

Centuries' Connection with China

Dialogue

By BI Weizi

Michael Crook, 72, has lived in Beijing for more than 50 years. Six generations of his family, from his great-grandmother to his grandchildren, have lived in China for over a century, investing a lot of effort in English education in the country, while witnessing its glorious development.

Back in 2004, Crook received the Chinese Government Friendship Award, the highest award given by the Chinese government to honour foreign experts who have made outstanding contributions to China's modernization drive.

"I have lived in Britain, the United States, Canada and other places. But my home is Beijing, and this is the place I know best," Crook told *Science and Technology Daily* at a foreign experts' event in Chengdu. Crook has always seen himself as an insider instead of an outsider or guest. Decades of living experiences in China have not only given him a deep insight into Chinese society, but also endowed him qualities typical of Chinese people, being honest, practical and frugal.

Connecting to China through education
Influenced by his parents, Isabel Crook and David Crook, who dedicated themselves to English teaching in China for their entire lives, Crook sought to also play an active role in education and returned to teach at the Graduate School of the China University of Science and Technology in 1978, after graduating from the University of London.



Michael Crook. (COURTESY PHOTO)

Back then, with China's reform and opening up beginning to unfold, more and more foreigners, including businessmen and diplomats, came to live and work in Beijing. The demand for international schools became stronger. In 1994, Crook and his friends opened the Western Academy of Beijing (WAB), which was one of the first international schools in Beijing, providing foreign children with a valuable opportunity to learn about the wonders of Chinese culture.

"Instead of replicating some Western teaching model in China, I thought we should build a unique international school that could incorporate the magnificent culture of China with our teaching. I hope my students will cherish this experience of living and working in China for the rest of their lives, making friends with Chinese people and learning from China," said Crook.

Now, as one of the top international

schools in China, WAB has 1,400 students from nearly 60 countries and regions and world-class facilities. The school's emblem was designed and written by Crook himself: the traditional Chinese seal, simplified seal script characters and colourful fragments in the corners represent the diversity, openness and tolerance of culture, which also echoes Crook's life philosophy.

Witnessing China's rapid development
During the visit to Chengdu, Crook told *S&T Daily* that he was amazed at this city's advanced science and technology development and excellent infrastructure construction, adding that he has special feelings for Chengdu since his mother was born here and spent the very first few years of her life here too.

"Chengdu has changed a lot in the past few decades. When I was a child, there weren't so many skyscrapers and cars," he said, adding that China de-

serves immense credit for its efforts to improve people's livelihood and lift millions of people out of poverty.

"China is a big agricultural country. I think China has created a miracle, lifting hundreds of millions of people out of poverty," said Crook. He cited his visit to a primary school in Xizang autonomous region this May as an example.

After checking out the excellent teaching facility, Crook sat through a Tibetan language class, and was delighted to see the entire class conducted in Tibetan language, not a word of Han spoken by teacher or student, nor a single Han character written. China is a rich, multi-ethnic country, while all the students had a good command of Putonghua - "common speech", their traditional culture is also being preserved. The students' lunch provided by the school also appeared delicious. He said this achievement is a testament to the great leadership of the Communist Party of China.

For the benefit of all

Crook said that China is now further opening up to the outside world and sharing the fruits of development with the world. With the continuous improvement of its international status, China is participating in international affairs with a more active attitude and playing an increasingly important role on the international stage.

China gaining economic strength and having a stronger voice are good things for the world. Because China emphasizes harmony, cooperation and win-win, said Crook, the advantage of China's socialist system is one of the key contributing factors in China's development.

China Impression · Nanjing

Nanjing: Harvesting Innovative Vitality

By QI Liming

When mentioned Nanjing, capital city of Jiangsu province of southeast China, the historic city leaves people with many reveries and memories, as well as the infinite vitality unleashed by the sci-tech development.

Through participating in some events with foreign experts from all over China, *Science and Technology Daily (S&T Daily)* felt impression of them on the vivacious city Nanjing.

Seeing is believing
When asked about his first impression of Nanjing after three-day visiting, Nathan Stott from Ningbo Institute of Materials Technology & Engineering, Chinese Academy of Sciences, told *S&T Daily* that, "As an American, although this is my first time visiting in Nanjing, what impressed me most is that it is a highly inclusive city." The schedule of this Nanjing trip showed that Nanjing is constantly making progress and seeking a better future with the help of science and technology eagerly, Stott said.

As for his second time's visiting in Nanjing, coming from Syria, Asad Khalil, Professor of Southwest University of Political Science & Law, said that he even wants to settle in Nanjing permanently. "One of the most impressive aspects of my visit was witnessing the collaborative spirit between international and Chinese talents. Nanjing has become a melting pot for experts and innovators from all over the world, and the exchange of ideas and expertise that occurs within Nanjing's borders is a shining example of global cooperation in action," he said.

The visit to Nanjing offered a glimpse into a city that is not only embracing innovation but actively shaping it. With its international reputation as a hub for innovation, Nanjing is further solidified by its dedication to sustainability, he added.

As a Chinese American, Yang Meijia, chief scientific officer of Jiangsu Cell Tech Medical Research Institute, used a word of Chinese "博爱 (universal love)" to describe the city. "Nanjing has demonstrated the development con-

cept of the world for the common good," said Yang, adding that Nanjing is rich in history and culture, with an indomitable spirit and harmonious co-existence between man and nature. The harmony of patience and resilience of the city's residents rooted in the soul of the city.

Listening is learning

Nanjing is a sci-tech vibrant city that never stops exploring. The sci-tech clusters here are blessed with many universities, research institutions, high-tech parks, and many foreign companies have settled here. When the entrepreneurs who settled in Nanjing made suggestions for the development of Nanjing from their own experiences, they gave advice rationally and without reservation.

Austrian Vitaly Ignatovich, founder and chairman of Jiangsu AgrioCom IoT Co., Ltd, first commented Nanjing from his own experience that "Nanjing has a good business environment, infrastructure and favorable policies for trade. It is a gathering place for college talents."

Meanwhile, foreign experts also gave some useful suggestions for personnel exchanges and city's development. Ignatovich suggested that it is necessary to establish professional platforms to display information and policies, which not only provide foreigners employment information in China, but also help local entrepreneurs to hire much-needed foreign employees. Stott said, "Making the international colleagues want to stay in China is more important than bringing them in."

Australian Lloyd Townley, chairman and chief technology officer of Nanjing Zhiyou Technology Development Co., Ltd., started a business in Nanjing in 2019. He proposed to build an open and innovative ecosystem, build trust among partnerships and be willing to share, facilitate each part of business system, make them work in a virtuous cycle through holding various sci-tech competition, etc.

In the eyes of these foreigners, it is essential to learn Chinese history and culture in addition to the country's language.

My China Story

Pakistani Researcher, We All Benefit from BRI

By Yin Wei

Moazz Awan's family has a long connection with China. Both his grandfather and his father studied and worked in China, and the young man from Pakistan is following in their footsteps, currently doing his PhD at Tianjin University (TJU). "When I was young, I lived in China with my father for a while, so I have strong feelings for China," he said. After completing high school, Awan chose to study in China.

He has developed several personal ties with China. He worked as a senior public relations manager at the Karot Hydropower Plant in Pakistan's eastern province Punjab, a major green energy venture under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This personal link to the BRI made Awan look forward to the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held in Beijing on Oct. 17-18. "The forum definitely promotes high-quality development of the BRI," he said.

Awan's other link is his appearance in the Pakistan episode of *The Call of the Silk Road*, a TV documentary by China Global Television Network, where he spoke about his involvement in the construction and development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the BRI's flagship project in Pakistan. In the documentary, he spoke about the benefits of the hydropower project: "Pakistan benefits [from] the abundant 720 MW of clean and green energy, making the vision of BRI a tangible reality."

He also spoke of Chinese President Xi Jinping first proposing the concept of a modern Silk Road Economic Belt, during his visit to the Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan in 2013, calling on young people worldwide to join hands in building a community with a shared future for all. "I was immediately attracted to this concept and made up my mind to participate in this cause," Awan said.

After completing his undergraduate studies, Awan pursued his master's and doctorate at the School of Civil Engineering at TJU, focusing on the sus-

tainable development of infrastructures in countries along the BRI, especially the CPEC.

Asked about the impact of the CPEC on Pakistan, Awan said, "The infrastructure projects of CPEC have improved Pakistan's transportation system. The construction of the Karot Hydropower Plant alleviated Pakistan's power shortage, which has had a profound impact on Pakistan's economic landscape."

When he was working for the Karot Hydropower Plant, Awan and his team were mainly responsible for implementing corporate social responsibility projects in the surrounding areas. "We helped build schools, hospitals and parks, [launched] clean water systems for drinking and vocational training for residents, and repaired roads to improve transportation. Those are all tangible achievements of China-Pakistan cooperation. In a word, we all benefit from the BRI."

Awan is also telling China's stories to the outside world. He uses various domestic and international media platforms to tell the stories of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and China's development from the perspective of a foreign student. During the 20th CPC National Congress last year, he co-authored a front-page article in Pakistan's national newspaper *The Nation*, titled "The 20th National Congress Resonates Across the Himalayas."

At TJU, Awan is further delving into how the CPEC can play a long-term role in the development of Pakistan and the western region of China.

"The CPEC is a comprehensive development system that involves in-depth cooperation in various fields such as infrastructure construction, economic cooperation, trade, and personnel exchanges. Through in-depth research and exploration, I hope to provide valuable insights and suggestions for [its] sustainable development, thus laying a solid foundation for long-term cooperation between the two countries," he said.

The author is a staff working at the Publicity Department of TJU.



Moazz Awan works with his team member at the site of Karot Hydropower Plant. (PHOTO: COURTESY PHOTO)

Mileage Drum Wagon: Ancient Way of Calculating Miles

Traditional Eastern Wisdom

By ZONG Shihan

In modern society, every car is equipped with an automatic odometer to record the distance traveled. However, in China, as early as in the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD), a device known as the mileage drum wagon was invented. It can be said that the mileage drum wagon is a pioneer of modern odometers.

Its basic principle is to calculate mileage by means of differential gears. The wagon has a set of differently-sized

gears connected to the axle. When the wheel rotates, it makes the gears rotate as well.

The mileage drum wagon gets its name from the mechanical-driven wooden figure on the wagon carrying a drum and a bell and connected to the gears.

When the wagon travels one li (or 500 meters), the gear controlling the figure rotates once, causing it to hit the drum once with its mechanical-operated arm. When the wagon travels ten lis, the figure rings the bell. A person sitting in the carriage can tell how far the carriage has traveled just by hearing the sound.

In addition to calculating mileage, the mileage drum wagon was also a ceremonial vehicle for Chinese emperors to travel. Therefore it was large and luxuriously decorated to show the emperor's supreme status.

The mileage drum wagon embodies the wisdom of ancient Chinese people. However, it didn't automatically record mileage, and the passengers had to count the number of drum

beats to gauge the distance covered. But after more than 2,000 years of the development of science and technology, modern odometers have addressed that by recording the mileage electronically.



The mileage drum wagon at the Six Dynasties Museum in Nanjing city, Jiangsu province. (PHOTO: VCG)

New Gwadar Airport Witnesses Takeoff of China-Pakistan Friendship

From page 1

Commended for quality work

The construction of the airport has received strong support from the Pakistani government, which includes providing three transmission lines to continuously supply power to the airport, and actively cooperating with opening the human resources training course for training airport personnel.

The Chinese efforts went beyond

the realm of project work. In 2022, when Pakistan encountered torrential rains that triggered devastating floods, the project team donated relief materials to the local people.

Due to the quality of cooperative work, the project team has been commended by the Chinese Consulate General in Karachi, Pakistan's financial center, and received the honorary title of "Outstanding Camp for Overseas Projects" in 2021.