries attended the reception conference with high praise for the new association's establishment.

Uzbekistan also attaches great importance to nongovernmental contacts with China. It established the Uzbekistan-China Friendship Association in 1998. The association's first president was Zamoridin Branov, president of the country's National Foreign Language University.

After its establishment, the Chinese Central Asia Friendship Association did a lot to enhance mutual understanding between the Chinese and Uzbekistan peoples and became a major force to push forward nongovernmental exchanges between the two countries. Later, the CPAFFC twice invited Kuliamov, president of the Uzbekistan Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries to visit China. Kuliamov was then minister of higher education and an academician of the Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences and had widespread influence among all walks of life. He earnestly hoped that the two friendship associations could strengthen exchanges and cooperation. Zhang Deguang, president of the Chinese Central Asia Friendship Association and Zhou Xiaopei, the vice-president, visited Uzbekistan in return.

In 2012, with the establishment of a strategic partnership, exchanges between the two Friendship Associations got on a fast track. I still remember that in late May 2012 I accompanied CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin on a friendly visit to Uzbekistan at the invitation of President Kuliamov. That visit marked the completion of mutual visits by the two associations' presidents two decades after the establishment of relationship. President Li attended the International Seminar celebrating the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the Uzbekistan Association for

Friendship with Foreign Countries and delivered a speech. During the visit, she met with Rustam Azimov, vice-premier of Uzbekistan; Usmanov, mayor of Tashkent city; Sabetova, chairman of the Forum of Culture and Arts of Uzbekistan Foundation; and Vahabov, president of the Tashkent Finance Institute and president of the China-Uzbekistan Friendship Association. President Li also visited the China-Uzbekistan Trading House, Tashkent Finance Institute and the Chinese Cultural Center. Vice-Premier Azimov said that both China and Uzbekistan boast a long history and splendid culture, and that he himself was greatly influenced by Chinese culture.

In addition, Azimov promised full support for the Uzbekistan Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the China-Uzbekistan Friendship Association to carry out exchanges with China's foreign friendship organizations, to push forward bilateral cooperation in various fields. President Li Xiaolin pointed out that civil diplomacy was an important complement to state-to-state relations.

"Countries' relations rely on mutual friendliness between the two peoples," Li said, "which constitutes the basis and guarantee for the sustainable development of national relations." She said the two countries on the ancient Silk Road had witnessed longtime nongovernmental exchanges and time-tested friendship between the two peoples.

"For thousands of years," Li said, "our two peoples learned from each other in exchanges and met each other's needs, making significant contributions to the dialogue between Western and Eastern civilizations.

"At present, the two peoples should further strengthen exchanges, enhance understanding, expand cooperation, carry forward friendship and foster friendly opinions among the public."

In Samarkand, the vice-governor of the state entertained President Li with the most well-known Samarkand bread and hand pilaf. What was more touching was that President Kuliamov specially prepared a family dinner in President Li's honor. About 10 family members, including his wife and younger brother, joined. All the delicacies on the table were cooked by his wife and family members. Throughout the meal, the hosts and guests feasted in a festive atmosphere. The hosts' gracious hospitality made the Chinese guests feel at home. At that moment, we forgot we were in a foreign country.

The Uzbekistan side also made an exception and arranged for a visit to an ordinary citizen's family at the request of President Li.

President Li and President Kuliamov signed an agreement between the two associations for cooperation in the economy, trade, science, technology, culture and education, and establishing and developing sister

cities and cooperation between local governments.

The visit triggered my nostalgia about the country. In my innermost heart there is a strong sentimental attachment to the old yet young country. Following the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Uzbekistan in 1992, I was luckily dispatched to Uzbekistan as a member of the first batch of diplomats. After leaving office in May 1993, I returned to China to continue the work of people-to-people friendship with foreign countries, a job I dearly loved.

After 19 years, I came to this familiar country again. I found the city of Tashkent had changed; so had the entire country. The city was cleaner and tidier. Towering buildings, omnipresent green belts, express trains shuttling between Tashkent and Samarkand—everything impressed me greatly. Yet the old traditions, colorful ethnic culture and gorgeous landscapes along the Silk Road remained what they used to be, as did the friendly feelings of the honest and warmhearted people of Uzbekistan toward China. Registan Square, Bibi-Khanym Mosque and other buildings still looked imposing, solemn and spectacular, with visitors awed by the profundity of history and the miracle of civilization. Meanwhile, the political stability, social solidarity and sustained economic development are mirrored in people's smiles and their evident confidence in the country's future. The visit of only a few days refreshed my knowledge of Uzbekistan. I felt the responsibility

on my shoulders as a civil envoy between the China and Uzbekistan. We who work in this field should use the platforms of the CPAFFC and Chinese Central Asia Friendship Association to foster closer feelings between the two peoples.

In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the Belt and Road Initiative, which elicited a positive response and support from the international community, including Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries. To put into practice this initiative and enhance civil diplomacy, the CPAFFC planned and implemented a host of events under the theme of “people-to-people bonds”. The moves promoted Chinese cities' exchanges and cooperation with their sister cities in Central Asian countries including Uzbekistan. Furthermore, in January 2014, 2015 and 2016 the CPAFFC invited Central Asian envoys to visit various localities in China as a regular event. Ambassadors and embassy officials from five Central Asian countries, including the then-Uzbekistan Ambassador to China Qurbanov, went to Fujian, Hainan and Guizhou provinces for investigations. A China-Central Asian Cooperation Dialogue was held twice, respectively, in Lanzhou, Gansu province, and Sanya, Hainan province. Ambassador Qurbanov made a special trip to Lanzhou to attend and address the meeting. Ishanhozarev, vice-president of the Uzbekistan Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, and Akramova, president of the Bukhara

Municipal Federation of Sister Cities, attended the dialogue in Haikou, during which they introduced the renowned historical city of Bukhara, sparking heated discussions and praise. A number of other events were held, including a roundtable conference themed “Strategic Partnership Between China and Uzbekistan”; the Symposium of Medical Experts from China and Uzbekistan; the Silk Road and Silk Town exhibition of paintings by Chinese and Uzbek children held in Jiaying, China; and the Exhibition of Chinese Cartoon Art held in Tashkent. In addition, the CPAFFC also conducted more frequent exchanges of personnel with the Uzbekistan Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Uzbekistan-China Association for Friendship, with both sides repeatedly sending delegations to each other's country.

In 2016, the China-Uzbekistan relationship was upgraded to a comprehensive strategic partnership, which provided a broader stage for civil exchanges between the two countries. The CPAFFC continued to enrich and deepen the nongovernmental exchanges by organizing a series of activities, such as the Seminar on the 25th Anniversary of the Independence of Uzbekistan and Development of Relations between China and Uzbekistan. The CPAFFC also accorded support to the establishment of four pairs of sister provinces (states) and cities, promoted friendly cooperation between Luoyang and Bukhara and made friends with the Uzbek Care for the Next Generation

Foundation. The CPAFFC also arranged for Mr Chen Yuan, vice-chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and honorary president of the Chinese Central Asia Friendship Association, to visit Uzbekistan. I also went to the country to observe the presidential election in the capacity of international observer.

In January 2017, a grand reception was held at the Diaoyutai State Guest House by the CPAFFC to celebrate the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the other five Central Asian countries including Uzbekistan. On March 22, 2017, as part of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Uzbekistan, the CPAFFC and Uzbekistan Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries as well as the Chinese Embassy in Uzbekistan jointly held a seminar entitled "Vista of China and Uzbekistan Jointly Building the Silk Road Economic Belt" in Tashkent. The seminar was chaired by Hajimatov, president of the Uzbekistan Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. Sun Lijie, China's ambassador to Uzbekistan; Kasimov, minister of higher education and president of the China-Uzbekistan Friendship Association; Akmal Saidov, director of the Ukrainian National Human Rights Center; and Faturanayev, director of the Asia Pacific Bureau of Uzbekistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, attended the seminar and addressed the opening ceremony. Some 100 representatives

and friends from all walks of life, including academic circles, education, industry and media reviewed the achievements in cooperation the two countries had made in the past 25 years. They also discussed various topics related to the building of the Belt and Road and put forward suggestions.

Ambassador Sun spoke highly of a string of policies made by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev since he took office, while introducing the remarkable achievements made in the building of the Belt and Road. He noted that the two countries' heads of state had reached an important consensus on promoting the sustained and sound development of the comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Uzbekistan and the deepening of bilateral cooperation in various fields.

Kasimov pointed out that in recent years, China and Uzbekistan had worked closely in the fields of investment, transportation, energy, infrastructure construction and humanities, and that the exchanges in higher education and youth had been unfolding in a flourishing manner. He stressed that the teaching of Chinese and Uzbek languages played a pivotal role in promoting cultural exchanges and mutual understanding between the two peoples, with more and more youths joining the friendship building between the two countries. Moreover, he spoke highly of the important contributions made by the CPAFFC and Chinese Central Asia Friendship Association to the nongovernmental

exchanges, saying that the Uzbekistan-China Friendship Associations would work together with friends from all walks of life to make unremitting efforts for friendship promotion.

Saidov noted that China's Belt and Road Initiative had received a positive response from many countries along the Eurasian route and that the initiative was in line with the development interests of all countries and thus conducive to promotion in the great spirit of the Silk Road.

On behalf of the CPAFFC and Chinese Central Asia Friendship Association, I addressed the opening ceremony of the seminar, reviewing the results yielded by the friendship promotion organizations of the two countries over the past 25 years. I emphasized the important role both countries' friendship associations had played in promoting people-to-people exchanges, while expressing hope for more cooperation between the two associations in the future.

During the seminar discussions, scholars from both countries expressed opinions on politics, economics, trade, archaeology, tourism, transportation, think tanks, education, humanities and local issues. The speeches were highlighted by such buzzwords as "the rapid development of bilateral cooperation in various fields", "the implementation of key projects", "active nongovernmental exchanges", "Uzbekistan development strategy" and "Silk Road Economic Belt". All the speakers agreed that the two countries' cooperation is seeing



unprecedented opportunities and that the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative is injecting fresh vitality into the cooperation between Uzbekistan and China while meeting the interests of all the countries in the region.

Attending the seminar gave me the understanding that the congenial, friendly mutual feelings flowing in the two peoples have become a strong social force and foundation propping up the development of bilateral relations. Personally, I have long been working for promoting nongovernmental exchanges with the Uzbek people. That has deepened my friendly feelings toward the country.

Over the past 25 years, the friendship organizations of the two countries have taken each other as important cooperative partners. They have jointly established a bridge of friendship between the two peoples by developing mutual understanding and trust. I'm convinced that under the strategic guidance of both countries' leaders and with a solid foundation of civil friendship, the towering tree of the China-Uzbekistan relationship will grow higher and higher with luxuriant foliage. Meanwhile, I also hope that our friend Uzbekistan will make greater achievements in the great cause of national development. I wish for the friendly civil cooperation between our two countries to become even more fruitful. May the friendship between our two peoples be evergreen. ■

## A little-known history of 170 years of struggle by Cuban Chinese

**Chen Kuanghuai**

**I**n June, at Havana Jose Marty International Airport, enclosed with red walls, Caridad Diego, a member of the Cuban Communist Party Central Committee and president of the Cuba-China Friendship Association, welcomed the delegation led by Ma Peihua, vice-chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and president of the China-Latin America and Caribbean Friendship Association. The delegation made a special trip to attend an activity marking the arrival of Chinese people in Cuba 170 years ago.

A ship—*Oquendo*—carrying 206 Chinese laborers arrived in Havana Harbor in the Legras District on June 3, 1847. Twelve days later, the British sailboat *Duke of Argyll*, with 365 Chinese laborers on board, sailed into the harbor, marking the start of flood of Chinese laborers pouring into Cuba. They began the glorious history of the Chinese people's contribution to that country's development with their sweat and blood.

According to historical records, among the Chinese arriving in Cuba in the mid-19th century were many former soldiers of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom movement. At that time, Hong Kong and other southeastern coastal ports in China that were not under the jurisdiction of the Qing government were ideal transfer stations for the Taiping officers and soldiers seeking asylum abroad. Thus, a number of Chinese with fighting experience and a rebellious spirit came to Cuba as laborers.

When the Chinese first landed on the island of Cuba, the Cuban nation had not yet been formed; racial mixing of the Spanish colonists and local blacks on the island had been happening for a long time. Because of the Spanish authorities' obstruction, it took a long time for the Chinese to get into the racial integration.

The locally born Cubans longed for independence and freedom—to break from the control of the suzerain and the fetters of slavery. For three

decades, from 1868 to 1898, the Cuban people fought a war against Spanish colonial rule. The Chinese-Cubans, sick of exploitation, also responded positively to the call of war for the sake of self-respect and freedom. None of them ceased fighting but continued to the very end. They refused to accept the Treaty of Zanjón, which was signed by the Spanish army and the Cuban insurgents. With regard to the deeds of the Chinese laborers, General Quesada, who participated in the war, wrote a memoir entitled *Chinese and Cuban Independence*. Following is a soul-stirring passage from the book:

“In the tragic and heroic war Cubans fought for national independence, the Chinese fought like

fierce tigers on the battlefields. They worked hard in factories to improve the fighting conditions for Cuban soldiers. They endured starvation and all hardships in the war. Once captured, they faced death unflinchingly. They shed their last drop of blood munificently for Cuban independence. They were not desirous of any personal fame or gain, nor did they crave for flowers of gratitude. If we could set up a monument for the Chinese in the future, let’s engrave these words in praise of their sacrifice: Not a single Chinese-Cuban was deserter and not a single Chinese-Cuban was traitor.”

In October 1931, in honor of the Chinese martyrs in the Cuban War of Independence, the Cuban people set up

a black marble column—the Monument to the Chinese Who Fought for the Cuban Independence—which measures 8 meters high and 2 meters in diameter. An inscription on the monument captures the famous words of General Quesada: “Not a single Chinese-Cuban was deserter and not a single Chinese-Cuban was traitor.”

Yet, that was not the end of the Chinese-Cubans’ revolutionary history. Following the July 26 Movement in 1953, hundreds of Chinese joined the revolutionary troops led by the Castro brothers and Che Guevara. The struggle against dictatorship surged like rainstorms. Three Chinese fighters were promoted to the rank of major general. One of them was General Shao Huang, the late chairman of Cuba-Chinese Friendship Association.

After the success of the revolution, Castro asked Shao Huang face-to-face how many Chinese took part in the Cuban War of Independence and revolution. Shao replied that the exact number might never be known because many of the Chinese used Spanish names. Among all the Chinese communities in Latin American countries, Chinese-Cubans were most related to the locals (including Hispanic whites and indigenous blacks) by marriage; hence it was common that they changed their names.

In the past 170 years, the footprints of the Chinese could be seen across sugarcane plantations, factories, villages and the battlefields of wars



On June 3, 2017, an art performance was held in commemoration of the 170th anniversary of the Chinese people’s arrival in Cuba.

for independence and revolution. They developed friendly and harmonious relations with the Cuban people. In their prime, the number of Chinese hit more than 120,000. There was a Chinatown consisting of 40 blocks in Havana, one of the largest in the Americas.

Walking on a street in Cuba, you can often hear people call you “Cheeno” or “Cheena” (meaning Chinese); some people even venture to talk to you. It’s fair to say that in Cuba the friendliness toward Chinese people can be felt everywhere. The Cuban people’s good impression of China is admittedly related to the improvement of relations between China and Cuba from the 1990s, and the selfless

assistance China has given to Cuba in its difficult times. It is also due to the fact that Chinese have always had a good reputation in Cuba, and that they made great contributions at all stages of the Cuban revolution.

China-Latin America and Caribbean Friendship Association President Ma delivered an enthusiastic speech at the ceremony marking the 170th anniversary of the arrival of Chinese in Havana Harbor, saying that Cuba was the first country in Latin America to establish diplomatic relations with China and that ever since the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1960, Cuba-China relations have withstood the test of international vicissitudes. He said the

friendship between the two countries is deeply rooted in the hearts of the two peoples.

“Over the past 170 years,” Ma said, “the Chinese in Cuba overcame hardships to integrate themselves into Cuban society and valiantly took part in the Cuban Revolutionary War. They made remarkable contributions to the economic and social development of Cuba.”

He said Chinese people were willing to work with the Cuban people to remain “good comrades with sincerity, good friends in long-term cooperation and good brothers with mutual trust”. He added that China would like to deepen its traditional friendship, expand mutually beneficial cooperation and strengthen exchanges and mutual learning. He called for strengthening nongovernmental exchanges, with a wider scope and at a deeper level “to benefit the two peoples”.

Billy Atlantis, the Cuban author of the book *Chinese in Havana*, once said: “There are few Cubans of pure Chinese blood. Most are descendants of Chinese and Hispanic or African Cubans. But this matters little for Cuba; what’s important is that the Chinese have become a part of our population. The three ethnic cultures have completely intermingled with one another to make up the Cuban population and make us different from other Latin American countries.”

May the China-Cuba friendship be evergreen! ■



A glimpse of Havana

# Ambassador Han Xu and his friendship with George H. W. Bush

**Bian Qingzu**

From 1985 to 1989, my wife, Han Wenjun, and I were in the United States working at the Chinese embassy in Washington, DC, which marked the second time I had been assigned a permanent post in China's diplomatic mission in that country. Our tenure coincided with the two countries' "honeymoon", which followed the establishment of diplomatic relations. Not only did we witness several important developments in bilateral relations but we also took part in a few parties given by Chinese Ambassador to the United States Han Xu in honor of George H.W. Bush and his wife. We were witnesses to the special friendship between the ambassador and Bush.

From 1979, when China and the United States officially established diplomatic relations, until the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, the two countries enjoyed a period of intimate relations, and there was substantial and rapid growth. Politically, the leaders of the two countries made visits on another frequently, with Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping and President Li Xiannian

visiting the US, and with US President Ronald Reagan and Vice-President George H.W. Bush coming to China. Not only did the two countries conduct exchanges frequently in science and technology, culture and education for cooperation, but great progress was made in exchanges between the two militaries. Top military leaders from both sides made many mutual visits, resulting in a number of cooperative projects in military technology and the selling of Black Hawk helicopters to China. In particular, China and the United States maintained sound momentum in economic exchanges and trade. In 1981, trade between the two countries reached \$5.5 billion, which rose to \$9 billion in 1986 and exceeded \$20 billion annually in the early 1990s. In 1986, the total amount of US direct investment in China stood at \$2 billion, making it the largest foreign investor in China at that time. All those cooperation projects enhanced understanding between the two nations. That period was hailed as the "honeymoon" in bilateral relations. Some American scholars even claimed

that the two countries were tacit allies.

The mutual friendliness between the two peoples created favorable conditions for bilateral diplomacy in the 1980s. The relaxed social climate helped Chinese diplomats make friends widely in the US, as had been urged by Premier Zhou Enlai. Zhou told Chinese diplomatic personnel that the primary job of diplomacy is to manage public relations. "The more friends, the better," he said.

Speaking of making friends in the US, one should not forget Ambassador Han, who was also former president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. Han set a good example in carrying out Zhou's idea of making friends as widely as possible. The number of Americans Han succeeded at befriending was the most of all those made by staff members at the Chinese embassy. In diplomatic activities organized by the embassy, such as the National Day reception, hundreds or even thousands of guests usually attended. Han could recognize almost half of them—an ability that should



be attributed to his meticulous work style. Every time the event concluded, he would make special marks on the back of each of the business cards he had received. Next time they met, he could not only address them and their spouses by the right name but could also mention their particular interests and hobbies. Han kept many notebooks in which he recorded the details of every guest he met. Upon seeing an acquaintance, he might say: "Today is your father's birthday, and this bunch of flowers is for him." This practice won him many friends.

Whenever a banquet was given in his name, Han would pay great

attention to every detail. Once he invited Henry Sailer, vice-president of the National Committee on US-China Relations, to dinner. Browsing the menu beforehand, he told the chef: "Henry likes dry-fried meatballs. Add this dish to the menu." That not only deeply moved Henry but also taught me a lot. The impressions Han left with his American friends were of friendliness, warm-heartedness, sincerity, diligence, easiness of approach and personal charisma.

Of all the friends Han made in the US, George H.W. Bush was the most special, and most intimate. He made acquaintance with Bush while serving

as deputy director of the Liaison Office in the US in the 1970s. After Bush assumed the post of director of the Liaison Office of the United States in China, he had more contacts with Ambassador Han than before. And their friendship grew closer after Han became Chinese ambassador to the US in 1985. At the time, Bush was vice-president of the country. The reunion of old friends developed into a private relationship that lasted 10 years until Han's death in 1994. In 1978, Bush announced at a banquet that even if he were elected US president, he and his wife would attend any family banquet Han prepared for them.



**The author (far right) and his wife (red dress) with Mr and Mrs Bush**

The American diplomatic practice was that the president and vice-president seldom attended any activities in foreign embassies, let alone banquets hosted by ambassadors. However, during Han's tenure in the US, Vice-President Bush made an exception and visited the Chinese ambassador's residence annually around New Year's Day. That made ambassadors of other countries envious.

What was even more special was that after the success of his presidential election in November 1988, Bush made a visit to the Chinese ambassador's residence to celebrate Christmas with his Chinese friends at the invitation of Han, which was really exceptional in the history of American diplomacy. At the banquet, Han spoke highly of Mr and Mrs Bush's feelings toward the Chinese people and congratulated Bush on his election victory. He expressed hope that China-US relations would see healthier and more stable development on the basis of the two countries' three joint communiqués after Bush assumed office. Bush said that even before he officially assumed the presidency, he had already felt the Chinese people's friendly feelings on many occasions. He added that he was willing to respect the three joint communiqués and maintain a "robust relationship" between the two countries. He also enthusiastically said that after taking office he would first make a visit to China to see Deng Xiaoping, whom he respected greatly. He told Han in private that even the US State Department did not know about the plan. It was obviously against the

usual practice for a new president to appear in Beijing before visiting any allies. Bush announced his visit to China one week after he was sworn in as president. Later, Mr and Mrs Bush met with Deng during their visit in China.

In the eyes of Bush, Ambassador Han made manifold remarkable contributions to the promotion of China-US relations, calling him "an outstanding representative of China". When Han died in 1994 while serving as president of the CPAFFC, Bush and his wife sent a message of condolence, which read: "Mr Han Xu was a good man who could deal with thorny problems skillfully and it was pleasing to work with him." The message of condolence was handwritten by Bush rather than printed.

During his tenure in Washington, Han hosted a banquet every year before Christmas, and Mr and Mrs Bush and their relatives and friends would gather. To create a friendly and festive atmosphere, Han asked the embassy staff to give some performances after dinner. My wife, Han Wenjun, was a soprano singer in the PLA General Political Department Ensemble and thus was a perfect performer on that occasion. But there was no piano in the ambassador's residence. Fortunately, I was an amateur accordion player, so I accompanied my wife and other impromptu performers at the party. She and I participated in such top-level diplomatic activities three times, and those are highlights in my life that I will never forget.

On Dec 23, 1986, then-US Vice-President Bush came to the Chinese ambassador's residence for Christmas at the invitation of Ambassador Han. The entourage comprised more than a dozen people, including Bush's wife, Barbara. At this season of the year, many American guests were invited to celebrate Christmas at embassies of different countries in the serene and elegant embassy area of Washington, DC. Vice-President Bush was no doubt the most unusual of them. After arriving at the Chinese ambassador's residence, Bush shook hands with everybody and then talked with Han for a long while before finally getting seated at the dinner table. Their talk during the banquet centered on Bush's old days in Beijing. Bush spoke a lot about his impressions of China and Beijing when he was director of the US Liaison Office. Among the highlights that night were the songs sung by my wife. I played accordion in "tacit understandings" with her. When we sang the famous Chinese folk song *Rendezvous at a Mound*, Bush asked the embassy staff if the woman singer had been specially invited from China. Staff members told him that Han Wenjun is the wife of Mr Bian and a singer by profession—and that both were members of the embassy staff. Bush was glad to hear it and took the lead in offering applause. When he left, he shook hands with both Wenjun and me. "You sang very well and I had a wonderful Christmas this year," he said. At this point, Ambassador Han invited Bush to come to the embassy

for Christmas the following year. Bush readily accepted the invitation. For three years in a row, Bush indeed came to the Chinese embassy for Christmas.

The second of the three top-level diplomatic activities I mentioned above took place on Jan 5 the following year. Mr Bush invited Ambassador Han and his wife, along with counsellor Yang Jiechi and his wife, to visit his official residence. In the invitation message, he specifically mentioned: "Don't forget to invite that singing couple to come over. My family and I love to hear them sing." The vice-presidential residence was not far from our embassy—just a few blocks away. Since Han was otherwise engaged that day due to an important appointment made a few days earlier, my wife and I, together with Mr and Mrs Yang, went to Bush's home without him. (The Bushes lived in the vice-president's residence, but the vice-president's office was at the far west end of the White House's West Wing.) The residence was built in 1893 and was originally intended for the superintendent of the US Naval Observatory. It's a beautiful two-story home with a white exterior. In 1974, the US Congress decided to refurbish it as the vice-presidential residence. The house—which measures 850 square meters—is much smaller than the 5,100 square-meter White House, the residence of the president.

When we four arrived at Bush's house, the first things to meet our eyes were the spacious hall and fireplace. "Have a look at my living room," Bush said. The residence was not as

lavish and luxurious as one might expect. There stood an impressive cupboard suggestive of Bush's feelings about China—a display cabinet full of Chinese antiques he bought when he was serving in China. On that day, Bush also invited several top American officials and a soprano from the US Air Force.

On Dec 22, 1988, as he was about to take office as US president, Bush visited the Chinese embassy once more to celebrate Christmas with his Chinese friends. Mr and Mrs Bush brought along 16 family members, including their youngest son, Marvin, and Bush's cousin Mary. All the guests appeared relaxed and happy, and Bush himself was buoyant.

To express congratulations on his election, the chefs had prepared a rich banquet that included roast duck, fried noodles, shark's fin soup and rice dumplings. The guests chatted amid ripples of mirth, relishing the Chinese dishes.

For the after-dinner entertainment, Jiang Chengzong, the embassy counsellor recited an acrostic poem he wrote for the occasion, an English translation of which reads: "Gathering before the New Year in Hanjia village, we are more than joyfully reveling in wine and fine dishes; Bush is blessed before the auspicious New Year, while Barbara wins American hearts amid cheers." The poem containing the names of Han Xu and the Bushes produced a radiant response from the president-elect and his wife, with broad smiles and guests resounding with

laughter. My wife, Han Wenjun, sang *Upon A Christmas Night*, which was a popular song of the Christmas season in the United States. Mr and Mrs Bush sat in the sofa side by side, and it was all quiet in the hall as everybody enjoyed the melodious song and my violin accompaniment. Wenjun sang in English, prompting warm applause. Barbara was noticed with tears in her eyes, presumably moved by the religious elements in the song and the fact that a Chinese could sing this Christmas song so naturally. Later, all the Chinese sang *Jingle Bells* and *You Are My Sunshine* to the excitement of the guests.

In the end, Mrs Ge Qiyun, Ambassador Han's wife, presented Barbara Bush with a mirror frame with a red ribbon upon which was written two Chinese characters—"Dragon" and "Eagle"—beside a line of smaller characters reading: "May the China-US friendship last forever." Barbara embraced Ge warmly and scrupulously studied the three Chinese characters representing her name.

On Dec 25, the *People's Daily* published a special report entitled *Gathering before the New Year in Hanjia Village*, which was reprinted or quoted by newspapers in the US.

Thirty years later, a few of us embassy colleagues who were present that day gathered for a reunion. We could vividly remember every detail of that wonderful evening of Dec 22, 1988, an evening that deserves a few lines in the history of China-US diplomatic relations. ■

# Jointly building a community of shared future for all mankind

**An Xinzhu**

**T**he world is facing serious dilemmas in its push for further growth, such as insufficient impetus to drive economic growth, the gap between rich and poor, the prevalence of protectionism and global governance that needs to be improved. The question remains: How to work together to promote common prosperity and inject new impetus to boost sustained economic growth?

“In promoting mutually beneficial cooperation, we should raise awareness on building a community of shared future for all mankind. A country should accommodate the legitimate concerns of others when pursuing its own interests; and it should promote common development of all countries when advancing its own. Countries should establish a new type of global development partnership that is more equitable and balanced, stick together in times of difficulty, share all rights as well as shoulder all obligations, and boost the common interests of humankind.” This is quoted from the report adopted by the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in November 2012, which attracted the world’s attention.

## **An increasingly clear notion**

“It is a world where countries

are linked with and dependent on one another at a level never seen before. Humankind, by living in the same global village within the same time and space where history and reality meet, has increasingly emerged as an intimate community of shared future,” said President Xi Jinping. He first made the remarks about sharing with the world China’s perspective on the future development of human civilization in his speech delivered at Moscow State Institute of International Relations during his first overseas trip after becoming China’s president in March 2013.

The response from international society showed that Xi’s understanding of the future development of the whole world and human society is “far-sighted”. The concept of building a community of shared future for all mankind has struck a chord with the rest of the world.

In a series of conferences and major events in the ensuing years, Xi expounded on the notion repeatedly. All the remarks he has made and what he has called for over the past five years— “an intimate community where everyone is interlinked”; “there is only one Earth in the universe and we, humankind, have only one homeland”; “foster a keen sense of a global

community of shared future”; “let the awareness of a community of common destiny take root in the neighboring countries”; “create and fulfill an Asia-Pacific dream”; and “move toward a community of common destiny and a new future for Asia”— have made the concept of building a community of shared future for all humankind a global notion that has surpassed national boundaries and the constraints of nationality and ideology. China’s influence on regional cooperation and global governance has been expanded from merely an institutional aspect to a spiritual level.

On May 18, 2015, People’s Daily, the flagship newspaper of the CPC, published an article by Guo Jiping, to elaborate on the concept of a community of shared future for all mankind. The article pointed out that China has expressed its wish for peaceful development through this global notion that has surpassed the constraints of nationality and ideology.

The article, entitled Promise of a Better Future for the World, noted that there are divergences and conflicts when pursuing different state interests, religious beliefs, ideologies and social systems. However, we are all humans, and people are the subject of any historical activity. Countries with



different beliefs, systems and ethnic groups can coexist peacefully and compete with each other equally and in an orderly fashion, so that the common interests outweigh divergences and confrontations and the people can rationally decide the future of the world.

### **A new model of international relations based on win-win cooperation**

British historian Arnold Joseph Toynbee said: “If the CPC can blaze a new path in its social and economic strategies, then it can prove its capacity to endow a gift on China and the world. The gift will be a combination of the vitality of modern Western society and the stability of traditional Chinese cul-

ture.”

The notion of building a community of shared future for all humankind is probably part of this gift.

In September 2015, Xi delivered a comprehensive elaboration on the notion when he attended summits marking the 70th anniversary of the United Nations’ founding in New York. He pointed out that efforts should be made to establish a partnership in which countries treat each other as equals with mutual consultation and mutual understanding; build a security pattern featuring fairness and justice that is contributed to and shared jointly by all nations; strive for open, innovative, and inclusive development that benefits all; advance inter-civilization exchanges featuring inclusiveness and harmony amid diversity; and build an ecosystem that puts nature and green development

first.

His elaboration made the overall plan for building a community of shared future for all humankind clear. It depicted the bright prospects of international relations and presented the innovation of major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics.

Following the traditional Chinese doctrine of “the unity of knowing and acting”, China has become a pioneer and contributor in realizing this notion through its actions. Over the past 30 or so years since the implementation of the reform and opening-up policy, China has climbed from the 10th-largest to the second-largest economy in the world, with its contribution to total world economic growth at around 30 percent annually, proving its commitment to development. Meanwhile, China has lifted more than 700 million people out of poverty in the past three decades—which amounts to more than 70 percent of global poverty reduction over that period.

From a political aspect, China insists on a new approach to state-to-state relations that features dialogue rather than confrontation and partnerships instead of alliances. Efforts should be made to seek common ground while shelving differences. Countries need to respect other countries’ unique social systems and development paths, as well as respect each other’s core interests and major concerns. Countries may differ in size, strength or level of development, but we should discuss and look for solutions together on matters that involve us all. China takes the



**President Xi Jinping delivers a speech—“Working Together to Create a New Mutually Beneficial Partnership and Community of Shared Future for All Mankind”—at the general debate of the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York on Sept28, 2015.**

lead among major countries to make “establishing a partnership” a guiding principle of building international relations. So far, it has established partnerships with more than 80 countries, regions and regional organizations. A partnership network between China and the rest of the world has begun to take shape.

On security issues, China calls for abandoning the outdated Cold War mentality in all forms and fostering a new vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security. As people of all countries become increasingly interdependent, no country could ensure its own security without also ensuring the security of other countries or of the wider world. Therefore, all countries should play a constructive role in safeguarding global and regional stability. Guided by the new vision of security, China is working hard to provide solutions to regional hotspot issues. It has actively participated in the UN’s peacekeeping operations by sending the highest number of peacekeepers of all the five permanent members of the Security Council and contributing the greatest amount of money to the UN peacekeeping budget as a developing country.

Regarding the economy, China calls for open, innovative, and inclusive development that benefits all to achieve win-win cooperation and common development. China supports the establishment of a more open economy and firmly boosts free trade and investment by promoting the facilitation of trade and investment and opposing protec-

tionism. Against the anti-globalization movement, China calls for eliminating gaps between countries and allowing people around the world to share the fruits of development together.

For cultural exchanges, China strives to promote exchanges between different civilizations and different development models, so that we can learn from each other for common progress. “Different civilizations represent different wisdom and are made up of contributions from different nationalities. They are equal, with none superior or inferior. We should respect all civilizations, treat each other as equals, learn from each other and take in each other’s excellent essence so as to promote human civilization toward creative development,” President Xi Jinping said in a speech delivered to the Peruvian Congress in November 2016.

To encourage green development, China has made significant efforts to promote the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. China takes the lead among the world’s biggest carbon emitters in starting domestic procedures to ratify the Paris Agreement. Patricia Espinosa Cantellano, executive secretary of the UNFCCC, said during her visit to China at the end of August 2017 that China is one of the most important leaders in tackling global climate change, noting that the country has made positive efforts in line with its green development concept. She added that China plays a leading role, especially in promoting the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

### **Sincere partner for developing countries**

Building a community of shared future for all humankind starts in surrounding countries. The Boao Forum for Asia witnessed the concept of an Asian community of shared future.

During the annual meeting of the Boao Forum for Asia in 2013, President Xi stressed “firmly establishing the consciousness of a community of shared future”. He then delivered an important speech to the Indonesian parliament, and proposed five major initiatives to build the “China-ASEAN community of shared future”. At the Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs in 2014, President Xi stressed the need to create a “community of shared future in surrounding countries”.

The theme of the Boao Forum for Asia in 2015 was “Asia’s New Future: Toward a Community of Shared Future”. At the opening ceremony, Xi once again explained the proposition to “march toward the community of shared future and create a new future in Asia”. The forum is regarded as a symbol of Asian solidarity by foreign media.

The concept also reaches Africa and Latin America across the ocean.

In March 2013, when President Xi gave an address in Tanzania, he said that China and Africa have the same historical experience, development tasks and strategic interests of a community of shared future. His 30-minute speech won 30 rounds of applause.

In July 2014, Xi visited Brazil

and met with leaders of Latin American and Caribbean countries. In his speech—“Strive to Build a Community of Shared Future”—he proposed a new pattern between China and Latin America, and called for the creation of the “Sino-Latin American community of shared future”.

As China is a developing country, its diplomatic work has never neglected the common progress of other developing countries. It believes that only joint self-improvement can allow developing countries to go to the center of the world stage. During the 2016 G20 Summit in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, China invited developing countries to speak. During the BRICS 2017 meeting, the Chinese side hosted a dialogue between emerging market economies and developing countries, with the aim of building a network of partners and a community of common development and shared future.

The concept of “community of shared future” has extended from the real world to virtual space.

According to international media, building a community of shared future has become China’s new diplomatic strategy, even the new blueprint to establish a fair international order.

### **Contributing Chinese wisdom**

The community of shared future is rooted in the inheritance of thousands of years of Chinese culture.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi pointed out that the concept is rooted in the long history of Chinese civilization and China’s magnificent

diplomatic practice, in line with various countries’ sincere desire and lofty pursuit of peace, development and cooperation.

The Chinese people have said, “The world is a commonwealth.” The community of shared future resonates not only with the Chinese philosophy of life, diplomatic traditions and the contemporary era but also with the pursuit of better lives for the people of other countries.

In the China Hall of the United Nations Headquarters hang two Chinese paintings—Interactive World and Home of Us All. According to former United Nations secretary-general Ban Ki-moon, the two paintings reflect the important role of China in the peaceful development of the world. China is not only the advocate of the community of shared future but also a responsible practitioner.

On Sept 28, 2015, at the UN headquarters, President Xi stated: “We are going to inherit and carry forward the purposes and principles of the charter of the United Nations, build a new type of international relations centered on win-win cooperation and build a community of shared future for mankind.” This was the first time that he had elaborated the concept at the United Nations.

On Jan 18, 2017, Xi delivered an important speech entitled “Jointly Build a Community of Shared Future for Mankind” at the United Nations office at Geneva, and clearly put forward China’s approach to building a community of shared future to achieve win-

win results. In February, the concept was first written into a United Nations resolution. One month later, at the 34th meeting of United Nations Human Rights Council, China, on behalf of 140 countries, issued a joint statement entitled “Work Together to Promote and Protect Human Rights and Build a Community of Shared Future for Mankind”.

China has not only provided a unique vision to promote the progress of world civilization, but also put forward the “China approach” to this idea.

Proposed more than three years ago, the Belt and Road Initiative has entered the new stage of action and implementation. The circle of friends along the Belt and Road is expanding. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has gained plentiful and substantial achievements since its establishment. As a growing number of Chinese initiatives have met with international consensus, a series of constructive public goods have emerged to benefit the world.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres expressed great appreciation for the idea put forward by President Xi. “China has become an important pillar of multilateralism, and the purpose of multilateralism is to establish a community of shared future for all mankind,” Guterres said. ■

*From China Today*

# Premier, Bill Gates discuss safe, reliable energy breakthroughs

Hu Yongqi

Premier Li Keqiang pledged his support on Nov 3 to further promote nuclear energy cooperation between China and the United States and develop safe and reliable breakthrough technologies.

The premier spoke during a meeting in Beijing with Bill Gates, chairman of TerraPower and founder of Microsoft.

Li spoke positively of the cooperation the two nations have had in research and development on new-generation nuclear power technologies. He said he was exhilarated to learn about the establishment of a joint R&D venture on traveling-wave reactors, a new

breakthrough in the field.

Li emphasized that safety is an essential prerequisite in nuclear power development and that the new technology must be reliable and secure.

The premier also said that the new industrial revolution is proceeding to a higher level as the internet provides vital support. He said China is carrying out innovation-driven development and making use of the Internet Plus Initiative, both of which involve promoting new technologies and integrating them with traditional industries to accelerate economic transformation and upgrading.

“We wish to further international cooperation and achieve technological breakthroughs by developing China’s advantage of rich talent resources and by using internet-based platforms,” he said.

New-generation nuclear power technology is vital for mankind to develop energy in the future, and the energy supply must be kept clean, safe and reliable, Gates said. He said he appreciates the cooperation with

Chinese companies and is willing to make the wishes become a reality with an open attitude.

A traveling-wave reactor is a fourth-generation technology that can directly process depleted uranium, natural uranium, thorium, spent fuel from light-water reactors or combinations of these materials, which allows the reactor to use fuel in a more efficient way.

China National Nuclear Co signed an agreement with TerraPower in September 2015 to jointly develop traveling-wave reactors, the first time such cooperation has been undertaken since 1985, when China and the US signed a cooperative agreement in nuclear energy. A joint venture was established by the two companies and some other Chinese energy suppliers in September 2017.

The joint venture aims to build and operate small, medium and large power plants using traveling-wave reactors in the next 20 years. They are expected to reduce costs by 20 percent from existing, third-generation nuclear power plants. ■

*From China Daily*



Bill Gates



# Brief Biography of Rewi Alley

## Department of American & Oceanian Affairs

Rewi Alley (Dec 2, 1897-Dec 27, 1987), a well-known New Zealand writer, educator and social reformer, was born in the small town of Springfield in Canterbury, New Zealand. As a young man, Alley fought in World War I, after which he returned to New Zealand and engaged in



Rewi Alley in his later years

livestock farming.

In 1927, he came to China. Seeing the social turmoil and miserable living conditions of its people, he decided to devote himself to their fight for change. In the 1930s, he joined Shanghai's first international Marxist learning group and supported the underground struggle of the Communist Party of China, disregarding his own safety. At the beginning of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, he initiated the Gung Ho movement, together with Edward Snow, Snow's wife and a few other Chinese and foreign friends. They overcame untold difficulties to organize laid-off workers and refugees displaced by the Japanese invasion, and set up various manufacturing cooperatives to support China's military and civilian needs. He contributed a great deal to the guerrilla warfare led by the CPC.

After 1942, Alley turned his main attention to training the management and technical talent needed in the Gung Ho movement. He founded the Shandan Bailie School with George Hogg, trying to explore and develop a new approach to education—work-study pro-

grams with emphasis on the combined use of hands and brain—suitable for China's national conditions.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, Alley traveled across the country for social investigation. He wrote many reports introducing the world to the changes and achievements of the new China, and committed himself to the maintenance of world peace and friendship between people of different countries. He published 53 books in New Zealand and China, translated and published many ancient Chinese classics and played a unique role in promoting mutual understanding and friendship between the people of China, New-Zealand and the rest of the world, winning international prestige. To help with cultural and educational development in Northwest China, he donated more than 4,000 cultural relics from his personal collection to Shandan. Thanks to his tireless efforts, Chinese industrial cooperatives resumed work in 1983, and the International Committee for the Promotion of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives was re-established in 1987 after 35 years of

suspension. Alley served as chairman of the committee and took charge of the daily work in person.

Throughout his 60 years in China, Alley shared weal and woe with the Chinese people and established friendships with Chinese revolutionary veterans. He devoted his entire life to the cause of the Chinese people. As a writer, educator and social reformer, he made important contributions to China's revolution and construction at all stages in the fields of politics, economy, culture and education, winning won great respect and love from the Chinese people. His selfless dedication and hard work earned him well-deserved recognition in his later years. He was awarded numerous honorary titles for his many achievements as a writer, poet, social activist, historian, archaeologist, educator, Father of Gung Ho and bridge builder between New Zealand and China. He was awarded the Queen's Service Order, Honorary Citizen of Beijing, Honorary Citizen of Gansu province and various other honorary degrees. Deng Xiaoping called him "an old soldier, old friend and old comrade of the Chinese people".

Alley died in Beijing on Dec 27, 1987. Dengwrote an inscription: "Long live a great fighter for internationalism."

In 2009, Alley was named one of the Top Ten International Friends of China for his great contribution to the cause of Chinese liberation, as well as to the cause of democratic progress in the first half of the 20th century. ■

## Carry forward Rewi Alley's spirit of internationalism and write a new chapter of China-New Zealand friendship

**Xu Fenghua**

On April 21, 1927, Rewi Alley, a young New Zealander, came to Shanghai, China. It was the first time he had set foot in China, which was called "a country shaken by revolution" by newspapers back in his country. He came out of curiosity. But he became a direct witness to inequalities in China and the people's sufferings, and quickly determined to assist the Chinese people in their battle for social change. He spent the next 60 years in the country working to that end.

Alley's six decades of struggle in China became legendary. What he saw of the people in war-torn China prompted him to appeal to the world to help them get through the hard times. Whether setting up Bailie schools for poor children or volunteering to rescue the victims of famine, Alley devoted his life to the liberation of the Chinese people, to the country's socialist construction and to the development of friendly relations between China and New Zealand. His

story spans revolutions in China over half a century and represents one of the great contributions of China-friendly foreigners.

Alley and Edgar Snow launched the Gung Ho movement to support the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931-45) by promoting industrial production and seeking international support. Alley and George Hogg from Britain established the Bailie Technical School in Shandan, Gansu province, the Bailie Oil School and Beijing Bailie University, which trained tens of thousands of technicians for China's industrial development, particularly in the petroleum industry. He also adopted children left behind by Chinese revolutionary martyrs. Those children grew up to become qualified successors to the revolutionary cause. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, Alley contributed to the establishment of the New Zealand China Friendship Society, which laid a solid foundation for the two countries



**CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin with the delegation of Rewi Alley's relatives**

to develop friendly relations.

In his 60 years in China, Alley forged bonds of deep friendships with revolutionaries of the older generation, including Mao Zedong, Zhu De, Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping, Song Qingling, Li Xiannian and Xi Zhongxun. Deng hailed him as an “old battle chum, bosom friend and good comrade” of the Chinese people.

Alley once wrote a poem to express his feelings toward China. In the poem he says China gives him purpose in life and a cause to fight for; and as the cause prospers year by year, he counts himself among the millions of people marching forward. He exclaims

how significant it is, adding: “And who can expect a reward that is more beautiful than all I received?”

On Dec 23, 1972, China and New Zealand established diplomatic relations. The Western world knew little about China at that moment. But the envoys from New Zealand found that they did not need to start from scratch because they had a compatriot who knew a lot about the country and who was widely respected by the Chinese people—Rewi Alley.

“He gave us useful tips and most enthusiastic help,” the New Zealand diplomats said.

On Dec 27, 1987, Alley died of an

illness in Beijing. In accordance with his will, half of his ashes were scattered over the Sibatan farm of the Bailie Technical School; the other half was buried in a cemetery in Shandan.

The great internationalist fighter and friendship ambassador connecting the Chinese and New Zealand people, and people around the world, won the respect and love of both nations and the international community. In 2009, Alley was selected as one of the “top 10 international friends who have made exceptional contributions to China and are most loved by the Chinese people in the past 100 years”.

Alley received many honors both

in China and New Zealand. For example, he was the recipient of an honorary doctorate of literature from Victoria University of Wellington. He was also granted honorary citizenship by both Beijing municipality and Gansu province, and the Queen's Service Order by the New Zealand government.

President Xi Jinping said during his visit to New Zealand in 2014 that Rewi Alley had devoted his whole life to the cause of national independence and the socialist construction of China and that he always stood with the Chinese people through thick and thin until he died in 1987.

Alley was an old friend of the Chinese people, the initiator of Gung Ho and the founder of Bailie schools. This year marks the 120th anniversary of his birth, the 90th anniversary of his first arrival in China and 30th anniversary of his death. In order to carry forward Alley's spirit of internationalism, the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries organized a series of activities in commemoration of his birth and invited his relatives to attend events in Beijing, Shanghai and Gansu.

On April 21, as part of a series of birthday activities, a symposium about carrying forward Rewi Alley's spirit of internationalism was organized by the CPAFFC in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. Li Yuanchao, a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and vice-president of China, met with the relatives of Alley and addressed the symposium. More than 260 guests attended the

event, including CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin; Ouyang Jian, vice-chairman of the Gansu Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference; Qin Gang, assistant foreign minister; Comrade Xi Zhongxun's son Xi Yuanping; relatives, friends and former staff members in Alley's office; as well as representatives from the International Committee for the Promotion of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives, the New Zealand China Friendship Society, Shandan Bailie School and Beijing Bailie University. CPAFFC Vice-President Xie Yuan presided over the symposium.

President Xi Jinping wrote a letter to ICCIC and Beijing Bailie University, and CPAFFC's Li read the letter at the symposium. Xi, who is also general secretary of the CPC Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, said in the letter: "Alley stood with the Chinese people through thick and thin during the 60 years he lived and worked in China, building a bridge of friendship between the people of China and the people of New Zealand." Xi also mentioned the Gung Ho movement, which Alley initiated with Soong Ching-ling and Edgar Snow, saying that Alley made great contributions to the revolution and socialist construction in China. Xi called on the ICCIC and Beijing Bailie University to carry forward the Gung Ho spirit of "work hard, and work together", continue international cultural exchanges, open a new chapter of international friendship and make new contributions to the world's peace and

development and to the human race's common prosperity.

Addressing the symposium, Li Yuanchao noted that President Xi acknowledged in his letter Alley's long-tested friendship with the Chinese people and great contribution to China's national independence and socialist construction. Li called for carrying forward Rewi Alley's spirit—the Gung Ho spirit of "work hard, and work together", as praised by comrade Xi Zhongxun. "We should also learn from Alley's philanthropy and selfless dedication to the Chinese people," Li Yuanchao said.

John McKinnon, New Zealand's ambassador to China, said he felt honored to review on behalf of the New Zealand government Alley's contribution to the New Zealand-China friendship. McKinnon recalled that he had met with Alley in 1980 and visited Honghu, Hubei province, and Shandan, Gansu province, where Alley once worked. He noted that Alley initiated the Gung Ho movement and set up the Shandan Bailie School, making positive contributions to the war effort against Japan, as well as postwar reconstruction. The fact that Alley was named one of the Top 10 Influential Foreigners in China in the 20th century in an internet poll of more than 50 million Chinese in 2012 indicates that his dedication to China and the New Zealand-China friendship is widely appreciated, McKinnon said. He said that he felt proud to join in the commemoration of Alley on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of diplomatic relations between New Zealand and China. It was great, he said,



to see progress being made not only in government exchanges but also in people-to-people friendship, which was unimaginable in the 1960s and 1970s. McKinnon also paid tribute to Alley's relatives and friends who supported Alley's work in China.

Ouyang Jian, vice-chairman of the CPPCC's Gansu Committee, said that after 10 years spent in Gansu, Alley saw Shandan as his second home and developed a profound friendship with the local people. Alley has won respect and love from both Chinese people and New Zealanders, and the tree of China-New Zealand friendship planted by Alley has blossomed, Ouyang said. He added that the traditional friendly relations between the two countries initiated by Alley should be carried forward from generation to generation.

Dave Bromwich, president of the New Zealand China Friendship Society, noted that three decades had passed since Alley died, but his spirit never died, and the cause to which he had been committed never stopped. And the New Zealand China Friendship Society, which was supported by Alley in its founding continues to work for friendship today. Bromwich also said that in response to President Xi's call, the society would work hard to make people's lives better and more harmonious.

Nie Guangtao, Alley's adopted son, on behalf of Alley's family members in China, said: "Alley will be remembered by generations of people, and his care for us is the epitome of his love for the Chinese people, the em-

bodiment of his spirit of internationalism and a symbol of the friendly ties between the two peoples. I hope the friendly relations between China and New Zealand will continue to prosper and can be passed down through generations."

Philip Alley, the younger brother of Rewi, said family members had visited places where Rewi once lived and worked and received a warm welcome wherever they went. He said he was deeply moved on seeing commemorations held in so many places. He also said that, inspired by Rewi, all family members took it as an honor to carry forward his spirit. The family delegation presented a reprinted edition of Rewi Alley: From Canterbury to China to the Chinese leaders and sang the Maori song *Waiata Tuatara mai*.

Michael Crook, chairman of the ICCIC, said his organization was greatly encouraged by President Xi's letter, adding that the best way to honor Alley was to carry forward his spirit and carry on his cause. Mr. Crook also said that the ICCIC had always been active in promoting the development of cooperatives, such as offering training to members, advancing urban rural cooperation, supporting the government's targeted poverty-alleviation campaign and initiating the establishment of education bases for internationalism. He said the ICCIC would continue to act in the spirit of Gung Ho. ICCIC members also sang the Song of Gung Ho at the end of the symposium.

CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin said: "President Xi's letter is an enthu-

siastic acknowledgement of Alley's six decades of devotion to China, as well as a commendation of the traditional friendship between China and New Zealand. Alley was a man whose greatness lay in his unassuming common manner and sincere friendship for China, devoting his whole life to its revolution and socialist construction. Like everyone present in this room, I have a deep feeling for Alley. He began to live in the compound of our association in 1958 and never moved out until he passed away in 1987. The pomegranate trees planted by Alley in the yard still look exuberant, with luxuriant foliage, and the Friendship Palace where he lived is still tranquil and reminds us of his anecdotes. Although this great man has left us, we are grateful for his contribution and keep in mind his spirit. Rewi Alley will live in our hearts forever."

In his essay *In Memory of Norman Bethune*, Chairman Mao wrote: "What kind of spirit is this that makes a foreigner selflessly adopt the cause of the Chinese people's liberation as his own? It is the spirit of internationalism, the spirit of communism, from which every Chinese Communist must learn." Like Bethune, Rewi Alley was an internationalist, for whom Deng Xiaoping wrote the inscription: "Long live the great fighter of internationalism. ■"

# The progressive cause and the great spirit

## Carry forward Alley and Hogg's spirit of vocational education

**You Xiliang, Beijing Bailie University (BBU)**

On the occasion of the 120th anniversary of the birth of Rewi Alley—a great fighter for internationalism, an old friend of the Chinese people, the initiator of the Gung Ho (short for Chinese Industrial Cooperatives) movement and founder of Beijing Bailie University (BBU) 34 years ago—Chinese President Xi Jinping made remarks in a letter to the International Committee for the Promotion of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives (ICCIC) and the BBU speaking highly of Alley and ICCIC's important contributions and great spirit in carrying forward the progressive cause in China. He acknowledged and praised the achievements of BBU, saying he hoped the BBU will carry forward Alley's Gung Ho spirit of "work hard and work together", actively carry out international cultural exchanges, write a new chapter in

building friendship with the outside world and renew their contribution to world peace and development and to humanity's common prosperity.

### **I. Alley initiated the Gung Ho movement and pioneered a new model of vocational education in modern China.**

President Xi said in the letter: "Alley stood with the Chinese people through thick and thin during the 60 years he lived and worked in China and thus built a bridge of friendship between the peoples of New Zealand and China. The ICCIC established by Alley, Soong Ching-ling and Edgar Snow made great contributions to Chinese revolution and socialist construction."

Alley came to China in 1927. He co-founded the first Industrial Cooperative Promotion Committee with Edgar

Snow in Shanghai in April 1938 to support the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the struggle to shake off poverty. The Gung Ho movement gradually expanded and gained support from Zhou Enlai and Soong Ching-ling. Mao Zedong met with Alley many times in Yan'an and urged him to introduce industrial cooperatives to the revolutionary base areas. By 1941, more than 1,800 industrial cooperatives had been set up in China, producing more than 500 kinds of products in 50 industry categories for civilian and military purposes, which helped improve people's livelihoods.

With the development of the Gung Ho movement, Alley set up the first Bailie School in Ganxian county, Jiangxi province in 1940. Later, at least 10 Bailie schools were set up in other places.

The Shandan Bailie School was founded by Alley in February 1945. By 1948, the school had recruited more than 800 students in over 20 majors (or production plants or groups, as they were called then). They studied 13 subjects, taught by more than 20 foreign teachers and technicians, as well as Chinese teachers specializing in politics and the Chinese language. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the industrial cooperatives and Bailie schools were transformed into State-owned units.

The Bailie School set up by Alley was a pioneering effort in what was then the new area of vocational education in China. It brought to China new thoughts on vocational education. The main ideas were running schools that catered to common people's needs for education; adopting a teaching method integrating theory with practice; teaching vocational skills through half-work and half-study; establishing courses (in the form of workshops and groups) to meet the demands of the cooperatives and the school's own production departments; cultivating the students' essential competence through integration of work and study following the principle of "utilizing both hands and mind for creative studies", as stated in the school's motto; providing international quality education by tapping the talent of foreign experts, professors and technicians recommended by ICCIC as well as Chinese teachers; letting the School Administration Committee and the Executive Council make collective decision on important matters; estab-



**The symbol of Gung Ho**

lishing a loving campus-management system (including student profiles) to help them develop a healthy moral character and making it a rule for the teaching staff to love students as their own children; encouraging everyone, from the principal to the students, to be faithfully dedicated to the progressive cause with solid work performance.

## **II. Alley and George Hogg carried forward their ideas on vocational education in the new era.**

When China adopted the reform and opening-up policy and began to thrive day by day, Alley, with his persistent love for vocational education and despite of his advanced age, cooperated with Li Yisan, who was deeply engrossed in privately run higher education. Alley suggested renaming Li's university "Bailie Vocational University". The new name was approved by

the Beijing education authorities in July 1984. This meant a historic leap from the old Bailie School to the new Bailie Vocational University. Alley and George Hatem were the first two honorary presidents of the university.

The Chinese Industrial Cooperative Association (CICA) founded by Alley and Snow in 1938 run the Bailie Vocational University for eight years.

Alley and George Hatem wrote to Chen Haosu, Beijing's deputy mayor at the time, requesting official recognition of the academic credentials of their students. Chen replied, expressing support.

In April 2004, the Beijing Municipal People's Government approved the establishment of the Beijing Bailie University on the basis of the original Beijing Bailie Vocational University. The new university was officially registered with the Ministry of Education as an institution of higher vocational educa-

tion for college degrees. That realized Alley's desire for students to receive degree-oriented education at Bailie.

The BBU inherited and carried forward the ideas of Alley and Hogg on vocational education to a new stage of development. It resumed the old school's motto of "utilizing both hands and mind for creative studies" and adhered to the principle of running a school for common people's education and "training for the dawn". It set as its goals providing top-level service to society and striving for high-quality employment for its students. The university made remarkable achievements in teaching and other related work, receiving commendations and awards from government departments and winning special funds from the Ministry of Education and the Beijing Municipal Education Commission.

In April 2008, Premier Wen Jiabao learned about BBU's development and created a calligraphy piece inscribing the university's motto. In a letter to the university's students, Wen said the motto was applicable to all vocational schools.

In recent years, following the spirit of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, BBU has coordinated its development with the capital's "four centers" function and the needs of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei development zone, trying to build itself into a high-end technical talent cultivation base and an international platform for educational and cultural exchanges. It has overcome many difficulties and made encouraging progress.

BBU has continuously optimized the mix of its faculty by reforming the curriculum system and introducing advanced talent to open new courses. For six consecutive years, the rate of its students passing the Beijing College Degree-Upgrading Examination has been 65 percent, 15 percentage points higher than the junior college average in the city, and the employment rate of BBU graduates has been steady at about 97 percent.

BBU has been deepening cooperation with enterprises for the multi-dimensional training of its students. It adopted effective measures to change and diversify teaching modes to help students overcome difficulties in classroom study. The school also standardized teacher's work norms. It takes morality education as its fundamental task and focuses on the cultivation of Bailie culture in campus management. It attaches great importance to the establishment of a human-centered regulation system.

As President Xi Jinping said in his letter to the university, "It takes 10 years to grow trees but a hundred years to rear people. The BBU has followed the motto of 'utilizing both hands and mind for creative studies' and kept the national interests in mind in its hard work amid difficulties. It has carried forward the spirit of vocational education initiated by its founders Alley and Hogg, and brought up a large pool of talent for China's socialist modernization."

President Xi's letter praised the BBU's inheritance and promotion of

Alley and Hogg's spirit of vocational education and acknowledged its experience and achievements. The letter provided great encouragement and inspiration to the teachers and students at BBU.

### **III. We should take Alley and Hogg as the example, practice the spirit of President Xi's letter, and make efforts to attain the goals President Xi has set for BBU.**

President Xi's letter has shown us the right direction to follow, and set the mission we are expected to fulfill, namely renewing our "contribution to world peace and development and to humanity's common prosperity". We should take Alley and Hogg as examples and do solid work to provide the common people with higher vocational education with Chinese characteristics that is up to international standards.

First, we should renew our concept of higher vocational education with an international vision as embodied in the Belt and Road Initiative, so that we can groom top-class technical talent with international perspective.

Second, we should consolidate the basis, bring forth new ideas and make up for shortcomings. The foundation for running BBU is to inherit and carry forward the spirit of Alley and Hogg in vocational education. We must adhere to this foundation while making up for shortcomings and mobilizing our development potential. This is our school's unique characteristic.

Third, we should open our school



to international cooperation. The historical background related to Alley and the ICCIC is the BBU's natural advantage for international exchanges and cooperation. We have developed several international programs to help our students further their studies abroad, such as the "junior college directly rising to master's degree" program and the "uninterrupted study from junior college to master's degree"—the only programs of their kind in China.

Fourth, we need to make great efforts both inside and outside the campus to build up a strong team of teachers and management staff. We should improve the capabilities of the university's leading members and strengthen Communist Party organizations so that they play a vital political role in the school's management. We should groom a team of teachers that can meet all kinds of challenges. Outside the campus, we should make good use of social resources and cooperate with enterprises to jointly develop talent. We believe we will be able to blaze a trail for modern vocational education and will bring new honor to the spirit of vocational education and internationalism exemplified by Alley and Hogg. ■

*(The author is a board member of BBU and was executive vice-president of the university and deputy secretary of the university's CPC committee)*

# Rewi Alley and the Silk Road

**Liu Wei**

Shandan county in Gansu province was once an important stop on the ancient Silk Road, where people from Central Asia, India and Persia traded commodities. Tales from their friendly exchanges and harmonious coexistence were often retold. Through thousands of years of changing circumstances, the friendship and communication between Chinese and foreign people was never interrupted but rather became more intimate and frequent.

In the early years of the 1940s, a group of foreign friends represented by New Zealand-born writer and political activist Rewi Alley set up the Bailie School in remote, poverty-stricken Shandan. Their pioneering expedition and creative work left a brilliant chapter in the history of foreign friends helping the Chinese people. Reviewing this chapter will give us some insight into the relationship between Alley and the modern Silk Road.

## **I. Moving west to Shandan to become associated with the Silk Road**

Starting in the second half of

1942, Alley and George Hogg, a graduate of Oxford University began careers devoted to vocational and technical education, setting up the Bailie Technical School in Shuangshipu, Shaanxi province. In the summer of 1943, Dr Joseph Needham (widely known as Li Yuese in China), a British scientist and curator of the Sino-British Science Cooperation Office, was invited by Yumen Uranium to give lectures. On his way from Chongqing to Yumen, he passed by Shuangshipu and was warmly received by Alley and Hogg. He asked Alley to go with him and Alley accepted the invitation with delight. During the journey, Alley found that Shandan, an oasis on the Silk Road, was a "promised land" for running schools because of its location as a hub on the trade route and its endowment of rich natural resources. In the winter of 1944, Alley and Hogg moved the Bailie Technical School from Shuangshipu to Shandan and began their arduous yet creative exploration of vocational education.

Based on favorable studies of Shandan's natural resources conducted by the school's surveying and mapping

team, and in line with the goals set in the teaching plan, Alley determined to set up some modern industrial factories and a Western-style medical clinic. Within four years, he successively established a small hospital and 27 factories specializing in coal-mining, textiles, knitting, sewing, glass, printing, chemical engineering, leather, metals melting, mechanical engineering, mechanized farming and animal husbandry.

The school-run factories were connected with the local economy and supported the school's teaching approach, and the products sold well in local markets. The school-run hospital was open every day to treat patients from Shandan, Zhangye,

Minle and Alxa Right Banner. This unconventional school—a part-work and part-study program—soon gained fame and attracted impoverished children from 19 counties along the Gansu section of the ancient Silk Road. By 1949, the number of students on the roster had reached 600.

Alley's idea was to closely associate education with industry, agriculture, science and technology. He combined teaching with production, and theory with practice, in an exploration of creative education. In the process, he introduced advanced Western industrial and agricultural technologies to rural Northwest China and planted the seeds of modern

civilization in Silk Road areas.

## II. Exploring the Silk Road and making a generous donation

In his earlier years in Shanghai, Alley began to take an interest in Chinese antiques. He took every opportunity to learn about Chinese history and culture and traveled widely to learn about local customs and collect famous people's anecdotes. His rich knowledge made him an “old China hand”, as well as a connoisseur and collector of Chinese antiques.

Alley reaped an abundant harvest from his trip to western China with Needham. Everything was new to him. He traveled alongside the winding Great Wall to visit the anecdote-rich cities of Zhangye and Suzhou; trekked on ancient tracks to see the famous Yulin Grotto Temple and Dunhuang Mogao Grottos; paid tribute to time-honored battlefields of the Three Kingdoms; marveled at the mysterious mists wrapping Mount Maiji; and fell silent to ponder on the bank of the Yellow River.

After the westward move of the Bailie School, Alley took up a stable residence in Shandan. Collecting antiques became his hobby. He collected a number of animal figurines—including decorative plates with animal patterns—and ancient weapons. Human figurines were mostly collected along the Silk Road, such as a stone head from the Luoyang Longmen Grottoes, a Hutten Dance bronze figurine from the



**Rewi Alley on his inspection tour**

Tang Dynasty, a copper Buddha from the Ming dynasty, and Bodhisattva statues and Indian pottery bought from antique stalls in Xi'an. Some of the figurines depict elegant postures; some are simply yet tastefully clad, showing strong characteristics of their times as well as traces of Chinese and Western exchanges.

In the spring of 1947, Alley found the site of an ancient culture while reclaiming wasteland and digging a canal in Sibatan—a piece of land on the bank of a dry riverbed in Shandan. The find was later named for the Sibatan Culture.

In 1980, Alley donated all the cultural relics he had collected in China to Shandan. The curator of the China Revolution Museum at the time asked Alley why he didn't keep the treasures in Beijing. Alley answered that it was better to send them to Shandan because it's far away from the city and located on the Silk Road, which attracts tourists. If Shandan could become a stop on the route, friendly exchanges between different countries would be more frequent.

Since the 1940s, especially in the last four decades, friendly exchanges between Shandan and other countries have become increasingly frequent, thanks to the fame of Rewi Alley, who has become a cultural symbol of Shandan. And the "Alley phenomenon" has added rich content to the spirit of the Silk Road. ■

## Rewi Alley in my mind

**Nie Guangtao**

I was fortunate to get to know Rewi Alley and become a member of his Chinese family during my childhood. This year marks the 120th anniversary of his birth, and hence a host of commemorative events will be held in both China and New Zealand. As one of the four boys he adopted from the Nie family, I am the only one among the siblings who is still alive. I have always thought about sharing the stories of past decades with my friends, so that they would know how we four boys fit into Alley's Chinese family, and feel the New Zealander's deep affection for his Chinese family members.

During China's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, my father worked for the underground service of the Communist Party of China in Baoji, Shaanxi province, and was thus persecuted and wanted by the reactionary Kuomintang authorities. The local CPC organization transferred him to Zhongnan Mountain to work as a charcoal burner. Later he was sent back to the CPC's base area. As my father left in haste and was not allowed to bring his family along, my mother had to move to Yongqingpu Village in Baoji, where she began to rear the four kids by spinning yarn. Shortly after the

move, my mother died. At that time, nobody would run the risk of adopting the children of a fugitive communist.

Ren Lizhi, a communist comrade of my father, asked George Hogg, a British colleague in the women's department of the Committee for the Promotion of Baoji Industrial Cooperatives, to take care of us, before going to the anti-Japanese base areas with my father. Hogg once worked in the Taihang Mountain area and in southeastern Shanxi province, where he took part in the Eighth Route Army's battles with the Japanese. The 27-year-old Briton complied with Ren's request without hesitation because he considered it to be supportive of the war against Japan. Hogg and Alley moved us to Shuangshipu, Feng County, Shaanxi province, where they arranged for my two elder brothers to study at the Bailie School and let my younger brother and me live with them at a cave dwelling on a hillside of Baijiaping. Back then, I was feeble and became ill easily. However, with their careful nursing, I miraculously survived.

At the end of 1944, we moved together to Shandan, Gansu province. But good times didn't last long. Hogg injured his toes while building the new

school and died after suffering from tetanus in July 1945. Alley took over the care of my younger brother and me. After that we lived with Alley, who, like us, wore grass sandals, slept on an earthen bed, used a pit privy and went about tough and arduous work. When taking part in a water conservancy project in Sibatan, he went every day to the worksite in the morning to assign work before returning home to take care of us; then in the afternoon he went there again to check the quality of the day's work. In household chores, he often needed to air the bedding wet by my little brother. He gave us haircuts and baths, taught us English and related stories. We lived happily like father and sons.

In Yan'an, my biological father was informed by the CPC that we had

been adopted and were well attended by international friends, so he worked wholeheartedly for the Party, free from worry. In 1944, my father, at age 38, was honored as a top-class model worker of the institutions directly under the CPC Central Committee and received an award certificate signed by Chairman Mao Zedong.

In 1950, one year after liberation, Alley sent the four of us to Northeast China to reunite with our father. In so doing, he suddenly lost the children who had lived with him for so many years. Loneliness often haunted him. Later he wrote in his autobiography that "in early 1950s, the third and fourth sons went to Dandong in the Northeast to join their father. For quite a few years, I was only left with some faded photos and wonderful memories

of the two lovely boys."

In the first few years of our separation, he missed us very much, but we had no opportunity to visit him. Later, he managed to visit us in Shenyang several times. In the summer of 1956, he came to Shenyang for our first reunion six years after the separation. Zhang Kewei, our university president, took me to meet him at the Liaoning Hotel. Alley gave me a brand-new French Hemer watch with a calendar inside and encouraged me to study hard, and to acquire more knowledge and skills so as to make greater contributions to my country in the future. In November 1957, he came to Shenyang again and took my brother and me to the Dongling Park for fun. He also bought us two pairs of skates and encouraged us to do more physical exercise. At that time, he was already 60 years old. Our meeting had him mired in memories of the past. After returning to Beijing, he wrote a poem for me recalling those unforgettable moments in the past and expressed his pleasure at our healthy growth. The poem was later published in his book *Fruition* (its Chinese edition is titled *From Oxford to Shandan*). To help future generations understand this deep affection between father and son, I donated the watch and the poem to the Alley Research Center of Lanzhou City University.

In the following decades, my brothers and I grew up to have our own jobs, one by one, and thus had the opportunity to visit him in Beijing.



**Nie Guangtao with his family called on Rewi Alley in Beijing.**



Like all the seniors, he became particularly sentimental about ties between family members. In August 1959, I had already graduated from college and worked for one year. I took my fiancée to Beijing to visit my adoptive father. I told him about our relationship and asked for his advice. He replied with elation: "I think it's wonderful." He was so excited that he immediately told Anna Louise Strong about it. She lived downstairs in the same apartment building. Strong was also exhilarated at the news and asked Alley to show her his future daughter-in-law. She invited us to have dinner with her. It felt unreal that I could have dinner with the world-renowned celebrity. I was so eager to see her as soon as I entered the restaurant that I forgot to take off my hat. It was only at Alley's hint that I took it off and thus avoided an embarrassing situation.

In the spring of 1961, when told that we would get married, Alley particularly asked Saionji Kinkazu, a Japanese friend who also lived in the campus of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), to help him buy a Sony semiconductor radio as a wedding gift to me.

In 1975, in the wake of the Haicheng earthquake, he came to Liaoning to investigate the disaster. The province's officials asked him to write an article criticizing Deng Xiaoping. He declined, saying that he was too old to write. At the hotel in Shenyang, he often stood before the window and

murmured "Huzi, Huzi" repeatedly. His associates couldn't understand what he said. Later, when I went to Beijing, the staff asked me what Alley's murmuring in Shenyang meant. I told them that he was missing me and my son. At the time he visited Shenyang, the hotel he stayed in was not far from my home, but we could not meet because of the political situation then. There was an unspeakable pain in my heart. [Editor's note: It was a taboo during the "cultural revolution" for a Chinese to contact a foreigner, even if the expat proved to be friendly to China, for a number of them who had taken part in the Chinese communist revolution were secretly suspected to have connections with Western countries or the Soviet Union.]

While recuperating in the summer resort of Beidaihe, he had two large wooden boxes delivered to us in which we found a pair of badminton racquets, a pair of tennis rackets and an inflated football. Obviously he used the gifts to express his feeling of missing us. Whenever my elder or younger brother visited him in Beijing, he repeatedly inquired, "Why does my third son not come to see me? I know he's come to Beijing too." Actually, I was not on the journey at all. He was overcome with the worry that I might have been implicated in his case and thus persecuted. It was not until 1977 that I got the chance to explain. When I attended his 80th birthday celebration and he took me to the Fragrant Hills, he mentioned his suspicion again. My explanation reassured him.

With the implementation of the reform and opening-up policy, I was the first among the brothers of the Nie family to be sent abroad to serve as an expert to help residents. He was very glad and wrote to Ruth Baker, Hogg's elder sister living in Britain. I received her letter from Britain, in which she told me that Alley had briefed her about my foreign mission. Alley was happy with every step I took in my progress. The fact that I was able to work abroad reassured him that someone had begun to follow in his footsteps. Alley's genuine feelings moved me deeply and will be enshrined in my mind forever.

In his senescent years after retirement, my younger brother Guangpei took care of his daily life. Every day after work, Guangpai went to the CPAFFC headquarters at Taijichang in central Beijing by bike from Lipukang on the northern side of the city, where his employer—called the Ministry of Petroleum at the time—was located. Everyday toward nightfall, Alley would stand at the CPAFFC gate, eagerly awaiting the arrival of the ever-jubilant Guangpei. They had dinner together in the comfort of family. At night, Guangpei slept on a folding bed beside Dad's bed, giving him a sense of safety and contentment. Next morning, Dad would escort Guangpei to the gate and watch as he mounted the bicycle and faded away in the distance.

After Alley died, we four brothers saw him off at the Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery in western Beijing. In April the following year, we transferred

his ashes to a cemetery in the southern suburbs of Shandan county, Gansu province. In China, it is customary that the younger generation attend to the elderly every day in their later years and make sure they rest in peace after death. We did it.

As a matter of fact, we never went through the formalities of adoption to Alley. At that time, he lived an arduous and threatened life much harsher than his days of serving as the safety inspector in Shanghai. Yet it is a plain truth that he raised us and cared for us over the years, a fact nobody can deny. Back in 1942, Alley was dismissed from his post as technical adviser and put under secret surveillance by the KMT's Shaanxi Committee for his support of the CPC base areas. If he went to apply for an adoption certificate, wouldn't that mean putting his neck into the noose?

Although there were no formalities, the special bond of father and sons forged at that particular time has been recognized by history. Wang Bingnan, former president of the CPAFFC, wrote in his article Exemplary Fighter for the Chinese Revolution, Stellar Advisor for the Building of New China:

“Comrade Alley had a strong sense of revolutionary humanitarianism. He adopted two orphans, four children of a CPC cadre and the nephew of Deng Zhongxia, a CPC martyr. He brought up the adopted children in extremely difficult conditions and helped them take the path of revolution. Now these kids have grown up to take important duties in different sectors of the

revolutionary cause. The noble deeds of Comrade Alley in raising the younger generation of the revolutionary cause have been universally acclaimed and admired.”

Dec 2, 1977 was Alley's 80th birthday. We four brothers of the Nie family brought along our wives and children to attend the celebration held by the CPC Central Committee in the capacity of his Chinese family. The Foreign Affairs Office of Liaoning province booked three sleeper tickets for us. Stepping out of the Beijing Railway Station, I was surprised to see Alley's secretaries Piao and Yao waiting there. They arranged for us to stay in the guesthouse of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Zhengyi Road. Comrade Deng Xiaoping, then vice-chairman of the CPC Central Committee, met us before the banquet. A Xinhua News Agency photographer shot pictures of Deng shaking hands with each of us to keep the unforgettable moments alive for ever.

In March 2006, the CPAFFC organized a delegation to visit New Zealand. They invited my brother Gun-gepei and me to join the group. During the tour, we visited Alley's hometown and his primary and middle schools; participated in the annual meeting of the New Zealand-China Friendship Association; called on Alley's relatives; and went, in their company, to the Taranaki farm, where Alley once worked as a herdsman. This visit was a precious opportunity for me to meet Alley's relatives. We had a feeling of family reunion and all wished we had

met earlier. After returning to Beijing, I published an article, A Visit to Alley's Hometown, in People's Daily to share my feelings about my first visit to New Zealand.

Since then, we have maintained frequent exchanges just like a family. September 2007 marked the 110th anniversary of Alley's birth. Dorsey, a relative of Alley, and Nirren Mason, a teacher from New Zealand at the Bailie School, visited me in Shenyang. Then we went to Beijing, Lanzhou and Shandan together to attend commemorative events. In May 2012, I was invited by the New Zealand-China Friendship Association to participate in the events marking the 60th anniversary of its establishment and the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and New Zealand. Later, we also visited Hastings, Palmerston North, Wellington and other places and met with the president of the New Zealand-China Friendship Association and presidents of local branches.

Morris, Alley's nephew, and David Somerset, another relative, invited me to stay at their houses for several days. During those days we went to the farm in the daytime to help do some work; in the evening, we took a stroll in the field, across the murmuring brooks, to see fireflies on the hillside. The faint green light took me back to my long-ago childhood. The profound kinship emanating from our hearts at that moment was an embodiment of the eternal human love transcending international boundaries. We all held it dear. Last year, Morris and his wife came to Chi-

na to attend the International Symposium for Dunhuang Study at the hosting organization's invitation. In April this year, they came again to participate in events held by the CPAFFC to commemorate the 120th anniversary of Alley's birth, giving us the opportunity to meet again.

China and New Zealand began far away from each other. It was the outstanding contributions made by Alley in the Chinese revolution and later development that helped narrow the distance between the two countries and deepened the friendly relations between the two peoples.

This relationship is developing continually. The Sichuan earthquake in 2008 also impacted Feng County in Shaanxi province. The New Zealand-China Friendship Association sent an inspection team headed by Dave Bromwich, its vice-president, to arrange for disaster relief. I joined them in the investigation, which included a briefing by local officials. In the end, the New Zealand side decided to donate hundreds of thousands of yuan to help rebuild Honghupu Hospital.

Our story represents the pinnacle of Alley's sincere affection for the Chinese people and provides a little evidence of his devotion to the New Zealand-China friendship. We have every reason to believe that the seeds of friendship sown by Alley will blossom and bear fruit year after year forever. ■

# The best of Jiangxi to make the world drunk

## Highlights of the Jiangxi Global Promotion activities

**Liu Yong & Bian Ye & Li Dongming**

**G**reen represents vitality; blue symbolizes opening. Magnificence blooms when "Jiangxi green" encounters "diplomacy blue".

In Sept 8, the Global Promotion of Jiangxi was held in the Blue Hall of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing. This was the 10th Global Promotion for provinces held by the ministry. Ten represents perfection in Chinese culture. It is everybody's expectation.

Blue Hall, the press department of the ministry, is a platform for communication with the rest of the world. It is also a mirror reflecting China's reform and opening-up drive. On Sept8 it became a "Jiangxi stage", with more than 500 envoys from various countries, representatives of major international organizations, heads of transnational corporations, representatives of foreign business associations and media figures in attendance. For the first time, Jiangxi was starring in a leading role on this diverse, three-dimensional stage under the global spotlight, showing its specialties to the world.

"The theme of this event is 'An Open China: Beautiful Jiangxi Showing Her Charm to the World'. The key-

word is 'Xiu', which has a pronunciation similar to the English word 'show'. Our purpose is to show charming Jiangxi to the world and make Jiangxi go global," said Lu Xinshe, secretary of the Jiangxi Committee of the Communist Party of China, in a speech during opening ceremonies.

### Charming Jiangxi

The colors of Jiangxi were the first thing to impress the guests at the event.

After entering the south building of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and taking the escalator to the third floor, guests were greeted by a mural of migratory birds on Poyang Lake, symbolizing Jiangxi's open mind and embrace of the whole world. At one side of the mural was an ink painting of a Jingdezhen blue-and-white porcelain plate, telling the guests from all over the world that the world came to know China through china, and got to know china from Jiangxi.

The Jiangxi style was outlined between the switch of colors—green mountains and blue skies to blue-and-white porcelains. Pakistani journalist

Raza Khan of the Dawn News, who had recently been to Jiangxi, gave a thumbs-up: “This is Jiangxi, the one and only Jiangxi.”

“This is Jiangxi. Have you ever imagined how beautiful she is?” While enjoying the familiar and lively melody of the song Jiangxi is a Good Place, people were shown pictures in which villages and highways were dotted in green landscape, and left with impression that this is a green home.

Everardus Kronenburg, the newly appointed ambassador to China from the Netherlands, was fascinated by the green scenery of Jiangxi. Before the promotion started, he said he was fascinated by the mountains and waters shown in the dazzling film. “I learned about Jiangxi long ago, and it’s a great honor to be here today. I was impressed by the beautiful picture of Mount Dajue, and I love the mountains and forests of Jiangxi. I hope to have the opportunity to ride a bicycle in the mountains and by the rivers of Jiangxi in the future,” he said.

“I’ve been to Mount Sanqing, and her beauty was amazing,” said Fazlul Karim, Bangladesh’s ambassador to China. He said he was impressed with Jiangxi’s mountains and valleys. “Mount Lu shows the world its tranquility; Mount Sanqing shows the world its beauty; and Mount Longhu shows to the world its uniqueness.” He said he was determined to go to Jiangxi again.

### Decorous Jiangxi

Red is the thickest background color of beautiful Jiangxi. Today,

the fine revolutionary tradition is encouraging the people on this land to continue their struggle. In recent years, Mount Jinggang has taken the lead in China in the poverty alleviation campaign. In less than five years, more than 1.51 million people in southern Jiangxi and other former central Soviet areas have shaken off poverty, putting the region at the top of the country in terms of the number of residents lifted out of poverty since the founding of the new China. The achievements find an echo from Dawn News reporter Raza Khan, who remarked: “I went to the God mountain village last month; I can perceive the joy of running toward a well-off society from the smiles on their faces.”

Khan was keen to share photos of his trip to the God mountain village with this writer, and he told me that Ji’an Gougunao tea was his favorite discovery during the trip.

Jiangxi’s tea and porcelains not

only captured the hearts of the foreign journalists but also attracted foreign envoys.

Tasting tea, watching ceramic manufacturing and a performance of traditional Chinese medicine slicing were some of the world intangible cultural heritage items that demonstrate Jiangxi’s charm to the outside world. Before the promotion activities started, Foreign Minister Wang Yi invited the envoys to taste Jiangxi tea outside the hall. Yao Su, a student from Nanchang University and a tea art volunteer performer, introduced Jiangxi’s “four green and one red” tea species to the diplomats. “It tastes great,” said Sveinn Kjartan, first secretary at the Iceland Embassy to China, after a cup of black tea. He praised the tea art of Yao and other volunteers.

### Open Jiangxi

In the sixth part of the exhibition area, under the theme of “humanistic



Barbara Janet Woodward, ambassador of the United Kingdom to China, attended the activity “An Open China: Beautiful Jiangxi, Showing Her Charm to the World”.



beauty”, articles by Wang Dayuan and Zhan Tianyou, two historical Jiangxi native celebrities, were exhibited. They outlined the history of Jiangxi’s opening-up.

Wang Dayuan, one of the pioneers of the ancient maritime Silk Road, who is known as the “Oriental Marco Polo”, was 162 years ahead of Christopher Columbus in launching ocean expeditions. Zhan Tianyou from Wuyuan county is known as “the Father of Chinese Railways”. The two pioneers have become business icons for today’s Jiangxi in its effort to contribute to the Belt and Road Initiative, and reflect its strong confidence in pioneering the country’s inland opening-up drive.

Exchanges and cooperation with Britain exemplify Jiangxi’s involvement in the Belt and Road. “Sino-British relations have entered a golden age,” British Ambassador Barbara Woodward said. “And our cooperation with Jiangxi testifies to the arrival of this golden age.” She used the three feet of Ding, a traditional Chinese vessel, as a metaphor to illustrate the three main pivots of international relationship in the contemporary world: government relations, business relations and human relations.

“In the past two years, Britain and Jiangxi have made great strides in their relations on the three pivots of local government, business and humanity,” she said, adding that cooperation between the two sides has continued to expand in business, including the joint effort to build an international trading center in Jingdezhen, and that that cultural cooperation was also deepening

through a series of activities—for example, the commemoration of Shakespeare, Tang Xianzu and Cervantes held in Fuzhou. The two sides also deepened cooperation between their local governments. The Jingdezhen government delegation visited a number of British cities, and both sides discussed the cooperation in the ceramic industry.

Even mountains and seas cannot separate people of common aspiration. “Although Britain is at the other end of the Silk Road, I’m sure the cooperation under the Belt and the Road Initiative will bring stability and prosperity to both countries, as well as countries along the route,” Woodward said. At the promotion conference, she announced that the British consulate in Guangzhou would hold a series of British carnival events in Jiangxi starting from Sept 24 this year, and would hold the 45th Anniversary Photo Exhibition of Sino-British diplomatic relations in Fuzhou.

### Dynamic Jiangxi

The hundreds of foreign guests who came to participate in the global promotion activities of Jiangxi were not only foreign envoys to China but also representatives of international organizations and the heads of the China business arms of global top 500 companies.

Lang Shifeng, the greater China animal health official for German Boehringer Ingelheim, participated in the promotion activities with great interest. He said the company currently has a project in Nanchang, and the good operating environment there en-

couraged him to attend the Jiangxi promotion.

“Jiangxi has done a good job in innovation. It has a clear thought and a long-term perspective, which are good for Nanchang. I believe that Nanchang will develop better and better, like other cities in China, and I am optimistic about the developmental prospects of Jiangxi,” Lang said.

The vitality of Jiangxi comes from the practice of enterprises, including foreign businesses investing there; it is also seen firsthand by foreign journalists who have visited the province.

Aminath Ibrahim, the Avas Online reporter from the Republic of the Maldives, also visited Jiangxi last month with a delegation. At the Beauty of Vitality exhibition area in the Blue Hall, Ibrahim stopped in front of a photograph of a modern greenhouse agriculture base. Unlike many foreign journalists, she was interested in modern agriculture in Jiangxi.

“When I was in Jiangxi, I visited a similar greenhouse, with all kinds of modern maintenance facilities,” Ibrahim said. “I was impressed by the professionalism of modern agriculture in Jiangxi.”

She told other reporters on the scene that one can tell from the rapid pace of agricultural development in Jiangxi that this is a vibrant land indeed.

Come to Jiangxi and you will be drawn to its beautiful scenery, intoxicated with its age-old cultural heritage and excited by its bright, sunny future. ■

# Delicacies of Jiangxi catching the attention of the world

## Jiangxi Friendship Association

Sept 8 is Jiangxi Day for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China.

On Sept 8, 2017, the ministry held the 10th presentation of Chinese provinces at its Blue Hall with the theme "An Open China: Beautiful Jiangxi, showing her charm to the world". Foreign Minister Wang Yi addressed the event. Lu Xinshe, secretary of the Jiangxi Committee of the Communist Party of China, delivered a speech, and Liu Qi, governor of Jiangxi province, gave presentation. More than 500 people attended the event, including diplomatic envoys and senior diplomats from more than 130 countries, as well as representatives of international organizations in China, representatives from the industrial and commercial sectors, Chinese and foreign experts, scholars and journalists.

Multimedia content, films, presentations, exhibitions and a buffet reception provided the guests a chance to learn how beautiful and happy the new Jiangxi is.

Foreign guests gave the event a thumbs-up. US Ambassador to China Terry Branstad said it was a wonderful event and expressed his wish to visit Jiangxi as soon as possible.

The event was a great success and showed Jiangxi's charm to the world.

At 6 pm, the buffet reception began. Foreign Minister Wang Yi, Secretary of the ministry's CPC Committee, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Zhang Yesui, and the US and British ambassadors all praised the Jiangxi delicacies, also known as Gan dishes. The arrangement of the reception won high praise from Xinshe and Liu.

With the beautiful porcelain-themed music, Jiangxi leaders toasted with guests while the buffet reception kicked off.

What a wonderful experience of local food tasting! This was a globally oriented feast of Gan dishes, and also a significant breakthrough in the history of Gan cuisine. All the dishes are cooked in Western style to the standards of Western buffets and served in cold dishes. The guests praised the food as "Jiangxi delicacies going global!"

That said, you must have been tantalized and developed a strong desire to know how delicious Gan dishes actually are. Ok, let's go!

This buffet reception served 21 dishes of classical Jiangxi delicacies.

### Ningdu Three-Cup Chicken

It's believed that this dish has something to do with Song Dynasty national hero Wen Tianxiang. The



major ingredient is Ningdu yellow chicken. It's braised in the traditional way.

### Four Stars Watching the Moon

In 1929, Chairman Mao named this dish according to its shape. Mao said humorously that the steaming fish box looked like the moon and the four cold dishes around it looked like stars. And so the name stuck: "Four stars watching the moon".



### Baked Red Rice Cake

The major ingredient is Jingang red rice flour.



### **Nanchang White Sugar Sponge Cake**

This famous Jiangxi dessert is soft, sweet and glutinous.



### **Baked Tea Biscuit, Jiujiang Style**

The major ingredient is high mountain Jasmine tea, black sesame and white sesame. The crispy cake has the flavor of tea. You can smell the fragrance of the flower without finding it inside.



The rest are as follows:

The most representative liquors of Jiangxi province—Sitir liquor 20th

Anniversary Collector's Edition; Junzi Valley Dry Red Cellar Wine; 8% Nanchang beer; and Runtian natural selenium mineral water were all served to the guests.

### **Runtian natural selenium mineral**



### **Water**

Collected from deep under Mount Mingyue, this mineral water is full of selenium and good for improving human immunity and protecting the liver and heart.



### **A great variety of beverages and Liquor**

Of course, the buffet reception also served fresh fruits produced in Jiangxi.



### **Fresh fruit platter**

Besides the Gan dishes, blue-and-white is also used in the logo of Jiangxi. The celadon blue sparkles in the hall. You will find celadon blue in the backdrop, the costumes, the porcelain instruments and even a small pendant. It's a night of blue and white!

A Yuan Dynasty celadon jar in a





cloud-dragon pattern with beast ears;  
a celadon vase with a picture of Prime  
Minister Xiao He urging rebellious  
general Han Xin to return; philosopher  
Guiguzi goes down the hill pot; peony  
and plum vase; gourd-shaped vase of  
peony pattern; jade spring vessel.

**Blue-and-white plates and small  
decorations capture all the guests'  
attention**



Having seen all these illustrations,  
are you feeling deeply attracted by the  
Jiangxi food and culture? The editor of  
this article believes that the answer will  
be yes!



The delicacies were so popular  
that all the plates were emptied. The  
catering staff changed the plates in  
order. The whole team was fully  
devoted to serving the guests, supported  
by leaders at all levels. ■

## Take a nice photo in front of the most beautiful golden autumn picture

With ingenuity hidden inside the most  
amazing exhibition hall

### **Jiangxi Friendship Association**

Come and have a look at the  
Chinese and foreign visitors

What kind of expression is on  
their faces?

Yesterday,

Themed “An Open China:  
Beautiful Jiangxi, Showing Her Charm  
to the World”,

A promotion event of MFA  
presenting Chinese provinces

Was held in the “Blue Hall” of the  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs!

Inside the hall, there was a warm  
atmosphere, with continuous applause.

Outside the hall, there was also  
colorful grandeur.

In front of a picture of “Shaiqiu”  
tradition (farm produce sun-baked  
by local residents in Autumn) in  
Huangling , Wuyuan, China’s most  
beautiful village,

The guide gestured:

Please take a photo here with

the most beautiful background, dear  
guests!

Two inheritors of intangible  
cultural heritage from Jingdezhen City,

Exhibit superb technique,

Attracting the attention of visitors  
from different countries.

Moreover,

Which other “treasures” of Jiangxi  
that are displayed outside the hall

Have won the visitors’ hearts  
beyond all praises?

So, would you please follow me  
to have a tour around?

### **“1 plus 6” layout of the exhibition wall**

As for the overall spatial  
arrangement, the whole exhibition and  
display is of the “1 plus 6” layout. “1”  
refers to one welcoming wall, while  
“6” stands for the display made up  
of six main parts: 1. Central Leaders’



Concern; 2. Revolutionary Heritage; 3. Beautiful Ecology; 4. Vigor and Vitality; 5. Fertile Land; and 6. Advanced Culture.

### **Welcoming Wall: Perfect combination of Poyang Lake and blue-and-white porcelain**

The first scene meeting the visitors' eyes is the large-scale welcoming wall, opposite the elevator on the floor of the "Blue Hall", which plays a key role in providing a good impression for the visitors at first sight. The welcoming wall adopts the method of combining the dynamic with the tranquil. The tranquil one is the picture of migratory birds on Poyang Lake, China's largest freshwater lake, while the dynamic one is the traditional ink and wash painting with special effects drawn on a blue-and-white Jingdezhen porcelain plate, both of which give a brief but impressionistic account of beautiful Jiangxi.

### **Part 1: Central Leaders' Concern**

Adjacent to the welcoming wall is the display of Part 1: Central Leaders' Concern. It displays vivid images of General Secretary Xi Jinping celebrating the Chinese New Year with peasants through small talk and making *ciba* (glutinous rice cakes) during his inspection tour of Jiangxi in February 2016. Those images demonstrate the general secretary's concern and profound love for the old revolutionary base areas. The sincere concern and great encouragement of the central leadership is indispensable for Jiangxi's

development. During General Secretary Xi's inspection, he asked that Jiangxi make efforts to become an example of beautiful China.

### **Part 2: Jiangxi's Revolutionary Heritage**

If one color were to be chosen to depict Jiangxi, the most shining one would be beautiful red. The people's army was born in Jiangxi. The sparkles for China's red revolution were ignited in Jiangxi. The People's Republic was born in Jiangxi. China's reform and opening-up sprouted in Jiangxi. Today, history doesn't just leave Jiangxi behind as the old revolutionary base. Jiangxi people have followed the Party resolutely and unswervingly, carrying forward the great Jinggangshan spirit—"to firmly and perseveringly pursue the ideal, to blaze new trails pragmatically by seeking truth from facts, to conquer hardship with arduous efforts, and to seek victory by relying on the people".

### **Part 3: Jiangxi's Beautiful Ecology**

Part 3 mainly introduces Jiangxi's advantages in green ecology and its new achievements in making Jiangxi an example of beautiful China. Jiangxi is a good place, with beautiful landscapes and many places of historical interest. There are four famous mountains here—Mount Lushan, Jinggang Mountain, Honghu Mountain and Sanqing Mountain. It is said of the mountains that "Lushan is the most culturally profound, Sanqing the most beautiful and Longhu the most extraordinary." Jiangxi boasts first-class forest coverage,

first-class water quality and first-class air quality. As frequently mentioned by Party Secretary Lu Xinshe, "In Jiangxi, the mountains are green, the water is clear, the sky is blue and the air is sweet."

### **Part 4: Jiangxi's Vigor and Vitality**

The State-level Ganjiang New Area has been listed as one of the five national pilot innovation zones for green financial reform. Jiang Fengyi's invention of silicon-substrate LED technology has made him a top winner of the State Technology Invention Award. Yan Long'an is reputed as the "mother of China's hybrid rice". Huang Lusheng, who is a DNA decoding expert for pigs, has set up China's most complete DNA database of pig breeds. The Vigor and Vitality part of the Jiangxi exhibition focuses on the display of Jiangxi's implementation of new concepts, R&D of new technologies, fostering of new drivers and promotion of development since the Party's 18th National Congress.

### **Part 5: Jiangxi's Fertile Land**

The fifth part, entitled "Fertile Land", mainly displays various admirable possessions of which Jiangxi is rightfully proud. Porcelain, rice, camilla oil tea and traditional Chinese medicine are the five "classic items of 100 years in Jiangxi". What's more, there are several exhibitions of intangible cultural heritage. Master Feng Shaoxing, an inheritor of State-level intangible cultural heritage, displays handmade porcelain techniques on the

site. Zhou Hong, another inheritor of intangible cultural heritage, works on a porcelain painting with fingers. Ding Sheru, an elderly pharmaceutical worker, exhibits traditional Chinese herbal medicine processing technology.

### Part 6: Jiangxi's Advanced Culture

With abundant resources and outstanding residents, Jiangxi is a land of prosperous culture and a treasure of Chinese civilization. A large group of scientists, statesmen, scholars and philosophers were born and nurtured on this piece of land, enjoying wide recognition and admiration at home and abroad. The last part of the exhibition, entitled "Advanced Culture", shows the profound history and glorious culture of Jiangxi, which has long been known as "a land of culture and a region of intellectuals and righteous men".

For such a promotion event, Jiangxi has meticulously prepared some small gifts, which the visitors cannot help but fondle admiringly.

#### Ramie and Xia grass cloth embroidery

In the reception area, there are many cloth bags, inside of which visitors will find souvenirs prepared for them. Well, don't underestimate this bag. It is much more than just a common wrapping. It is pure, handmade grass cloth.

As you may have heard, grass cloth is a kind of plain cloth made of

ramie fiber, manually woven. With fine weave of warp and weft, its texture is one of simplicity and natural beauty. Since ancient times, Jiangxi has been a major producer of ramie in China, and its grass cloth is famous for being "as light and delicate as the cicada's wing, as thin as Xuan paper, as soft as silks and satins and as smooth as a mirror". In 1915, Jiangxi's grass cloth won the gold prize at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, and it has been listed in the State Council's protection programs of State-level intangible cultural heritage.

The graphic pattern on the bag is of exquisite workmanship, which is another kind of State-level intangible cultural heritage, called Xia grass cloth embroidery (or simply Xia embroidery), with extremely high artistic value. Xia embroidery uses traditional hand-woven grass cloth made from ramie fiber, so it is also called grass cloth embroidery or linen embroidery. It is a carrier of the cultural integration of grass cloth and embroidery.

How impressive that this small gift bag consists of two items of State-level intangible cultural heritage! When a visitor leaves the exhibition hall, what he takes is not just a light cloth bag but rather a heavy and profound culture.

Souvenir: Blue-and-white tea set in pattern of interlocked lotus flower

After the story of the gift bag, let's check what's inside. Maybe you've already guessed that inside the

bag is porcelain ware, Jiangxi's most representative product. You're right. It is a piece of blue-and-white tea set in pattern of interlocked lotus flower produced in Jingdezhen, the world's capital of porcelain.

This tea set is made up of a lantern-shaped teapot and two small cups. The porcelain is white and pure, light, transparent and with elegant design. Its pattern is lotus flowers with their stems interlocked, which symbolizes mutual tolerance, inclusiveness and harmony. As a classic inheritance of Jingdezhen, the product adopts the traditional blue-and-white technique of under-glaze color and is completely covered by the pattern of auspicious stripes and interlocked lotus flowers painted by master artists.

The art of blue-and-white porcelain is a perfect combination of craftsmanship and innovative spirit, representing the world's top level of the ceramics and porcelain art. As Jiangxi's signature product with the widest international influence, Jingdezhen porcelain is becoming an important element of Jiangxi's tourism, "going global" and communicating with the outside world. It is the most representative gift for Jiangxi to give to its foreign friends.

Please imagine:

Within three minutes, one cuts a chunk of white peony root as long as one Chinese inch (one Chinese inch equals 3.33 centimeters) into 360 perfect round slices.

Is it only too inconceivable?

### The consummate skill of an elderly pharmaceutical worker

In the exhibition area outside the Blue Hall, Ding Sheru, an elderly pharmaceutical worker, demonstrates his consummate skill on the spot, winning waves of applause and praises from the visitors.

In a long white gown, Ding sat on the chair firmly, with one hand pressing on the white peony root, while the other hand moved a small guillotine knife swiftly, so that slices of the root drifted down one by one. Expressions of amazement from the crowd followed, and people exclaimed and marveled at the demonstration.

Ding is more than 60 years old, and famous for his skill in the manual cutting techniques of Chinese medicinal herbs. In 2014, Ding sliced a chunk of white peony root as long as one Chinese cun into 360 pieces with the guillotine knife in just three minutes. He was then awarded the Guinness Record of Shanghai Great World as “manually cutting the most pieces of Chinese medicinal herbs” from a single root.

Listed in the fourth batch of State-level intangible cultural heritage, the Zhangshu processing techniques of Chinese medicinal herbs is a shining gem in the treasure house of traditional Chinese medicine. It is a unique Chinese processing technique. There is a nationwide saying: “Only if the medicine is grown, produced or manufactured in Zhangshu, will it definitely be more effective.” ■

(Article sources: Jiangxi Network TV.)

## Second Cultural Inheritance and Innovation International Forum held in Fuzhou

### Gathering in Tang Xianzu's hometown to discuss drama development

**Fu Jie**

In September, the season when the osmanthus blossoms, the Tang Xianzu Drama Festival and International Drama Exchange Month was held in Fuzhou, Jiangxi province, hometown of the famous 16th century Chinese dramatist.

On Sept 5, Chinese and foreign scholars and guests gathered in Fuzhou from all over the world to attend the second Cultural Inheritance and Innovation International Forum hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Jiangxi People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Fuzhou government, and shared their views on “inheritance and innovation in drama”.

More than 160 people, including the ambassador of the Republic of Albania to China, the deputy chief of the Spanish embassy, the British consul general (Guangzhou), officials of

the consulates general of the Philippines and Thailand in Xiamen, famous cultural scholars and drama research experts at home and abroad, as well as representatives from Shakespeare's hometown of Stratford district (London) and Cervantes' hometown, Alcala city, attended the forum.

The main meeting in the morning was presided over by Zhao Hui, director of the Jiangxi Foreign Affairs and Overseas Chinese Affairs Office, and Fu Yun, a member of the standing committee of the Fuzhou committee of the Communist Party of China and head of the publicity department. In their addresses, guest speakers voiced their viewpoints on the development trends in cultural inheritance and innovation, and discussed ways to promote foreign cultural exchange and cooperation with Fuzhou.

Ji Wei, deputy director of the cultural exchange department of the Chi-

nese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, said the development of culture requires not only carrying on of inheritance but also, and more important, innovation and advancement with times. He quoted the *Book of Songs* written 3,000 years ago in China: "Although Zhou is an old state, the only way to develop is through innovation." He said that the phrase indicates that our ancestors realized that only by attaching importance to both inheritance and innovation can a nation continue to reach higher levels of civilization.

"Communication makes Cervantes culture more perfect," said Isabel Lozano Renieblas, chairman of the Spain Cervantes Association. "Through communication, Don Quijote de la Mancha, as a representative of Cervantes' fiction, has been adapted as a drama or musical, performed in festivals in the form of stage performance and delighted audiences. That has compensated for Cervantes' regret in drama, and has won both praise and aficionados."

Indeed, cultural inheritance and innovation cannot work behind closed doors. It also needs exchange with other cultures. Fuzhou has provided a stage for us to exchange our thoughts on the development of drama and opera. It is a garden where "a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools contend", as the CPC once advocated for cultural prosperity.

The Albanian ambassador said: "Culture and Art exchange is, and has always been, a core element of our common objective for enhancing

people-to-people communication, trust and synergy, thus winning public understanding and support for deepening bilateral and multilateral cooperation. On the other hand, the Belt and Road Initiative offers a great practical chance for more cultural and educational exchanges between countries, through developing concrete win-win projects. People-to-people ties are an essential element, especially now, in the implementation phase of the initiative."

Karen Maddocks, consul general of the UK in Guangzhou, said: "Today we gather in Fuzhou, Jiangxi province. As we all know, Fuzhou is the hometown of Tang Xianzu. China and the UK share a common wish to protect our drama legacies, as well as to produce innovative new works, and that is why we connect so well. Both Shakespeare and Tang Xianzu created literature that touches our hearts.

Their work captures life and death, passion and desperation, loss and redemption—pretty much the full range of human emotion. Their work is both timeless and contemporary, and both present us with opportunities to be recreated in innovative ways in modern performances today."

Experts and scholars attending the "Three Maestros" seminar in the afternoon reviewed the achievements of Tang, Shakespeare and Cervantes and their ideas on the art of drama, and discussed how to carry on their cultural heritage.

Tang, Shakespeare and Cervantes are all cultural masters. They all adopted stage forms that were popular among their people to create splendid cultural masterpieces.

Zhou Yude, former president of National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts, said: "The three respectable maestros belong to the whole world,



The 2nd Cultural Inheritance and Innovation International Forum



for they made great contributions in world cultural history. Today, scholars at home and abroad come together to share the results of their studies of the three great dramatists. We have a common hope that our forum will become an academic field that 'lets a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools contend'."

The Culture Inheritance and Innovation International Forum is an international high-end forum established by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. It was held in Nanjing for the first time last year and had widespread influence. It has become a brand activity in world cultural exchanges, and has played a positive role in promoting Chinese culture, telling true stories about China and pushing forward Chinese and foreign cultural exchanges. By choosing Tang Xianzu's hometown as the forum venue and "inheritance and innovation of drama" as the theme, the organizers aim to enhance the exchange of excellent Chinese and foreign cultural products. As Fu Yun, the head of the Fuzhou municipal publicity department, said, we hope to "recommend Tang Xianzu drama culture to the outside world, and introduce other countries' excellent drama culture, so as to push Fuzhou's culture industry to a new level."

Fu added: "We sincerely hope that experts and scholars will push forward the research on Tang Xianzu's dramas from a global perspective, so that Fuzhou will become a national example of cultural inheritance and innovation." ■

## TNT Theatre Britain coming to Tang Xianzu's hometown for the first time

**Zeng Zhihong**

On the evening of Sept 26, the Tang Xianzu International Theater in Fuzhou, Jiangxi province, was packed with audiences watching *Twelfth Night*, staged by TNT Theatre Britain. Shakespeare's comic masterpiece tells the story of Viola and her twin brother, who has the exactly same appearance and voice as hers. She cross-dresses as a boy page to help the duke, whom she loves, express adoration for a countess. But she is surprised to find that the countess has fallen in love with the character of the pretended page boy. The love triangle is broken by Viola's twin brother, and finally the story ends with a happy marriage.

The play is filled with romance, and humor is abundant. The actors used their exquisite skills in a wonderful performance, with drama, music and dance perfectly illustrating the pursuit of true love regardless of social status or wealth. The multilevel story structure vividly portrays totally different characters and embodies humanistic concepts of love and life while mirroring society during the primitive accu-

mulation period of British capitalism in the 17th century. The drama follows several threads of plot development and includes a number of interlocked romantic affairs, for a simultaneously intriguing and comic effect. For nearly two hours, the performance deeply engaged the mixed Chinese and foreign audience, drawing laughter and appreciative applause.

Founded in 1980, TNT Theatre Britain is a world-class international touring troupe. It has performed more than 1,000 times in 30 countries, winning a number of big prizes at the Munich biannual art festival, Edinburgh Drama Festival and Tehran Art Festival, and a Singapore government prize. The performance in Fuzhou, was the Shakespearean troupe's first in the hometown of the famous ancient Chinese dramatist Tang Xianzu, at the recommendation of the United Kingdom's Consulate General in Guangzhou. The British actors took part in the activities of the Tang Xianzu Drama Festival and International Drama Exchange Month hosted by the Chinese People's As-

sociation for Friendship with Foreign Countries, China Theatre Association and the Jiangxi provincial government. While bringing a fantastic performance to Chinese and foreign participants at the festival, the British troupe played a role of promoting cultural and art exchanges between China and the UK. It also helped boost communication and mutual understanding between the two peoples.

### Drama workshop

On Sept 26, happy laughter and cheerful voices could be heard coming out of the student activity center at East China University of Technology from time to time. The students made exaggerated body movements and facial expressions, sometimes jumping merrily, sometimes freezing in a dramatic posture.

They were learning stage performance skills in the Eternal Tang Xianzu and Shakespeare Drama Workshop organized by TNT Theatre Britain, East Chi-

na University of Technology's Jiangxi Drama Research Center, and the Fuzhou municipal foreign affairs and overseas Chinese affairs office. Actors from TNT Theatre Britain taught the students about drama's power of expression. The students performed Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet and Tang's Liniang Dream. Their performance won warm applause from the British actors. The students said such things as "I Feel like moving water" and "I feel like a swimming fish" to describe what they were doing. Their dramatic movements represented happiness, tiredness and other things.

TNT Theatre Britain producer Grantly Marshall said that every culture has its own characteristics. Put their similarities and differences on the same stage and the audience will understand, he said, adding that he hoped audiences would accept and appreciate English drama with insight and an open mind.

During their stay in Fuzhou, members of TNT Theatre Britain watched *The Peony Pavilion*, a classic

work by Tang, played in Xuhe Gaoqiang Opera on the evening of Sept25. *The Peony Pavilion* is hailed as a masterpiece of romanticism in Chinese traditional opera history. It depicts the romance between Du Liniang, a maiden living in seclusion, and Liu Mengmei, a young scholar, and their life-and-death separation and reunion. The play lauds the heroine's pursuit of freedom in love and appeals for emancipation. The Xuhe Gaoqiang version of *The Peony Pavilion* retains the plot and main characters of the original work and, on the basis of the Xuhe Gaoqiang (high-pitched) tune, blends Western instruments and traditional folk music to produce a unique work of art featuring both traditional rhyme and modern aesthetics.

Performers captured the love story of Du and Liu with skill and refined singing, striking chords in the heart of the audience. Amid the music lingering in the air as the play ended, audience members felt as if they were still in the dream created by Tang Xianzu and sharing the joy and woe of the characters in the drama.

Producer Marshall told this writer: "Your presentation of *The Peony Pavilion* was one of the best theater performances I have ever seen. It combined brilliant staging with soft, subtle lighting, dance, song and well-coordinated group movement. It was a true glimpse into your impressive cultural heritage, proving at the same time how modern this work of art really is. This is the first time I have ever seen this play staged, and I am sure I will compare any future production of this masterpiece with the performance I saw at Fuzhou on Sept 25, 2017." ■



TNT Theatre Britain actors with students from the East China University of Technology