



Thailand

*a Country Where Nature Blends
with Culture*

News in Brief

The Pursuit of Chinese Language and Culture
by a Princess of a Buddhist Country

DRC Takes Me around the World

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THE DIPLOMATS'

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Message from Ambassador to China

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Autographed Message from H.E. Mr. Wiboon Khusakul, Ambassador of Thailand to China:

Form Ties of Close Affinity with The Diplomats'

(Reading Delights in BDS)

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News at a Glance
News in Brief

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1

**Assistant Minister Qian Hongshan Meets
the Newly Posted Cyprus Ambassador
to China**



On May 21, 2014, Qian Hongshan, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs met Mr. Agis Loizou, the newly posted Cyprus Ambassador to China.

Assistant Foreign Minister Qian said China and Cyprus have long maintained excellent relations of cooperation and the Chinese government has attached great importance to the development of China's traditional friendly relations with Cyprus. He said he is convinced that H.E. Mr. Ambassador could further push forward the development of the friendly cooperation between the two countries. As an establishment affiliated to the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, BDS (Beijing Service Bureau for Diplomatic Missions) is willing to provide its strong support to H.E. the Ambassador for his performance of official duties and also his efforts to further promote the development of the bilateral relations. Mr. Ambassador Agis Loizou expressed his heartfelt thanks and said he will make every effort to contribute to the strengthening of the friendly cooperation between Cyprus and China and between the two peoples as well.

2

The 11th International Grape Conference cum the First International Wine Exposition Held in Yanqing, Beijing

The 11th International Grape Conference cum the First International Wine Exposition co-sponsored by the Yanqing County Government and China Jiaoyuan Corporation for International Economic and Technical Cooperation was held in Yanqing, Beijing from July 29 to 31, 2014. Responsible members of the Ministry of Agriculture, relevant leaders of Beijing Municipality and Mr. Yuan Weimin, deputy director general of Beijing Service Bureau for Diplomatic Missions (BDS) were present on the occasion.

For this International Wine Exposition, BDS specially invited five renowned international wineries, namely Chateau Mouton Rothschild and Collin-Bourisset from France, Torres from Spain, Bodega Achaval-Ferrer from Argentina and Sannicolas from Chile, and also arranged for over 400 professionals including more than 70 foreign diplomatic envoys to attend.



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3 The First Liangmaqiao • Chinese and Foreign Cultural Show by Diplomats

On June 21, 2014, the First Liangmaqiao • Chinese and Foreign Cultural Show by Diplomats was held at Liangmaqiao Diplomatic Residence Compound Beijing by Beijing Housing Service Corporation for Diplomatic Missions. Ambassadors and their wives or charge d' affaires of more than 20 countries, over 200 other diplomatic officers of more than 40 countries, senior representatives of international organizations and foreign media and their family members were invited to the show. Ms. Jiang Qi, deputy director general of BDS said that BDS has all along been committed to the mutual integration of diversified cultures of the world and also the enhancement of exchanges and cooperation between different cultures. This show is aimed to enrich the cultural life of foreign diplomats in China and make a new platform for the exchanges of diplomatic cultures. This show is also a successful trial for the Housing Service Co. to expand its service scope, raise service quality and renovate its service content.



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4 Diplomatic Envoys Tour Qinhuangdao

From July 4 to 6, 2014, the City Government of Qinhuangdao sponsored an investigation tour for foreign diplomatic envoys in China to "See the Mountain and Sea Sights in Qinhuangdao and also Experience its Local Customs". More than 30 diplomatic officers, including ambassadors or charge d' affaires of Montenegro, Croatia, Ecuador, Jamaica and Belgium, and their family members attended this tour upon invitation. Responsible members of the Qinhuangdao city government and Wang Bingnan, deputy director general of BDS accompanied the envoys in the tour.

Diplomatic envoys investigated on the spot the Economic and Technical Development Zone of Qinhuangdao city, the New District of Beidaihe, Changli Great Wall Huaxia Wine Industrial Park under COFCO and also Bodega Langes



Winery invested by the Swarovski Company of Austria. They expressed their willingness to make new contributions to furthering the exchanges and cooperation in such areas as the bilateral economic and cultural ties.



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5 Lecture on TCM and Workshop on Health Preservation

On May 30, 2014, a bilingual workshop on Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Health Preservation of the Third China Beijing International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) was held at the Beijing International Conference Center which was attended by the ambassadors of Madagascar and Austria and also scores of other diplomatic officers of the embassies of Pakistan, Zambia and so on at the invitation of the Ring-do Cultural Co. and Tayuan DRC Property Management Office of the Housing Service Co.

This workshop was designed to promote TCM culture and spread TCM science popularization knowledge so as to help foreign diplomats in China feel the appeals of TCM culture.



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6 The Chief Butler of Hotel St. Regis Beijing Awarded by the White House for “Outstanding Contributions”

Mr. Ru Bing, manager of the Butler Services of Hotel St. Regis Beijing has been awarded several times by the U.S. White House for his “outstanding contributions” in rendering excellent service to the successive U.S. presidents when they visited China. On June 3, 2014, the local paper Beijing Evening News devoted a whole page to a report on the awarded butler.

7 Living in Beijing Book Series Published

Of late, Beijing Language and Cultural Center for Diplomatic Missions (LCC) and Beijing's Chaoyang District Community College co-published Living in Beijing-Get a Taste of Local Culture, Living in Beijing-Get a Taste of Local Life and Living in Beijing-Get a Taste of Chinese Language.

The three books, all written in both Chinese and English and with each having its own focus, offer detailed introduction to various aspects of daily life in Beijing from food, dressing, housing, traveling to thinking and culture of Chinese people. In addition, patterns and common dialogues of the Chinese language which are of great practical value are also selected for the content of these books so as to facilitate the learning of readers who can find quick references in the books.



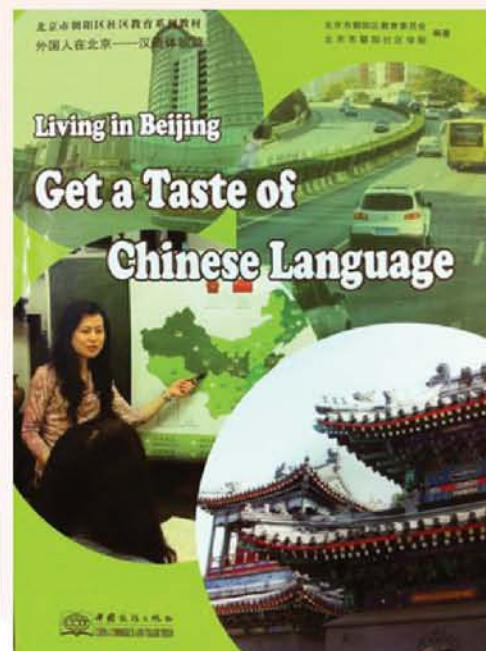
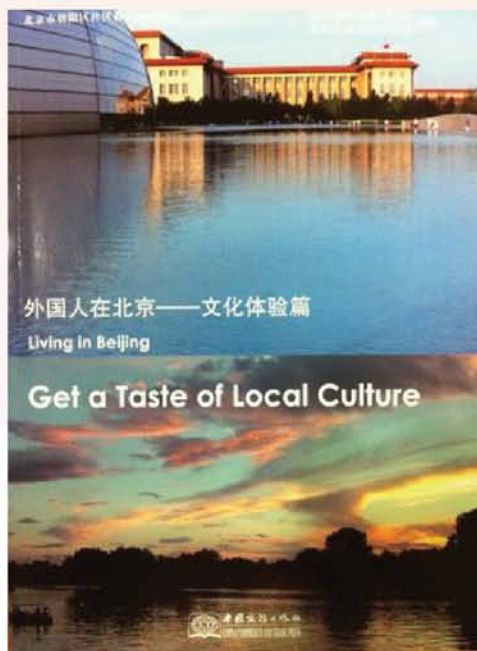
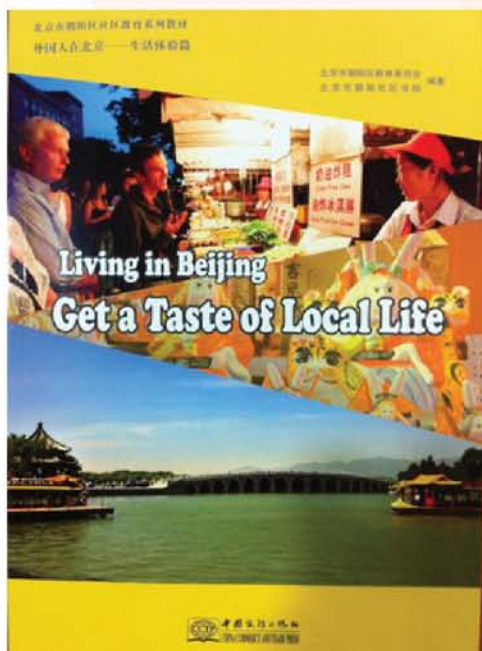
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【 Events of Diplomatic Missions 】

04 Patriarch of the Autumn Launched in China

On June 10, 2014, Chinese edition of Patriarch of the Autumn authorized by Gabriel Garcia Marquez was launched in the Embassy of Columbia in China. Chen Zongyi, director of the Foreign Literatures Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Science and book critique Zhi An came to the scene to share their feelings about the reading of this book with the guests.



The book is Gabriel Garcia Marquez's eighth novel translated into Chinese with the authorization of the author, the late Nobel Laureate and hallucinatory realism literature master. Although to most of the Chinese readers, this book is not as well known as *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *Love in the Time of Cholera*, it not only pushes hallucinatory realism to the zenith, but also serves as an excellent display of the author's artistic quality in the realms of poetry and music, thus being acclaimed by many literature critiques as the supreme master piece by Marquez to prove his literary attainment.

"Of all novels in various languages for almost 50 years, Patriarch of the Autumn is the greatest. In inconceivable epic language, Marquez wrote this works which nobody else could attempt to achieve."

— By the British writer Sir Salman Rushdie

(From Renmin Network)



In the evening of July 2, 2014, a reception was held by the embassy of Belarus to mark the 70th anniversary of the independence of Belarus at the Kempinski Hotel, Beijing. Cheng Guoping, vice Chinese foreign minister, Mr. Viktor Burya, the ambassador of Belarus to China, diplomatic officers of various countries and guests from various circles attended the reception.

Ambassador Viktor Burya and Vice Minister Cheng Guoping addressed the reception respectively and they enjoyed the singing and dancing performances full of the charms of Belarus national customs together with the guests. Representatives of the editorial board of The Diplomats' were among the invitees and they distributed to the guests over 200 copies of the magazine in Chinese or English.



02 Republic of Belarus Independence Day Reception by the Embassy of Belarus





The Pursuit of Chinese Language and Culture by a Princess of a Buddhist Country

— The Close Affinity of Thai Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn with the Chinese Culture

By Zhu Xiaoxing

Professionals Profile

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Bond with China and Affinity with Teachers

Her Royal Highness Thai Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn is the second daughter of King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand. Under the guidance of the Thai Queen Sirikit, she was eager to learn even from early childhood and showed her linguistic talents in particular. At the age of 25, the Princess was already well versed in the languages of English, French, Khmer, Pali and Sanskrit. At that time, she once intended to study German. However, her mother suggested to her: "You might as well learn Chinese, and be sure to master this language." Maybe since then the Princess has established an indissoluble bond with China.

In the 1960s of the 20th century, the Princess came to China as a student and she enjoyed loving care by the late Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai. After she returned to Thailand upon completion of her study in China and starting from 1984, the Chinese government has sent successively quite several senior teachers including Wang Ye, Gu Yajiong, Li Tianfu, Wang Junxiang, Fan Chunming, Ma Yanhua, Han Jiekuang, Zhu Xiaoxing and Yu Wenhong to the Chinese embassy in Thailand so as to continue to help the Princess with her Chinese study. Towards each and every teacher, the Princess has shown her considerate attention and care. If a teacher gets sick, the Princess would send her secretary to come over with flowers and fruits for a visit. In case the teacher misses the chance to join the staff of the Chinese embassy in their weekend activities just because of the special teaching program designed for her, the Princess would entrust her secretary to make it up for the teacher with visits to various scenic spots during their spare time, and her secretary would serve as the tour guide. All the gifts presented to her by the teachers, big or small, would be well kept by the Princess and displayed conspicuously at home. Every April the Princess would pay an official visit to China, and she would invite all the teachers for a get-together to renew their friendship on the sideline of her visit. More over, in 2002, the Princess made a special visit to Beijing Language and Cultural Center for Diplomatic Missions (LCC) from which all the teachers have been sent. During this visit she wrote an inscription of “A Bridge of Friendship” in Chinese, leaving a precious piece of calligraphy for the center.

This section of teacher-and-student bond has lasted for nearly

30 years so far. Mutually beneficial and promotional in terms of teaching and learning, it has yielded bumper fruits. The Princess not only speaks fluent Chinese, but has also read and translated a great number of Chinese classical literature and modern/contemporary Chinese literature works, thus becoming a “China Hand” in its real sense. Her translation works, covering various literature genres, subjects and styles, and involving works in different historical periods, range from the translation of over 200 Tang Poems and Song Verses to the translation of novels by some well known contemporary Chinese writers such as Wang Meng, Fang Fang, Wang Anyi and Chi Li. With such huge attainment, the Princess has made outstanding contributions to the enhancement of the China-Thailand good neighborly relations and the expansion of the cultural exchanges between the two countries. As a result, the Princess has successively won the “Chinese Language and Culture Friendship Award” by the Chinese Ministry of Education, the “Understanding



Thailand Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn with her teachers

and Friendship International Literature Award” by the Chinese Literature Fund of the Chinese Writers Association and also the “Peoples Friendship Envoy Award” by the Association of the Chinese People for Friendship with Foreign Countries. Through online polling, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn was elected one of the “Top Ten International Friends of China” in 2009. So like Bethune, Snow and Samaranch, she became a foreign friend with the greatest contributions to and the closest affinity with China and best loved by the Chinese people as well. At the award giving ceremony, the Princess spoke in Chinese on behalf of all the awardees. She said: “The meaning of the phrase ‘friend’ is both profound and beautiful. A genuine friend is more valuable than any treasure in the world. My fellow award winners and I do hope that one day mankind can spread the friendship all over the world. It is my sincere belief that only if peoples from different countries live harmoniously, can we realize our hope of creating a more peaceful, graceful and civilized world as expected by the whole mankind.”



Princess Sirindhorn wrote an inscription of "A Bridge of Friendship" in Chinese for the LCC

A Long Journey of Tireless Study

As the crowned Princess, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn is deeply loved by the Thai people. Her intelligent mind and assiduous study have become all the more popular topics. For more than 30 years, no matter how busily occupied with her work, the Princess has always insisted on having three hours Chinese learning session every Saturday. Even if she has just come back from abroad and still suffers from the jet lag, she would simply keep on and seldom ask for leave. Throughout the study process, the Princess is always willing to think and good at finding problems. For example, when she studied the acclaimed modern Chinese poem of Good-bye to Cambridge Again by Xu Zhimo, she suddenly asked a question: “Since Cambridge was translated as ‘康桥’ (Kang Bridge) at that time, then why people retranslated it later on as ‘剑桥’ (Jian Bridge)?” As a matter of fact, several explanations have been offered to this question and no consensus has been reached so far in the academic circle. Nevertheless, the Princess would not stop at that. Afterwards, during her meetings with Chinese leaders, the Princess several times raised the question with great interest and had heated discussions with people present on the occasion. Another example is about how the Princess dug into the exact meaning of the Chinese character “床” (pronounced as chuang) in Li Bai’s poem. Once she studied an article concerning the textual research of “床” as mentioned in Li Bai’s poem Thoughts on a Silent Night. Usually people would take “床” in this poem for a bed, but the author of the article argues that it actually means something like railings around a well or a small campstool. The Princess was amazed by this explanation and kept the question

in mind. In April 2011, during her visit to China, Chen Zhili, vice chairwoman of the National People's Congress gave a welcoming banquet at which the Princess mentioned the question. When she visited the home place of Li Bai in Sichuan, again she raised the question about this article.

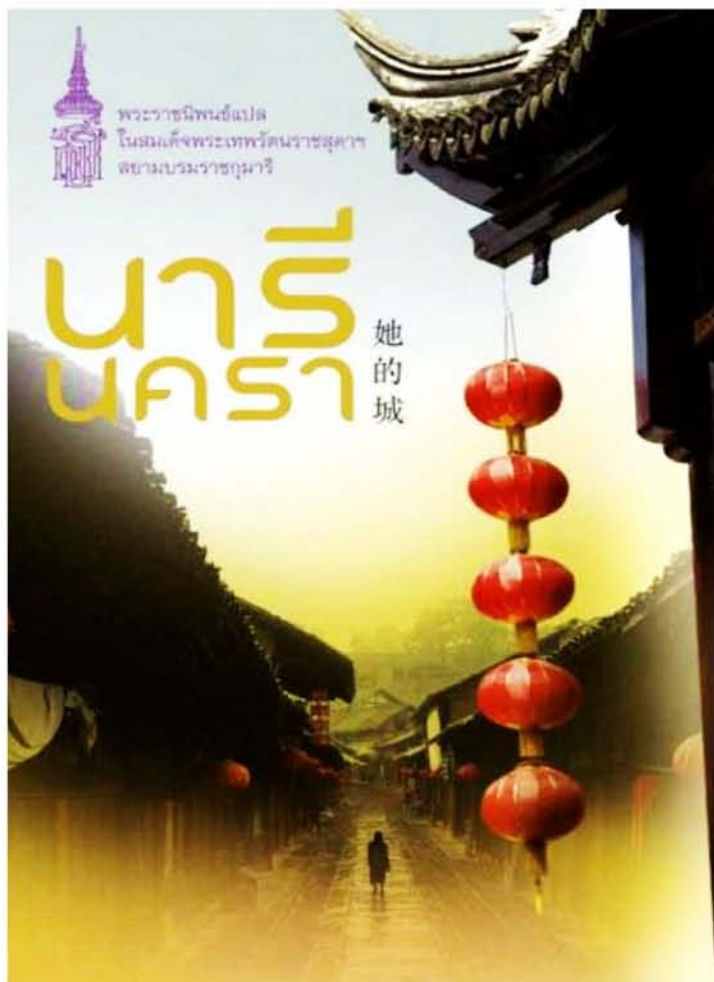
A popular saying goes: "Read ten thousand books and travel ten thousand li." So study and research of Chinese language and culture spurred the Princess to personally experience the Chinese society and get first hand experience of the commoners' life in China. It is already 33 years since her first China visit at the invitation of the Chinese government. During these years, she has left her foot prints in many places from the Capital Beijing to the remote border regions, from bustling cities to out-of-the way and poverty-stricken mountain villages. Almost following each visit to China, the Princess would put down what she has seen and heard plus what she has reflected upon in writing. Her books such as *Stepping on the Land of the Dragon* and *Long Journey on the Silk Road* have all left great impacts on Thailand and attracted keen interest in China on the part of the Thai people.

In 2011, after she heard the introduction to the culture of the Western and Eastern Han Dynasties from her teacher, she requested for a visit to Xuzhou. To many foreigners, Xuzhou is a Chinese city seldom heard of. But the Princess got an understanding of the world famous Han culture and acquainted herself with the warm-hearted and simple-living Xuzhou people.



Left: Princess Sirindhorn. *Stepping on the Land of the Dragon*
Right: Princess Sirindhorn. *Long Journey on the Silk Road*

She said at an interview: "I have been learning Chinese history for quite some time. But reading alone cannot enable me to understand everything. My Chinese teacher told me that the time-honored Han culture is well known and worth seeing. Today I have seen many historic relics left from the Han dynasties. They are so beautiful and I have also learned about lots of ancient techniques. I am happy about all this." Out of her profound fondness for the archaeology relics left from the Han Dynasties, the Princess made a special trip to Cambridge University in England for a visit to the Han Dynasties Jade Objects Exhibition held there by Xuzhou Museum. Although the Princess's visit to Xuzhou was short, many Thai people could still get a few glimpse of the ancient city of Xuzhou on television. In 2012 the direct flight from Xuzhou to Bangkok was opened, greatly facilitating the exchanges between the peoples of the two countries.



Chi Li. *Her City*. Translated by Princess Sirindhorn

with tender feelings and in an emotional expression touched the whole audience visibly. She said: "The mutual concerns and the good faith reflected in the minute details of even returning a small plate of pickles for borrowing just a spoonful of salt are the heart-to-heart alliance among people." On the display board, the Princess listed in both Chinese and Thai languages several sentences as her favorites. In the book, there are quite a number of pictures taken from her unique perspectives which seem to be able to take the readers to Wuhan. "All these photos were taken by me myself!" With both her hands posing for the shape of a "camera" and in standard Mandarin, the Princess told Ms. Li Xiaolin, president of the Association of the Chinese People for Friendship with Foreign countries who was then on a visit to Thailand.

Her City, Her Heart

In 2012, the Princess started to translate Chi Li's novel *Her City*. As many things peculiar to Wuhan such as "shoe-polishing shop" and "local snacks" are mentioned in the book, the Princess seemed to be particularly curious. She said to Guan Mu, the Chinese ambassador to Thailand: "I am presently translating Chi Li's novel, yet I have no idea about the hot-and-dry noodle and the round and dented rice cake. Can I have a taste of Wuhan cuisines at your embassy?" The ambassador answered the Princess with great pleasure: "The cooks at the embassy are unable to prepare Wuhan dishes. More over, we don't have the required ingredients. So I have invited two chefs from Wuhan to come to Thailand so that we can especially invite Your Highness to taste Wuhan dishes." In this way, Hubei delicacies entered the Thai royal palace for the first time. At that time, the Princess was newly discharged from the hospital and this was the first banquet she attended in the wake of her operation. However, the Princess took photo of each and every course before tasting them carefully.

In March 2013, the Thai language version of *Her City* was launched in Bangkok. "I was so moved by the novel that at several points I was just in tears." What the Princess said at the launching ceremony

In April 2013, the Princess flew to Wuhan from Thailand. Holding in her hand the book of Her City in the Thai language version, she walked through all the scenes as described in the book: Dr. Sun Yat-sen Avenue, Lianbao Lane, Jiangnan Road, Water Tower, Xiangong Hotel and the Bund of Hankou..... Standing on the pedestrian overpass above Jiangnan Road, the Princess turned the book to the last page where a city map of Wuhan is attached. Pointing to the sights, the Princess acclaimed: "Dr. Sun Yat-sen Avenue, Water Tower, Jiangnan Road, they are all covered in the book. Today I have seen all these with my own eyes!" The Princess's greatest concern was the where-about of the Sweet Sister's Shoe-Polishing Shop as mentioned in the book. However, after walking through the whole Jiangnan Road, that shop was still nowhere to be found. The Princess asked three times in Chinese: "Is there no shoe-polishing shop at all now?" To satisfy the wish of the Princess, the local supporting staff finally found a shoe-polishing shop just near her hotel. An accompanying Thai reporter disclosed: "The Princess had her shoes polished there and paid the polisher 100 RMB." In the book of Her City, the heroine polishes a pair of extremely filthy shoes for a male customer. And the payment she gets is exactly 100 yuan, an "astonishing" amount for the job! On the Pedestrian Zone of Jiangnan Road, the Princess stopped in front of the renowned



bronze statue of Hot-and-Dry Noodle. She moved up to the "noodle table" and sat down by it. Then she imitated a noodle cook by performing the act of scooping up a bunch of noodle from a pot of boiling water. At this point, someone joked with her by saying: "Your Highness princess, how about a bowl of hot-and-dry noodle?" The joke set the Princess laughing. Afterwards she told the reporter: "This morning I had some hot-and-dry noodle with sesame paste and also the deep fried rice cake for breakfast. They are really delicious!"

This is Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, who is so cordial and sincere. Highbred and noble class as she is, she is not in the least overbearing in her conducts. As a friendship envoy between China and Thailand, she has a heart of profound love for the Chinese people and the Chinese culture, a bright, kind and beautiful heart indeed.



Up: Princess Sirindhorn visited the Pedestrian Zone of Jiangnan Road in Wuhan.

Down: Princess Sirindhorn imitated a noodle cook by performing the act of scooping up a bunch of noodle from a pot of boiling water.

Some Observations on Qixi

By Deep Breath



Chinese Culture

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In the Chinese calendar, the 7th of July is Double Seventh Festival, which is recently called Chinese Valentine's Day. Besides the Chinese mystic background and traditional custom, what is the cultural integration and inheritance in this traditional Chinese Festival?

Looking out towards the southwest from Building No.1 of Jianwai DRC, a small grey-colored gate tower among a cluster of modern reinforced concrete buildings comes into view conspicuously. This is exactly Beijing's nearly 600 years' old ancient observatory, the historical site of one of the most time-honored astronomical observatories in the world.

Without the modern metropolitan night illuminations, the sky with all the shining stars in the ancient times must be extremely enchanting. In particular, the milk-colored light belt across the skyline would provide people with sources for endless imaginations and dreaming. The ancient Greek thought it was composed of stains of milk carelessly sprayed over by Heracles, an illegitimate son of Zeus when he sucked Goddess Hera's breast milk by stealth. That is why it is still referred to as the Milky Way in English today. Whereas, it is considered by Chinese to be a heavenly river marked out with a gold hairpin by the Queen of Heaven (also translated as the Supreme Goddess in the Paradise) when she tried to obstruct the love between her immortal daughter (the Girl Weaver) and her de facto mortal son-in-law (the Cowherd). And that is why it is called Yinhe (Silver River, i.e. Galaxy) in Chinese.

The fairy tale about the Cowherd and the Girl Weaver first appeared in Strange Stories during the period of the Southern and Northern Dynasties and later on got popular among the general public before it quickly became a model of stories of a particular type: a poverty-stricken farmer falls in love at the

first sight with a fairy who longs for the mundane world from her immortal Heaven. But most unfortunately, the love story is found out by the Heaven ruler. The loving couple has to be separated in the wake of their punishment with the enforcement of the rules and disciplines of the Heaven. However, following lots of hardship and ordeals, the couple and the whole family get reunited. In different versions of the story, the fairy girl should either be the daughter of the Jade Emperor of the Heaven (or translated as the Ethereal Emperor) or the daughter of the Dragon King at the bottom of the sea. In short these fairies are all kind and beautiful with command of certain magic power. They have got bored of their life as deities and long for the life of commoners in the human world. In contrast, however, the farmer must be a fire-wood cutter, a fisher, a hunter or even a scholar, and the boy must be honest and hardworking, yet poor and helpless. In all, the Cowherd and the Girl Weaver are two prototypes of all the stories of this kind. Interestingly, the immortals in the Chinese fairy tales usually live a boring and monotonous life and they are strict, prudent and rigid in their conducts in spite of their all mighty power and immortal life-span. Therefore, there are always some immortals that would endeavor to flee the Heaven out of their love and longing for human "freedom".

However, in sharp contrast, the immortals in the ancient Greek mythology live a more unrestrained and licentious life than mortals. The supreme king Zeus himself is a play boy with



constant sex scandals. The immortals under him are all jealous of and contend with each other for power and beauty. There it is indeed something rare for an immortal to long for mortal life. Instead it is a common sight for immortals to go after lustful life.

Take Zeus for an example, he feels it is far from enough for him to have the beautiful queen Hera alone. So more often than not he descends upon the human world to hunt for beautiful ladies and thus have many illegitimate children. The whole ancient Greek mythology comprises mostly stories about many immortals having children out of wed lock.

Against such cultural backdrops, the aesthetic taste in China is naturally widely different from that of the West. Jane Austin once said: "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife." Nonetheless, putting in the context of the traditional Chinese mythology, this statement could be adapted into such a line: "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single fairy girl in possession of absolute beauty must be married to a poor boy."

It is sunny with few clouds in Beijing's autumn. Although the

stars in the night sky are dimmed by the dazzling city lights, a few bright stars could still be recognized with our naked eyes. Towards the northwest in the sky there are three shining stars. The two on the sides are respectively Aquila α and Lyra α which are respectively called the Altair (Cowherd Star) and the Vega (Girl Weaver Star) in China. The one more or less closer to the middle is the main star in Cygnus which is exactly located midstream in the Silver River (the Milky Way). According to the Chinese folk legend, on the 7th night of every 7th lunar month, the Cowherd and the Girl Weaver would have a date on this Heavenly River. This is the only meeting time for the couple in a whole year.

This love tragedy cum comedy comes to the end in such a wonderful manner (reunion once in a year), which is completely different from the mode of great comedy (complete reunion) or great tragedy (death for the sake of love) about the traditional Chinese love stories. Therefore it holds unique appeal: With both romance of missing each other at different places and the cruelty of the parting in life and the separation by death, which generates both happiness and grief, the story could well





compete with the Sisyphus in the ancient Greek mythology who incessantly pushes stones up the mountain.

The legend about Lyra, home to the Vega (Weaver Star), is also worth mentioning: Lyra was the son of Apollo and also a musical instrument of Orpheus, a renowned poet and singer of the ancient Greece. It is said that his wife was bitten to death by a poisonous snake. He, on the strength of a sad and miserable song, touched Pluto in the Netherworld who promised to bring his wife back to life. But Pluto set one precondition: He should not turn back to see his beloved wife on the way out of the Netherworld. However, finally he could not help turning back to cast a glance at his wife when he was just about to step out of the Netherworld. As a result, everything promising vanished instantly, and the couple from then on was separated into the two worlds without any prospect of reunion. Compared with such a complete tragic ending, the outcome of the story about the Cowherd and the Girl Weaver seems to have granted more food for thought. Maybe that is the secret about why this Chinese story is still so popular till this date.

In ancient China, the Qixi Festival (also known as the Double

Seventh Festival) was originally observed as the Daughter's Day which is also referred to as the Qiqiao (It means begging for arts and crafts if translated literally) Festival. On this night young girls all did some needling work and prayed to the Girl Weaver for a pair of deft hands. Young couples also wanted to get some blessings from the immortal couple in the hope that their own love would be equally everlasting and the family would be most harmonious. Such a custom had already become quite popular by the Tang Dynasty over 1300 years ago. The great Chinese poet Bai Juyi wrote in his Song of the Everlasting Regret: "In the Palace of Eternal Life, at the Qixi's midnight and with nobody around, the emperor and his sweet heart are pouring out words of love from the bottoms of their hearts." This line portrays the profound love tucked in the inner court between Emperor Ming of the Tang Dynasty (also known as Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty, and his lover, the Imperial Concubine Yang. No wonder the contemporary Chinese put the label of the Chinese Valentine's Day on the Qixi Festival. Here we can find the source of this naming.





Sharing the Full Moon with a Cup of Wine in Hand

As the summer heat gradually receding, we will usher in another golden fall in Beijing. And the annual Mid-Autumn Festival is quietly approaching us too. The Festival is also known as the "the 8th Lunar Month Festival" because the Festival falls upon the 15th day of the 8th lunar month; this Festival night will witness a full moon which is a symbol of "reunion", so the Festival is also called "Reunion Festival". "How often comes a bright moon?" I asked this of the blue sky. I held up my drinking cup, as I pled for a reply....." These lines from Prelude to Water Melody by the Song Dynasty master of literature Su Shi are still extremely popular to this date. But if the wine in the cup is to be replaced by mellow vintage wine from an exotic land, then when you raise your glass and share the bright moon with your family or friends, will you experience some particular taste and emotion?.....



CHATEAU PECHON

Basic Data

Origin: Bordeaux Sauternes

Alcohol Level: 13.5%

Size: 75cl

Grape Varieties

Semillon, Sauvignon, Muscadelle

Wine Tasting

Appearance: Beautiful golden color

Aroma: The nose reveals delicious scents of almond, quince and citrus.

Taste: Crystallized notes honey, white flowers and apricot.

Accompaniment

As an aperitif, nice to have with Foie Gras, game or blue cheeses and best served at the temperature of 10°C



CHATEAU ROMER

Basic Data

Origin: Appellation Bordeaux Controlee

Alcohol Level: 13.5%

Size: 37.5cl

Grape Varieties

90% Semillon, 5% Sauvignon, 5% Muscadelle

Wine Tasting

Appearance: Pure golden color

Aroma: The nose reveals intense scent, with floral and citrus aromas.

Taste: The attack is pleasant, rich and magnificently fruity.

Accompaniment

Foie Gras, fish, poultry, fine pastry and Roquefort. Best served at 10-12°C

PHILIPPE DUBLANC PIERLANT MEDIUM-DRY ROSE



Basic Data

Origin: France

Alcohol Level: 11.5%

Size: 75cl

Grape Varieties

Tempranillo, Bobal

Wine Tasting

Appearance: Stunning salmon-pink tones, very attractive color.

Aroma: Fruity

Taste: Harmonious and balanced

Accompaniment

As an aperitif or nice to have with desert

KLUG ICE WINE



Basic Data

Origin: Germany Alcohol level: 9% Size: 37.5cl

Grape Varieties

The frozen grapes

Wine Tasting

Appearance: Itself is much thicker then a normal wine, it reminded a golden syrup both in color and consistency.

Aroma: A nutty smell on the nose.

Taste: It tastes very good, like a liquid candy with relatively strong flavors of apricot and honey. It also had a somewhat prune like taste.

Accompaniment

Drink pure, or served with fruit, cheese and desserts. Best served at 6-8°C .



Basic Data

Origin: Curico Valley (Aged for 15 months in French oak) Alcohol Level: 14% Size: 75cl

Grape Varieties

100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Wine Tasting

Appearance: Red ruby color with overtones of mahogany evolving to ocher.

Aroma: Well balanced scent, round and spiced, typical of the great Pacific cabernet sauvignon wines.

Taste: In the palate, it is intense, fleshy, evidencing great development, and ending with a strong and persistent after taste.

With the wine packaged in completely new wood boxes, you will find it entirely fresh and new!

Accompaniment

It is ideally served with empanadas, game birds, barbeques, and meat dishes.



For further details, please contact:

Beijing Duty Free Shop for Diplomatic Missions

Address: N0.44 Guanghua Road, Chaoyang

District, Beijing

Tel: (010) 6532 4678

E-Mail: bjdffsd@vip.sina.com

Website: www.bjdffs.com

Online Link for E-Commerce Purchase of the

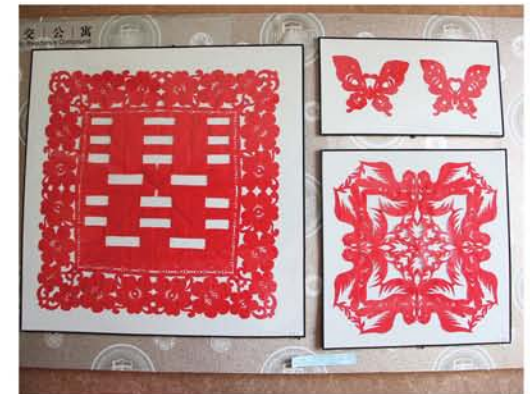
"Diplomatic Envoy Brand" :<http://shijie.jd.com/>

DRC *Takes Me around the World*

— the First Liangmaqiao • Chinese and Foreign Cultural Show
by Diplomats in 2014

By Li Na





In the present era in which everyone is enthusiastic about traveling and numerous people even take “No Life without Travel” as their creed in life, I, as a small white-collar, often get into the awkward state of being short of both time and money. It is by no means easy to cast everything else aside just for savoring the customs and sights of various countries. However, the Chinese and Foreign Cultural Show by Diplomats held on June 21st at DRC provided me with a completely new experience of “a Day Tour of the World”.

The Chinese and Foreign Cultural Show by Diplomats comprised two exhibition zones. The Indoor Zone covered distinctive cultural products of various countries, which boasted great varieties in forms and were rich in content. The exquisite paintings and fine handicrafts constituted a big feast for the eyes of the audience who could not help marveling at these exhibits all the time. In the outside, the Central Park of Liangmaqiao DRC became a bustling venue of the exhibitions sales for the cultural show. Against the backdrops of various national flags, diplomatic officers and their family members, in their national costumes, introduced with great zeal the tourist destinations, customs and folk cultures of their own countries, and they also showed off the dazzling array of special food and traditional arts and handicrafts articles on the display counters. Chilean wines, Malaysian flower and fruit teas, and African wood carvings, etc. are all available and each of them is equally attractive.

In front of the Philippines stand, a five-color fan woven with wheat ears caught my attention. Swinging the fan in my hand, a gust of cool wind with the post-rain freshness made me feel as if I was in the warm and humid tropical rain forests. After enjoying the green sight, I traced the aroma of curry to the Indian stand, where I tasted a little spoon of curry, the spicy flavor seeped in-between my teeth, and the aroma spread out together with the flavor. I closed my eyes and it seemed that the little path in front of the DRC merged with the busy streets in New Delhi, and the gurgling water of the River of Ganges flew by my feet. Stepping out of the wonders of the Indian streets, I was instantly brought to the dreamland of Italy by the Italian passion fruit yoghurt which tasted both sweet and sour yet was full of rich fruit aroma. In addition, I had a taste of rich and smooth Italian chocolate and immediately I seemed to have heard an aria of Italian opera by a vigorous bass singer. Still less we need to say that only the most imaginative Italians could turn out ice creams with the beer flavor, which satisfied my taste bud to its full.

Unintentionally I casted a glance back but immediately focused my eyes on a Chinese beauty in the Sui Dynasty costumes. This ancient beauty, with a red cinnabar dot painted between her eyebrows and smiling most graciously, put on different poses





Takes Me around the World

A Symbol of Everlasting Love and Affection

***Let luxuriant cypresses reflect my profound feelings,
Let the bereaved parents have something to find sustenance in,
And let love and affection always bring peace to the deceased.***

—Based on ancient Chinese verses

When you walk inside a Diplomatic Residence Compound and see a dense wood of green pines and verdant cypresses, maybe you will show your appreciation and admiration quietly, or you just cast a quick glance, or even simply overlook them. However, everything in this world is bound by certain affinity. You might not know that there is such a pine, behind which a sad but touching story has been concealed.

The last fall has been moving away from us further and further. Nevertheless, a diplomat officer and his wife from a certain country, tenants in this DRC encountered their most tragic experience in their life in that fall, i.e. their youngest daughter passed away prematurely because of illness. This blitz of misfortune brought huge blow to the family and in the meantime tugged at the heartstrings of the whole staff of the DRC property management.

In order to commemorate the little one who departed from us even before her young life came into bloom, extend sympathy and provide comfort to the bereaved parents, the Property Management Office proposed that a young pine be presented by DRC to the parents who could then plant it personally in the DRC garden to express their mourning for their beloved little daughter. The parents were grateful for the suggestion and the embassy also positively responded to this idea.

Witnessed by the ambassador, the planting ceremony was held. A green pine cropped up silently with strokes of spades and amidst sounds of praying. The sad mood of people seemed to be turned calm and tranquil under the impact of this lush and vigorous little tree.

The lovely little girl is gone, yet the four seasons still rotate. In the warm embrace of the DRC family, the little girl has elevated to be an angel and she will always be inlaid in the long scroll of years.

Editors' Note: So far various DRC Property Management Offices have gradually established regular or irregular communication mechanisms with many diplomatic missions, and they have designated special client service representatives to provide customized services for diplomatic tenants so that diplomatic officers and their family members could enjoy home-away-from-home styled warmhearted and considerate services.

The background of the entire page is a detailed, aged illustration of Buddhist architecture and sculpture. On the left, a large, golden Buddha statue is shown in profile, facing right. It has an ornate, multi-tiered crown and a decorative collar. In the lower right, a hand is visible, holding a small, golden object. The background also features several golden stupas with tiered, conical spires, set against a light, textured, parchment-like background.

Language and Culture

E-Mail: e-book@bsbdlm.com.cn

A Yellow Robe Buddhist Country

By Jin Guihua

*(The author once served as the
Chinese ambassador to Thailand)*

On this globe there is a country well known as “a Yellow Robe Buddhist Country”, which is Thailand. I served as the Chinese ambassador to Thailand for a term of three years and a half, and fully appreciated its special social customs and picturesque landscapes.



Thailand is located in the central south part of the Central South Peninsula with its shape just like the head of a big elephant. It is high in the north but low in the south, with the whole country slanting from the northwest to the southeast in terms of terrains. As Thailand is in the tropical and sub-tropical areas, it is almost in summer all the year round. Thailand boasts multi-ethnic groups, quite a number of religions and many ethnic holidays. The Thai ethnic group constitutes the main body of the population while there are also a great number of Thai nationals of the Chinese origin. Buddhism is the national religion of Thailand, yet Islamic and Christian believers could be found easily in the country. Of a great variety of Thai festivals, Songkran, i.e. the Water Splashing Festival and the Water Lantern Festival (Loi Krathong) are especially popular. Every year, in mid-April when Songkran is observed, people would splash or sprinkle water on each other as a token of blessings. Once I happened to drive out during Songkran, my car was splashed with water all along the way. I was extremely happy and responded with all smiles because I took this gesture as a good wish blessing extended from Thai people.

Thailand is indeed worthy of the name of "a Yellow Robe Buddhist Country". The dissemination of Buddhism in Thailand has been time honored. It is said that during the third century B.C., the Ashoka King of India already sent monks to Thailand to spread Buddhism. According to the Chinese historical record, this country "believed in Buddhism prevalently and has thousands of Samana". It is exactly due to these facts that Buddhist culture is deemed a representative of the Thai culture.





No comparison could be found to the influence of Buddhism on Thailand. Approximately 95 per cent of Thai people worship Buddhism and there are as many as 32,000 Buddhist temples there with the number of monks reaching beyond 300,000. To put it in another way, there is one monk among every 200 people in Thailand. According to its constitution, the King of Thailand must be a Buddhist. Thai men including the king himself must take one tonsure once in their life. During my tenure in Thailand, I personally came across such a happening. One day the President of Thai Supreme Court invited me and my wife to a dinner during which he all of a sudden announced his decision to be out of home on the following week for a period of time for the tonsure taking. His remark was indeed something unexpected, but in the meantime sensible to me. It is a big happy event for Thai people to take the tonsure and become monks. When it happens, friends and relatives would gather to give a warm send off beating gongs and drums. The farewell procession would go as far as to the inside of the temple. In November 1978, Deng Xiaoping, then Vice Premier of China visited Thailand when the Thai Crowned Prince Chulalongkorn held his tonsure-taking ceremony. To add luster to the ceremony, the Thai side sounded out whether Deng Xiaoping could honor such a ceremony with his presence. Deng Xiaoping agreed most crisply and it left a beautiful and unforgettable impression on the Thai royal family, Thai Buddhist circle and the Thai people as a whole.



Buddhist culture has influenced the conducts of Thai people. When Thai people meet each other, they would all put their palms together to exchange greetings. Thai people are honest and sincere, simple and mild in conducting themselves in society, by which we can say that they are influenced by Buddhism. After Chavalit Yongchaiyudh was selected as the Thai Prime Minister, the first thing he did in his office was to burn joss sticks in worshipping the Buddha. The Buddhist concepts are also reflected in the Thai diplomacy. The Buddhist doctrine takes "harmony" as its "supreme principle" and holds it in high esteem. And one of the important principles of the Thai diplomacy is to solve disputes through peaceful means.

Exchanges in Buddhist circles between China and Thailand have never been lacking, of which the most important historic event was the consecration in Thailand of the Buddha's finger bone relic from the Famen Temple in Xian, China. I had the luck and honor to experience the whole process of this grand event. During the 85 days when the Buddha's relic was enshrined in Thailand, Thai people from the king to commoners paid homage to the Buddhist relic and hundreds of thousands of Buddhist disciples rushed for the worship.

It is no easy job to give a detailed description of the Buddhist culture of Thailand. However, over 400 temples in between the sky scrappers and the Thai-style stilted houses in Bangkok are one of its symbols. Of these temples, the Emerald Buddha Temple, the Sleeping Buddha Temple (Wat Chayamangkalaram) and the Marble Temple (Wat Benchamabophit) are the most renowned ones. Till this date, these gems of the "Yellow Robe Buddhist Country" are still fresh in my memory.



In the afternoon of July 16, 2014, editors of The Diplomats' came to the Residence of the Thai Ambassador to China to have an exclusive interview with the Ambassador, Mr. Wiboon Khusakul.

The Door of the Royal Thai Embassy is Always Open to All **— An Exclusive Interview with H.E. Mr. Wiboon Khusakul, Ambassador of Thailand to China**

Entering the Residence, we could smell the light scent of agalloch eaglewood in the air, and felt as if the portrait of His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen of Thailand, the fine Thai porcelains and the lush tropical plants had brought us to Thailand, and the scene provided us with sort of urge to make further studies. We were just immersed in these fresh and mystical exotic sights when a string of words of greetings and welcome sprang into our ears. The Ambassador who was in high spirits and beaming with smiles, with his suit well ironed and leather shoes shining appeared in front of us. In fluent Chinese, the Thai Ambassador warmly ushered us to our seats. Just like an ordinary friend, he chatted with us about his bond with China, the Sino-Thai friendship, the beautiful landscapes of Thailand and the distinctive Thai culture.





Friendship Envoy : China and Thailand Are One Family

After entering the Thai Diplomatic Service, the Ambassador's first assignment overseas was as second secretary at the Royal Thai Embassy in Beijing in 1983. He subsequently served at the Royal Thai Embassy in Washington, D.C. and later as Thai Consul General in Kunming and then in Shanghai. And three years ago (2011), he returned to Beijing as the ambassador of Thailand to China. The Ambassador talked about his experiences in China with great enthusiasm: "Thirty years ago, I was a second secretary at the Royal Thai Embassy in China and after 30 years I made the round and came back to Beijing to be posted as the ambassador. This is my close affinity with China. Thai people believe very much in Buddhism and I have no doubt about the bond by fate." As a career diplomat, Ambassador Wiboon Khusakul experienced China's earth shaking changes over the past 30 years and he is also a witness of the close and friendly relations between China and Thailand which have lasted for nearly 40 years since the establishment of the diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1975.

And the Ambassador's close affinity with China also brought him into the rank and file of the Chinese people. He especially mentioned the fact that although he is busily occupied with his official duties, he would insist on going to the park to exercise together with

common people so long as time permits so that he could experience with great interest the real day-to-day life among commoners. The Ambassador showed his fondness for China and his ardent love for the friendship between the two peoples of China and Thailand, which touched us deeply. We could not help expressing our admiration for him.

The Ambassador told us especially that many Thai people are learning the Chinese language, Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, a time-honored friend of the Chinese people is just an example for Thai people to follow. The Ambassador introduced to us vividly the stories about Her Royal Highnesses Princess Sirindhorn and Princess Chulabhorn Mahidol.

Both of the two princesses have cherished deep affections for China and the Chinese people. Princess Sirindhorn made her first visit to China in 1981, and since then she has left her footprints throughout China in her thus far 38 visits. She





started to learn Chinese at the age of 26. She once studied in Beijing University and has translated many Chinese novels. In 2009, with 15 million votes in her favor at an online polling, she won the award as one of the "Top Ten International Friends of China". Commenting on that, the Ambassador expressed himself from the bottom of his heart: "This has been another special honor for the Thai people to rejoice greatly after the Princess was awarded with this Zhong Guo Yuan (Friend of China) title."

Princess Chulabhorn Mahidol is highly skilled in playing the Gu Zheng, a zither-like traditional Chinese musical instrument. She initiated a "Zhong Tai Yi Jia Qin" concert, with the theme "China and Thailand Are One Family". The concert combines traditional Thai and Chinese performances, at which she personally played the well-known Chinese music pieces of "A Night of Flowers and Moonlight by the Spring River" and "The Full Moon" to the great delight of the Chinese friends. Her Royal Highness Princess Chulabhorn has always been proud of the honorable "Special Cultural Envoy" title given to her by the Chinese Government.

Non-Governmental Diplomacy: Face-to Face with the Public

China-Thailand relations have been at their best in history during the period since Mr. Wiboon Khusakul was posted as the Ambassador to China by the end of 2011. In 2013, the bilateral trade volume exceeded 70 billion USD, and both the governments of the two countries decided that by 2015, the bilateral trade will reach the goal of 100 billion USD. In this regard, the Ambassador especially pointed out that apart from the strengthening of economic and trade exchanges, the two countries should also attach more importance to the contacts in the cultural field, enhance the soft power and take culture as a bond so as to promote the communication and understanding between the two peoples.

The Ambassador has much to offer with his unique understanding and endeavors for non-government diplomacy as well. He said: "In recent years, the Chinese government has made great efforts to promote cultural exchange. I think it is particularly imperative to push forward the exchanges



between the young peoples of the two countries to enhance the bilateral ties and friendship as a whole. Young peoples of the two countries serve as the foundation of the Thailand-China friendship and they are our hopes for the future. I am always available and the door of our embassy has been opened to young people in China. We are willing to introduce to them Thai culture and give them opportunities to taste Thai delicacies so that the younger generation can have certain knowledge and understanding about the traditional values and culture of Thailand. Only by maintaining our open attitude, can we enable more people to understand Thailand, which will further facilitate the young peoples of the two countries to deepen their exchanges and build friendship."

The Ambassador also emphasized: "In the meantime, as diplomats posted in China, we should all the more need to go among the younger generation of China. The embassy especially registered its official micro-blog (weibo) website which has so far attracted over 50,000 fans. The embassy and its fans often have interacting. I am ready to answer any questions about Thailand and improve our work by listening directly to opinions of our fans."

Nowadays, the Thai embassy often holds various kinds of cultural events to treat guests coming from all quarters. Among the events held here, there were Thai Food Festival, Durian Festival, Thai Film Festival and Thai Boxing Performing Tour, etc. which were all open to the general public. This year so far, more than 1000 Thai students in China and their Chinese friends have been received as the guests of the embassy. China has set up a cultural center in Bangkok. The Ambassador suggests that a Thai cultural center should also be established in Beijing, and through running cultural events of various types, the practical function of such a center could be brought into play for the purpose of promoting the friendly feelings between the two peoples.





A Country of Courtesy - Remaining Tranquil and Hospitable

Along with the introduction of Thai TV films and the popular screening of Chinese films based on Thai-theme or scenes, more and more Chinese tourists have been attracted by the distinctive appeals of Thailand. Ambassador Wiboon Khusakul talked on and on in a flow of eloquence when he touched upon the social customs and the tourism resources of Thailand. His words were full of love and pride for his motherland.

The Ambassador told us that Thailand is the coordinating country between China and the ASEAN. With the situation in Thailand stabilized now, it is still a safe, tranquil and hospitable tourist destination. To better know the folk customs of Thailand, foreigners need first hand experience. Kindness, compassion and hospitality of its people are important elements of Thailand's "soft power". In 2011, Xi Jinping, then Vice President of China visited Thailand and the Ambassador accompanied him throughout the visit. The Chinese Vice President commended that the reception on the part of Thailand was "meticulous in every possible way." When other Chinese leaders visited Thailand, the Thai people also

displayed such unique hospitality excellently.

Besides, both Thailand and China share some common characteristics of "geographic proximity, cultural connections and people's affinity." Apart from the widely known tourist destinations like Phuket, Koh Samai and Krabi, the Ambassador praised profusely the landscapes of his hometown Nakhon Phanom in northeast Thailand along the Mekong River (The section of the river in the Chinese territory is known as the Lancang River). He told us that his hometown boasts picturesque sceneries and popular Buddhist culture, having lots in common with the landscapes and culture of China's Yunnan Province. Actually, there are many places in Thailand which all have distinctive features although they are not yet the most famous tourist sights. Given such resources plus the warm hospitality of the Thai people, Chinese tourists would be left with unforgettable experiences and fond memories.

At the end of the interview, Ambassador Wiboon Khusakul hand wrote an inscription for The Diplomats' with Chinese calligraphy: "Forming Ties of Close Affinity", which offers the best interpretation for the bilateral friendship.





Additional Facts:

Trade: At present, China is both the No.1 trading partner and the biggest export market of Thailand, and China is also the second largest source of import for Thailand. Besides, China is the biggest source country of inbound tourists for Thailand. Exports of Thailand to China: Natural rubber, chemical products, granulated plastic; Imports of Thailand from China: Machinery and electric products and parts, household electric appliances, machinery and equipment.

Investments: Thai enterprises have investments in China's various industries such as agriculture and foodstuffs industry, energy and mining, banking, Thai restaurants, Thai SPA and office goods.

Cooperation Prospects: Hoping to strengthen cooperation with China in the fields of E-commerce, M-commerce, tourism, films and television, auto industry, electronic products, medical equipments, service industry and so on.

Preferential Policies for Investment: Thailand will provide foreign investors with preferential policies including both taxation-related policy and non-taxation-related policy (reduction and exemption of enterprises' income tax and import tariff on machineries and raw materials; foreign investors' right of ownership of land, one-stop investment service center, and foreign experts and technicians will be allowed to apply for work permits and visa.)

Support from the Thai Embassy: Within the setup of the Embassy of Thailand in China, there are complete establishments to take charge of economic affairs in various fields. The Embassy has not only the Commercial Section, Section for Investment Promotion, Agricultural Section and Beijing Office of the Thai Tourism Administration, but also the Beijing Office of the Central Bank of Thailand. The various Thai sections and offices are always ready to provide help and assistance, including consultative service.

(These facts are provided by the Embassy of Thailand in China)



Thailand

Enjoyable Tour of Thailand

— a Country Where Nature Blends with Culture



On the amazing land of Thailand, one could find everywhere sacred Buddhist temples, magnificent royal palaces, historical remains and picturesque natural landscapes such as mountains and forests shrouded in thin mists and beaches bathed in sunshine. Moreover, there are gorgeous Thai food and an endless array of commodities which all make tens of thousands of tourists reluctant to leave.

Splendid Grand Palace



“The Royal Family” and “Buddhism” are respectively two great pillars of the Thai society whereas “palace” and “temple” serve respectively as the symbols of these two pillars. The world renowned Grand Palace in Bangkok is just a two-in-one.

The Grand Palace in Bangkok consists of the inner palace and the outer palace with the former originally serving as the residence of the royal family and the latter functioning as the offices of the important government agencies. The Grand Palace including its 128 palaces and covering an area of 218,400 square meters is the largest and most majestic group of ancient architectures in Bangkok and an epitome of the Thai architectural art dating back over 2000 years. Visitors are all overwhelmed by its resplendent and magnificent image.

The Grand Palace boasts a well-known “Emerald Buddha Temple” where a Buddha statue carved out of a whole piece of jade is enshrined. The Buddha statue, 66 cm in height and 48 cm in width, is dark green colored all over, and it is a national treasure of Thailand. The Emerald Buddha Temple, the reserved venue for the royal family to hold Buddhist ceremonies, is the only temple without any resident monk in Thailand.

In addition to the Emerald Buddha Temple, there is a "Sleeping Buddha Temple" (Wat Chayamangkalaram) inside the Grand Royal Palace. With its construction starting from 1739, this temple covers an area of 80,000 odd square meters. It is the biggest and most time-honored temple in Bangkok. It is also referred to as "Ten Thousand Buddha Temple" owing to its great number of Buddha statues and stupas. Inside the temple, the biggest sleeping Buddha in the world is enshrined. The sleeping Buddha is 46 meters long and 15 meter high and even both its feet are 5 meters long. The Buddha lies on his side with his right hand supporting his head and looks completely relaxed and carefree. The Buddha is made of stones and bricks, and covered with gold foil. Visitors all marvel at this wonderful Buddha which is so glittering and shining.

Inside the Grand Palace, there is also a "Gold Buddha Temple" which enjoys identical fame with the Emerald Buddha Temple and the Sleeping Buddha Temple. The Gold Buddha, casted with gold, is 5.5 tons in weight and about 4 meters in height. The sitting Buddha, crossing his legs with the two knees more than 3 meters apart, is a priceless treasure of Thailand and Buddhism as well. It is said that the construction of the Gold Buddha Temple was funded by three overseas Chinese, so it is also known as "the Three Chinese Temple" or "the Three Friends Temple".





The Koh Samui Style Dreamy Life

Take your sweet heart to a small wooden house half way up a mountain, face the sea to watch the flow and ebb of the waves, count the numerous stars in the sky and then go to sleep and enter the dream land with the accompaniment of the pounding sound of the waves. This is exactly what is meant by the Koh Samui style dreamy life.

Koh Samui Island, located in the southeastern part of the Thai sea, is the largest island in Surat Thani. This island is covered with thick woods and coconuts are grown there. Chaweng Beach on the island is 4 kilo-meters long, and it has won great fame in the world for its flat and neat white sand. You could enjoy great fun of beach sports to your heart content, or choose a Thai style massage in the open to feel for yourself the wonder of integration of human beings with the great nature in its warm embrace.

The male and female stones on the Koh Samui Island are a must for the sight seeing of tourists. The legend has it that hundreds of years ago, in a small town on the opposite of the island, a young man shared his life together with his grand parents. One day, when he went fishing on the sea, he fell in love with a girl on the Koh Samui Island. The grand parents loved their grandson so dearly that they immediately took boat to the Koh Samui Island to propose marriage. But unfortunately, they got drowned in the sea. To show their sincerity and determination for their grandson's marriage, the old couple turned into two huge stones to stay on the island for good. Till this date, people still prefer to go to the stones to make wishes so that their love will be the sweetest and also last long.



A Bite of Thailand

Thailand is favorably dubbed a “Country with Smiles” and also listed as “the Best Tourist Destination Country”. It is also “the Best Value- for-Money” Tourist Destination in the Asia Pacific region. The great varieties of Thai cuisines are no doubt the business cards for the tourist industry of Thailand. They are the envies of all and great attractions to all as well.

Thailand is a leading sea food producer in Asia and also a major prawn provider in the whole world. The cooking methods for the sea food include steaming, boiling, braising with curry and charcoal grilling. Tasting of all this Thai sea food is also a must for the tourists.

If one wants to taste authentic Thai food, one must get to know its cooking features. Generally Thai chiefs are good at using spices. In terms of taste, spicy food is the main part of Thai food. However, the present day Thai cuisines have also absorbed the strong points of the cuisines of various countries in the world. For instance, curry crabs, fried oysters with eggs, steamed cakes of turnip shreds, etc. Thai BBQ has also its own features. Usually the food is covered with bamboo or lotus leaves, so the food comes to the eaters with a faint and delicate refreshing scent. Among the Thai cuisines the soup of Tom Yum Kung with ingredients such as prawns, chicken meat or pork is particularly nourishing. It should also be recommended to the tourists.

Thai food is taken in similar manner as that of the most other Asian countries: Eaters order several dishes to be placed at the center of the table and shared by them. Nevertheless, Thai people do not use chopsticks usually. Instead they use forks and spoons with which they take dishes and put them on their own eating plates, and then eat them together with rice.



Translated by Wu Lan. Adapted from the Intimate Country of Elephants — Thailand, one of the book series titled Diplomats Taking You around the World.



Handy Tips for Touring Thailand

Climate: It is humid and wet all the year round in Thailand with the annual average temperature ranging from 24 °C to 30 °C and the highest temperature could go beyond 40 °C . Precautions against heat and sun-stroke are advised for travelers to Thailand.

Voltage: Two-pin receptacles are available throughout Thailand for power at 220V and 50H.

Area Code for International Phone Call: +66

Traffic Rule: Driving on the left side of the road

Emergency Calls: Police 191, Fire 199, Ambulance 1691, Medical Care Assistance 1669.

Currency: Thai currency symbol is THB and its unit is Baht.

Exchange Rate: One USD=32.46 Baht (for the year of 2014)

Time Difference: One hour difference compared with Beijing Time. For instance, while it is 12:00 Beijing Time it is 13:00 in Thailand.

Dress Code: Visitors are required to take off shoes before entering a Thai temple. In the meantime they should dress neatly and in a dignified manner. Ladies must wear trousers or long skirts and shirts with sleeves while gents must wear upper outer garments with collars and long trousers as well. Neither of them is allowed to be bare-footed or on slippers.

Specialties: In Thailand, tourists could choose souvenirs they like at reasonable prices from among a great variety of local products. Thai silk produce, leather products, silver wares, potteries, soft wood and bamboo carvings are among the favorites of the tourists. Another "preference" is Thai Jewelries made generally with exquisite workmanship and sold at affordable prices.





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Cultural Express

【 Opera 】

01 *Italian Opera Norma to Make its Debut in China*

The opera *Norma*, newly designed and produced by the National Center for the Performing Art (NCPA), is not only the first Bellini's opera works to be presented by NCPA, but will also mark its debut in China. Setting against the

background of struggles between the ancient Gallic and the Roman occupiers, the opera features a love tragedy. The opera implies in a zigzag manner the Italian national liberation movement and the rising tide of the patriotism of the people. It is full of plain but pleasant melodies. More over, it contains well-known arias such as *Casta Diva*.

The opera will be under the baton of Renato Palumba, the renowned Italian conductor specially invited by NCPA. Pier's Alli, acclaimed European director and stage art designer will set up distinctive stage décor for the opera. By using symbolic method combined with modern designing elements, he will bring out esthetic concepts embodying stature-like textures and offer to the audience a vibrant art experience.

Show Time: 2014.09.11-2014.09.14

Venue: NCPA

(From the official website of NCPA: <http://ticket.chncpa.org/product-1000271.html>)



【 Music 】

02 ***Play of Saxophone, Western Classic Musical Instrument —Mid Autumn Performing Tour by Kenny G***

Saxophone, as a wood pipe musical instrument, has been much liked by a great number of music lovers since its birth. This time, Kenny G's Mid-Autumn Performing Tour has elaborately prepared for music fans plays mainly themed on family. In addition, he will also render various classic Chinese music pieces such as Jasmine Flowers which will be put on for the first time as a piece of saxophone play.

Kenny G was born in Seattle, USA, and he has been well acclaimed in the circle of saxophone play as a top saxophone player in the world. His play on the Mid-Autumn Performing Tour will be joined by his special orchestra which is one of the top three orchestras in the world. Kenny G's special orchestra has a unique playing style, and several renowned artists will be invited to support Kenny G in his saxophone presentation.

Date: 2014.09.05

Venue: Beijing Exhibition Center Theater

(Source: Jingdong Piaowu Network <http://www.piaobuy.com/news/1390.html>)



【 Dance 】

03

Classic Ballet the Swan Lake by the Russian State Ballet

The Russian State Ballet, a state-level art company directly under the Russian Ministry of Culture, has been to more than 80 countries and regions for performing tours. The ballet company has maintained the important tradition of the ballet history, and devoted to the regeneration of the excellent Russian ballet repertoire. It embodies high expressional arts and ballet skills, and brings the audience into creation world of Russian ballet dancers who brim with the charms of distinctive individuality.

Date: 2014.09.22-2014.09.26

Venue: Poly Theater

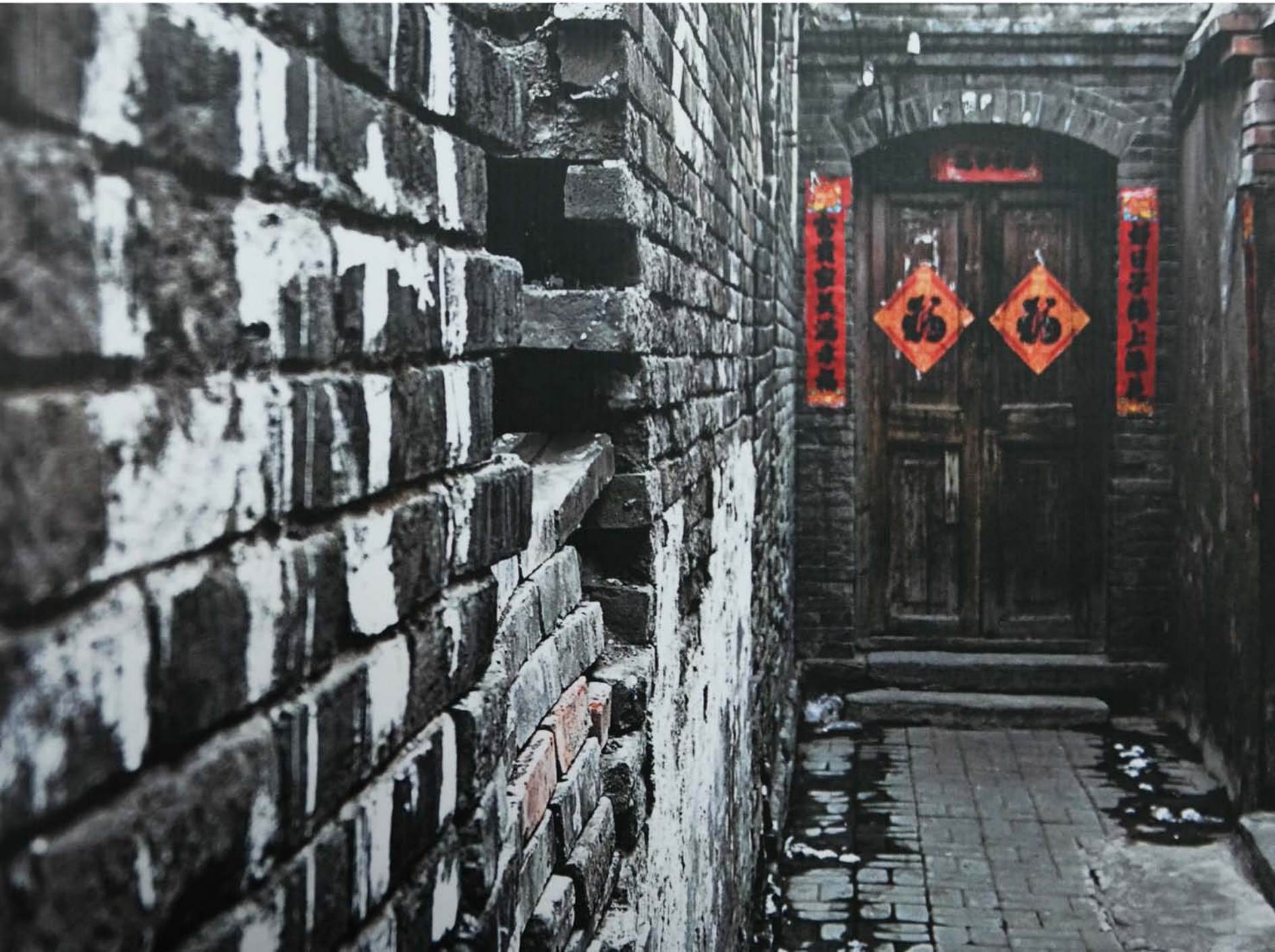
(Source: Jingdong Paiowu Network

<http://www.piaobuy.com/wudaobalei/4005.html>)



Hutong in Beijing

— *Dongsi*



A decorated Pailou (archway) was an important landmark at the entrance of streets and alleys in the old Beijing City. Dongsì in the Chinese language literally means “east” (Dong) and “four” (Si), and it actually refers to the place where four decorated archways are located in the east of Beijing City. In the past, there were four tall pailous facing four directions at the entrance of Dongsì Road, which were believed to be built during the reign of



Emperor Zhengtong in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) or during the reign of Emperor Yongle in the Ming Dynasty. Different people have different judgment about the years of the construction, and there has never been any consensus about it. Each of the four pailous had an inscribed board: the Chinese characters Lu and Ren (meaning maintaining justice) were on the eastern pailou, Xing yi (meaning willingness to offer a helping hand) on the western pailou, and Da Shi Jie (meaning a main market Street) on both northern and southern pailous.

There was a prince mansion in the east of the First Dongsì hutong, and after several generations starting from the founding emperor of the Qing Dynasty, it became the Mansion of Prince Fu, who was the ninth son of Emperor Daoguang, therefore his residence is also known as “Jiuye Residence”(jiu meaning the ninth). His residence is magnificent and it

is typical of the architecture of the prince mansions of the Qing Dynasty. Now, a modern styled building housing the headquarters of the Beijing Service Bureau for Diplomatic Missions. (also known as BDS for short) has been erected to the west of what was once the Prince Fu's Residence.

Doingsi Area has a long history and there were numerous mansions and famous houses in the area in the past. Not far from the eastern entrance of Dongsitiao (the Fourth Dongsitiao Lane), on the northern side of the road, there is a house somehow special because of its high steps. This house was owned by Mianyi, who served as vice minister of the Ministry of the Rites during the reign of Emperor Tongzhi in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). As Mianyi was a distant relative of Emperor Daoguang with the same family name and also owing to his seniority in the royal clan, his house was called "the house of the emperor's uncle" by ordinary people. Despite its small front gate, the house has a three-section courtyard with a regular layout.

The Chongli Mansion in Dongsiliutiao (the Sixth Tongsi Lane) is even better known than Mianyi House, and is the only private house listed as a historical and cultural site under state's protection in Beijing City. Chongli was an official of the imperial court and served as Grand Secretary of Wenyuan Royal Library during the reign of Emperor Guangxu. Chongli Mansion, covering a total area of more than 10,000km², comprises big quadrangle respectively in its east and west and with a garden in the middle, where artificial hills, pavilions and a crescent-shaped pool are all available.

There was a famous house-the Residence of Xu Shichang, a Northern warlord- close to the east of Chongli House. This former residence has already been turned to the campus of No.128 Middle School, Beijing. Xu Shichang served as assistant secretary of the Cabinet in the late Qing Dynasty and became President of the Republic of China. He was tremendously famous at that time. He lived through the fall of Qing Dynasty and the chaos of the Republic of China, and he





was a politician full of disputes and controversies. During the Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945), the Japanese called on Xu Shichang many times, threatening him and luring him to hold a treasonous position, but Xu Shichang refused. Later on, he simply closed his door to all visitors till he died of illness in 1939. The patriotism he showed in such behavior should be approved by all Chinese.

Numerous stories could emerge from these ancient hutongs. Unfortunately, Dongsì pailou was demolished in 1954, and it is rare to find hutongs like some of those still in existence in the Dongsì area, and those that completely preserve the appearances and features from the old days.

Adapted from Chen Guangzhong's *Hutong in Beijing*

Corrections for The Diplomats' N0.6 Issue

- 1. On page N0.25, there should have been "the air conditioning" as the sentence object in between "changed" and "from" of the 6th line from the bottom on the left side.**
- 2. On page N0.50, the article's title should read as "Savoring Spring at the Mansion of Prince Gong", instead of "Savoring outing at the Mansion of Prince Gong"**
- 3. On page N0.51, on the left side, the first sentence of the second paragraph is completely jumbled and wrong. Instead, it should read as "Stepping into the mansion, you will feel the spring just in the air."**

We extend our sincere apologies for the above-mentioned mistakes.

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