

ECNU



2022

Newsletter



E A S T C H I N A N O R M A L U N I V E R S I T Y

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EAST CHINA NORMAL UNIVERSITY



Headlines

The 22nd International Conference on Chinese Philosophy Convened Online

The opening ceremony of the 22nd International Conference on Chinese Philosophy was convened online on June 27, 2022. This conference was hosted by the International Society for Chinese Philosophy (ISCP) and East China Normal University (ECNU), organized by the Institute of Modern Chinese Thought & Culture of ECNU and the Department of Philosophy of ECNU, and co-organized by Shanghai Association of Comparative Study on Chinese-Western Philosophy and Culture.

Prof. Qian Xuhong, President of ECNU and Academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering; and Prof. Karyn Lai, Chair of Board of Officers of ISCP and a professor of The University of New South Wales, were invited to the Conference. Prof. Yang Guorong, President of ISCP and Director of the Institute of Modern Chinese Thought & Culture of ECNU, delivered the opening speech. Prof. Yu Zhenhua introduced information related to the 22nd International



Conference on Chinese Philosophy and ISCP, pointing out that this Conference was the largest ISCP conference since its establishment.

On behalf of ECNU, Prof. Qian Xuhong extended his sincere greetings to all the guests attending the conference as well as colleagues of Chinese philosophy from all over the world and friends around the world who have cared and supported the development of the philosophical cause of ECNU.

In the context of the world affairs, such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, international conflicts, and de-globalization trends, he believed that advocating the concept of “world philosophy” would require broader courage and thinking. Chinese philosophy is an indispensable link in the formation of world philosophy. The wisdom of Chinese philosophers belongs not only to the ancient times, but also to the present and future. Shouldering the sacred mission of “establishing a mind for heaven and earth” and “thinking for the people” in the era of highly developed science and technology, ECNU has been actively promoting interdisciplinary research, including the digital humanities project on Laozi (a great Chinese philosopher in the Spring and Autumn Period). In conclusion, Qian wished the International Conference on Chinese Philosophy a complete success and hoped that the world would become a better place through the joint efforts of all sides.

Prof. Karyn Lai, Chair of the board of officers of ISCP and a professor of the University of New South Wales, first extended a welcome to the distinguished guests and scholars attending the International Conference on Chinese Philosophy.

She wished the conference a success, and hoped every participant would reap the benefits from this seminar, including making new friends, expanding the network of academic exchanges, and promoting the research of Chinese philosophy and comparative philosophy.

On behalf of the organizers, Prof. Yang Guorong, firstly expressed his sincere welcome and appreciations to the scholars attending the conference. Focusing on the theme of this Conference, he pointed out that the encounter and interaction between Chinese and Western philosophy has become a common phenomenon. Chinese philosophy has started gaining a global perspective. World philosophy means to go beyond the limitations of regional cultural backgrounds and cultural traditions; that is, understanding the world from the perspective of the world.

Specifically, as a form of wisdom, world philosophy is not only a represent the concept of space, but also contains profound connotations at the historical and metaphysical levels; it not only transcends the limits of knowledge and shows a universal dimension, but also involves the care of values. World philosophy also provides explanations about the world, with practical insights about humanity. Since the 20th century, Chinese philosophy has not only presented global significance, but also participated in the contention of a hundred schools of thought worldwide. In this process, Chinese philosophy has formed an independent ideological system and demonstrated its own discourse power.

In the process of globalization of Chinese philosophy, world philosophy is essentially combined with the individualization and diversification of philosophy. Finally, Prof. Yang Guorong wished the online conference a complete success.

The theme of this conference is “**Chinese Philosophy from the Perspective of World Philosophy**”. After 14 years, the International Conference on Chinese Philosophy has convened in China for the fourth time. Over 600 scholars from more than 30 countries and regions participated in this conference to discuss the global dimension of Chinese philosophy in depth. As the largest ISCP since its establishment in 1975, the Conference lasted for five days, from June 27th to July 1st, during which, more than 100 academic seminars of different types were convened in total, including a series of lectures delivered by famous experts, plenary sessions, special-invited sessions, and special sessions.



First Conference on World Geography convened at ECNU



The First Conference on World Geography, with the theme of “Geography and Our Common Future,” was held on November 26, 2022, at East China Normal University, Shanghai.

A Chinese expert proposed a new solution of integrated development via strengthening border trade exchanges and cross-border coordination in the region of the Himalayas to tackle the multi-dimensional geopolitical security risks and further promote building a regional community of shared future, at a key conference in Shanghai.

The proposal was made at the First Conference on World Geography, with the theme of Geography and Our Common Future, which was held during the weekend in Shanghai.

Although fraught with geopolitical risks, the Himalayas region has a long history of interpersonal exchanges involving religion, ethnic and military groups.

Chen Fahu, academician from the Chinese Academy of Sciences and president of the Geographical Society of China, proposed at the conference to promote integrated development around the Himalayas by strengthening border trade exchanges and cross-border coordination.

In his keynote lecture entitled “Geo-security Issues Around the Himalayas”, Chen linked the significance of the Qinghai-Xizang (Tibet) Plateau where the Himalayas is situated with national security.

According to Chen, the Qinghai-Xizang (Tibet) Plateau plays an important role in safeguarding China's national security, a reserve base of strategic resources, a barrier for water safety and ecological security, as well as an important cultural area for China.

To cope with multi-dimensional risks in the region, Chen proposed the construction of integrated infrastructure zones at cross-border areas, which may include setting up free trade zones, industrial zones and international tourism zones.

Chen's team also proposed expanding border trade exchanges at an appropriate time to facilitate the movement of border residents and to boost border trade.

The team suggested strengthening cross-border economic cooperation by making use of the vital role played by border villages.

Since the 20th century, geography has been a key to geopolitics and international cooperation when viewed as a basic subject in studying man's relationship to land.

The First Conference on World Geography was jointly held by the Geographical Society of China, China Institute for Innovation & Development Strategy, East China Normal University (ECNU) and University of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Experts from China and abroad delivered over 500 keynote lectures and reports on a variety of topics ranging from geography and low-carbon energy security to research innovative tools and methodologies for the advancement of world geography during the two-day conference, which is being held both online and on-site.

Geography is an interdisciplinary subject between the natural sciences and the humanities, Du Debin, professor of human geography and dean of the School of Urban and Regional Science at the ECNU, told the Global Times at the sidelines of the conference on Saturday.

When we talk about the construction of a community with a shared future for mankind, we have to understand the distribution of local natural geographic resources and the local humanities, and the social and economic conditions, since humans are not only about population, but also about the spatial distribution of activities, and the relationship between all human activities and the natural environment, Du said.



ECNU establishes Kazakhstan Research Center ↙

On the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Kazakhstan, the ECNU Kazakhstan Research Center was officially established on November 3, 2022. Gu Hongliang, Vice President of ECNU and Rakhimov Rakhymzhan, Consul General of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Shanghai, jointly unveiled the Center. The event was presided over by Liu Jun, Deputy Dean of School of Politics and International Relations of ECNU.



Gu Hongliang, in his speech, pointed out that the establishment of ECNU Kazakhstan Research Center came into being in the context of the high-level permanent comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Kazakhstan, representing a significant achievement made by ECNU's in-depth studies of Kazakhstan and Central Asian issues for many years. Its establishment will also witness a new starting point for ECNU to open the next chapter in Sino-Kazakhstan cooperation, and will surely become an important momentum in promoting the development of bilateral relations. Gu Hongliang also pointed out that the establishment of the Center would further play a role as a link, and promote closer exchanges and cooperation between ECNU and Kazakhstan universities in the fields of scientific research and talent cultivation.

Rakhimov Rakhymzhan praised the establishment of the ECNU Kazakhstan Research Center and expressed his gratitude to ECNU for cultivating so many outstanding Kazakhstan students over the years. He earnestly expected that the ECNU Kazakhstan Research Center would become an important educational exchange platform between China and Kazakhstan and one of the bridges to enhance the permanent comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries.

The ECNU Kazakhstan Research Center is located under the School of Politics and International Relations. The Center will bring together academic elites from China and Kazakhstan and other related countries to jointly engage in the role of a think tank.

President of ECNU meets Nobel Laureate Roger Kornberg ↙

On November 13, 2022, ECNU President Qian Xuhong met the delegation led by Prof. Roger Kornberg, Chairman of the World Laureates Association (WLA) and Winner of the 2006 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, who visited Shanghai to attend the fifth World Laureates Forum. SHI Guoyue, ECNU Assistant President, presided over the meeting.

Qian heartily appreciated Roger Kornberg's great support in promoting the global influence as well as reputation of Shanghai in science and technology.

Qian highlighted that ECNU sticks to its influential features in teacher education and excels in the academic development of humanities & social sciences as well as science & technology. ECNU, by applying the "Academic Excellence" to "Education Excellence" as a driving force, is fully devoted to developing itself into a world-class comprehensive research university with Chinese characteristics that takes the lead in innovative talent training. In his opening remarks, Qian warmly welcomed top scientists worldwide to support ECNU's disciplinary development and research, and looked forward to working with Roger Kornberg and his team for future cooperation in the fields of biology, information technology, etc.

Kornberg spoke highly of ECNU's achievements of "Academic Excellence" in international cutting-edge science and technology, and strongly commended ECNU's theoretical and practical commitment to "Education Excellence". He commented that scientific and technological innovation is undoubtedly essential for global development and he hoped, by virtue of this visit, that the World Laureates Association could establish enduring and extensive cooperation with ECNU. ECNU participants then had in-depth exchanges with Kornberg and his delegation.



ECNU Russian website launched

On December 1, 2022, ECNU's Russian website (russian.ecnu.edu.cn) was launched, aiming to serve the "Belt and Road" Initiative and enhance the influence of ECNU in Russian-speaking countries and regions.

The Russian website of ECNU was launched jointly by ECNU President Qian Xuhong, Vice President Gu Hongliang, Director of the Center for Russian Studies Feng Shaolei, Director of the Center for Belarusian Studies Bei Wenli, Dean of the Russian Department of the School of Foreign Languages Hu Xuex-

ing, Director of the Office of International Cooperation and Exchanges Du Zhenyu, Russian and Chinese student representatives Spiridonov Evgenii and Gao Yuting.

The Russian website uses green as the main color and orange as the auxiliary color. The main color is inspired by Russian architecture, combined with the architectural details of the Shanghai skyline, symbolizing integration and innovation.

The website consists of 7 sections, including University overview, news center, research, international enrollment, talent recruitment, department introduction, and campus life. The

website provides a panoramic review of the ECNU, meticulously introduces academic exchanges with universities and institutions in the Russian-speaking region, vividly presents a group of scholars in ECNU.

Шайдуллина Айгуль Радиковна, a Russian teacher of the Russian Department of the School of Foreign Languages, said that the newly launched Russian website is artistically designed and allows people to have access to the latest news and information. Moreover, it is convenient for searching information, which is suitable for international students and helps more people to understand the development of higher education in China and seek cooperation channels.

Liang Yundi, a Russian student from the International College of Chinese Studies, said, "The launch of the Russian website of ECNU shows the openness of China and Russia in educational cooperation. The website has sufficient information, and I hope that it will grow rapidly and attract the attention and participation of more countries, teachers, and students in Russian-speaking regions."

ECNU has established close cooperation with more than 65 universities in Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine, carrying out cooperative research, student and faculty visits, summer camps and other programs in various fields.

Research

ECNU researchers develop a new generation of CAR-T technology for tumor treatment

On August 31, 2022, a research team from the School of Life Sciences of ECNU published an online article entitled “Non-viral, specifically targeted CAR-T cells achieve high safety and efficacy in B-NHL” in *Nature*, a leading international scientific journal. This is the first study to report the development of a new generation of non-viral specifically integrated CAR-T cell technology and its effectiveness in a clinical trial for the treatment of relapsed and refractory non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

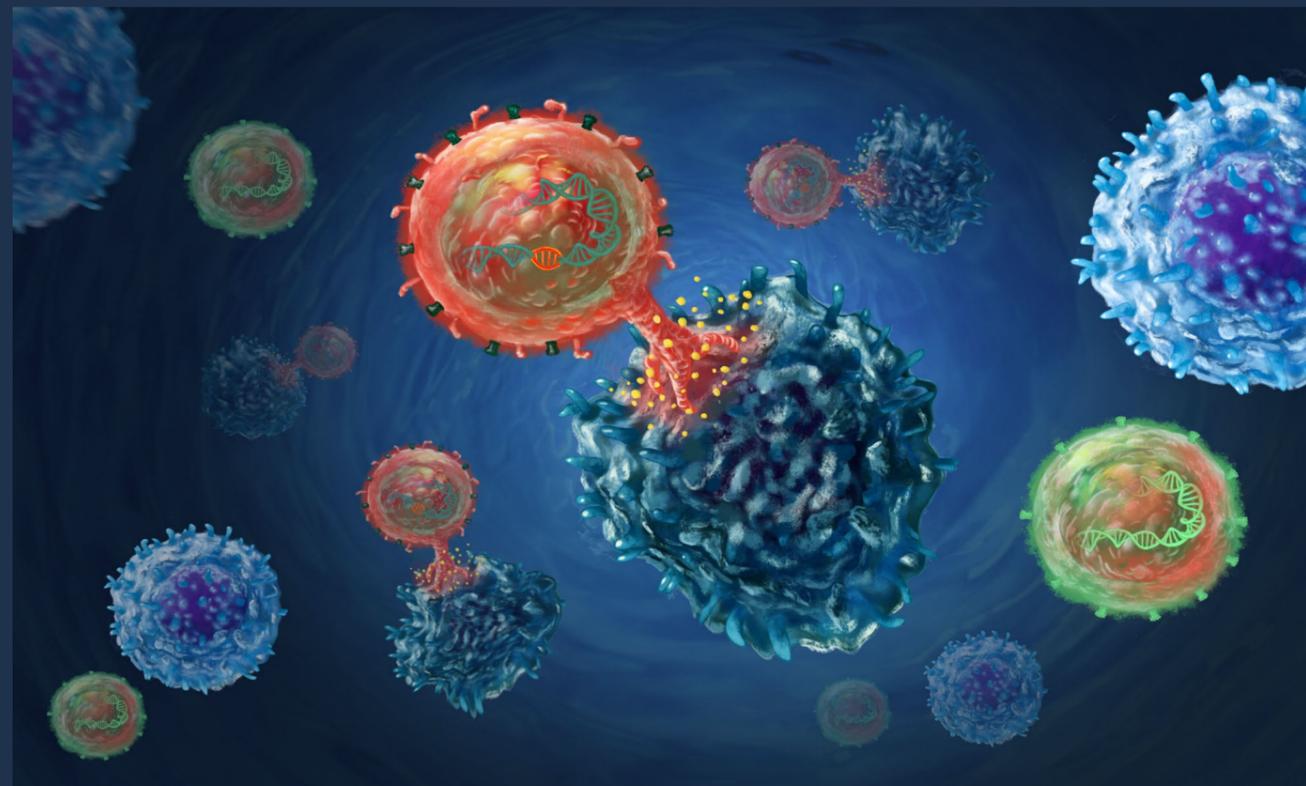
This original study was a collaboration among the team of Zhang Jiqin, Liu Mingyao, Du Bing and Li Dali from the School of Life Sciences, ECNU, the team of Huang He and Hu Yongxian from the First Affiliated Hospital, School of Medicine, Zhejiang University and BRL Medicine Inc.

Victoria Aranda, a Senior Editor of *Nature*, commented that “This study provides a thoughtful pre-clinical framework for the design and implementation of a therapy using non-viral, targeted CAR-T cells. The authors provide promising early clinical results on the safety and the potential efficacy of this treatment in B-NHL.”

One of the reviewers, Professor Justin Eyquem of the University of California, commented that “This study reports the first clinical trial using CAR-T cells in which PD-1 is disrupted by integrating a CAR encoding gene into its sequence. The high complete-remission rate with low associated toxicities is an exciting outcome and suggests that the CAR-T cells are potent and safe. The authors also show the feasibility of using non-viral, gene-specific targeting in T cells for clinical application. This method will pave the way to more gene-targeted CAR-T-cell therapies, providing an important step for the field.”

This study reports the first clinical trial of PD1 downregulation targeted integrated CAR-T cells. The researchers observed a high rate of complete tumor remission without serious adverse events in the clinical treatment. The surprising result demonstrates the high clinical safety and efficacy of CAR-T cell therapy, and its feasibility in clinical application. This technological innovation lays a solid foundation for the future development of genetically targeted modified CAR-T cell therapy and is an important boost to the development of the field.

“The previous method of tumor treatment was to use drugs to kill tumor cells. More and more studies in recent years have found that it is possible to kill tumors by enhancing the function of immune cells, and that this treatment may bring about great efficacy. From my perspective, this is an exciting research direction,” said Associate Professor Zhang Jiqin, first author and co-corresponding author of the article.



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In the eight treated patients, researchers observed high clinical safety and efficacy of PD1-19bbz. Complete remission of disease was achieved in 87.5% (7/8) of patients, and five of them have experienced cancer-free survival exceeding one year.

“We treated patients who could not be cured by conventional chemotherapy and radiotherapy or had relapses after treatment, and this clinical result proves that all the effort of these five and a half years was worthwhile,” said Zhang Jiqin.



ECNU researchers make a significant breakthrough in robot navigation algorithms

Prof. Shu-Guang Kuai and his team from ECNU skillfully quantified human social locomotion by combining virtual reality with computational modelling, and further designed a human-behaviour-based social locomotion model, which significantly improved the humanization of social robots and elevated human-robot interaction experience.

Their work has innovatively shed new light on the robot's integration into social scenarios, connected theories of human social behaviours with navigation algorithms, and thus realized the leap from conceptual definitions to the practical algorithm of human social locomotion. This interdisciplinary scientific research, covering humanities, science and engineering, was recently published in *Nature Machine Intelligence*, one of the world's top-ranking computer science journals.

With the advent of the era of artificial intelligence, more and more service robots have entered human life. They are expected to become efficient assistants to human beings.

How to make robots more humanized, able to better understand humans and conduct high-quality social interaction with them, has become a key and difficult problem in the field of service robots. To solve this problem, the theoretical concept of human social interaction behaviour needs to be translated into algorithms that can be directly implanted on the navigation robot's platform.

To address this problem, Prof. Shu-Guang Kuai from the School of Psychology and Cognitive Science, Institute of Brain and Education Innovation, and NYU-ECNU Institute of Brain and Cognitive Science, along with his research team, has successfully constructed an ideal experimental scene for measuring social behaviour using virtual reality technology to effectively quantify and model human social locomotion, and implanted it into the navigation platform of robots after being algorithmized. In doing so, it has realized the three-stage leap

from conceptualization, computerization to the engineering of humanities theory.

In particular, this research aims to solve two important scientific and technical issues in this framework: firstly, how to quantify and model human social locomotion, and build a quantitative model to predict human path selections and walking trajectories; secondly, how to translate these models into the engineering algorithm to improve the robot navigation performance.

Regarding the first issue, although many theories of special interaction in the fields of psychology, anthropology, sociology and other disciplines have been constructed and developed in history, most of these theories simply describe phenomena and lack a compensative quantitative computational model.

In this context, the research team, utilizing cutting-edge virtual reality technology combined with classical experimental psychology methods, have built an ideal social locomotion experimental scene in a virtual environment to quantify the space of human social interaction and behavioural characteristics of social locomotion. On the basis of the behavioural results, team members have further built a computational model of human locomotion behaviour, thus proposing the Social Locomotion Model based on personal social space. The robustness of this model in complex social scenes has been proved in virtual and real dynamic scenes with multiple persons.

Regarding the second issue, after acquiring the Social Locomotion Model, the research team algorithmized the model based on actual engineering needs, then implanted it in the robot platform for verification and optimization, and tested whether the algorithm based on human intelligence can improve human's evaluation of robots' sociality and humanization.

From various aspects, the study results proved that the human-behaviour-based social locomotion model can effectively improve the experience of human-robot interaction, as well as the humanization and sociality of the robot.

By combining psychological theory and technology with virtual reality, computer science and other fields, Prof. Shu-Guang Kuai has built a multi-disciplinary research team dedicated to quantifying a series of abstract and conceptual theories of humanities with the latest intelligent technologies and inspiring theory-driven breakthroughs in the field of science and technology. In recent years, the research team has designed a series of new research paradigms to achieve the computerization and engineering of humanities theories and relevant results were published in high-profile scientific journals including *Nature Human Behaviour*, *Journal of Neuroscience*, and *Nature Machine Intelligence*. It has become a distinctive research team in the field of the interdisciplinary study of humanities and science.

ECNU Joint-Delta Project endorsed by United Nations Ocean Decade



2021-2030 United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development

On September 28, 2022, the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) announced 31 newly endorsed actions on its website. The Joint International Laboratory of Deltas (Joint-Delta) project led by the State Key Laboratory of Estuarine and Coastal Research, East China Normal University (SKLEC, ECNU) is listed as one of the Ocean Decade actions. This is the second action led by SKLEC after the Mega-Delta Programme, which was endorsed in June 2021 by the UN Ocean Decade in the first batch of actions.

Joint-Delta is affiliated to the "Mega-Delta Programme" of UN Ocean Decade, which is also led by SKLEC. Joint-Delta is also supported by the Science and Technology Commission of Shanghai Municipality from 2021 to 2024. The first meeting for the International Joint Laboratory was held online on January 19, 2022. More than 40 scientists and government officials from five countries attended this meeting.

As a part of the Joint-Delta Project, scientists from partner countries conducted an intensive field campaign in 2022 during the extreme summer drought at the Yangtze Estuary, the extreme flooding at the Indus Delta in Pakistan, and the flooding at the Ganges-Brahmaputra Delta in Bangladesh.

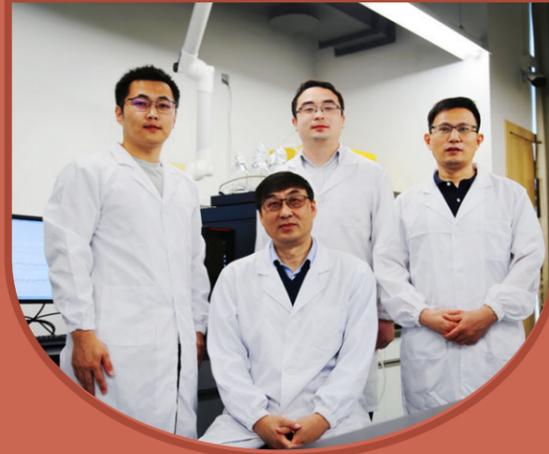
Estuaries and coasts are key vulnerable areas for the economic growth of the "Maritime Silk Road" countries and regions. Under the influence of climate change and human activities, coastal zones all over the world are faced with multiple challenges such as storm surges, flooding, coastal erosion, degradation of ecological environment and damage to public

health, which urgently need solutions with scientific and technological support. This Joint-Delta Lab is marked as a supporting project of the Mega-Delta programme, the latter being endorsed by the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development in June 2021. Based on the research achievements and international cooperation of the State Key Laboratory of Estuarine and Coastal Research, we are establishing an international joint laboratory with the leading institutions from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Romania and other countries. The cooperation is carried out through international academic cooperation, scientific and technological personnel exchange, student training and resources sharing to improve the scientific research and innovation ability of cooperative partners. The joint laboratory will become a platform for information exchange and sharing among partner institutions, and serve the needs of partner countries for disaster prevention and mitigation, environmental protection and public health.

On September 28, 2022, the project "Periodic cyclone effects on Gangetic food web" (<https://www.oceandecade.org/actions/periodic-cyclone-effects-on-gangetic-food-web/>) led by the Estuarine and Coastal Studies Foundation of India affiliated to the "Mega-Delta Programme" was also endorsed by the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. This project mainly focuses on the Biodiversity (Plankton, Benthos, Fish, mangrove), Biogeochemical cycle (nutrients and carbon cycle), Livelihood options (agriculture and fisheries), Living standards (cyclone forced refugees), and Knowledge sharing at the Ganges Delta.

ECNUers draw world's first spatial distribution map of soil antibiotic resistance genes

Along with his team, Prof. Liu Min from ECNU School of Geographic Sciences utilized the big data of soil metagenomics to accomplish the world's first distribution map of soil antibiotic resistance genes (ARGs), identifying the hot spots of soil microbial drug resistance, and revealing the geographical pattern and the driving mechanism of soil microbial drug resistance in the world. The research result, titled "*Global Biogeography and Projection of Soil Antibiotic Resistance Genes*", was published in *Science Advances* on November 16, 2022.



The massive use and misuse of antibiotics has resulted in the selective enrichment of ARGs in microorganisms in the environment, and the acquisition of ARGs by pathogenic bacteria through gene mutation or horizontal gene transfer has led to ineffective antibiotic treatment, prolonged treatment time, increased morbidity and mortality, and higher hospitalization costs, posing a serious challenge to the health of human beings and animals. Therefore, antibiotics and ARGs are considered as new pollutants.

However, the spatial distribution of soil ARGs in the world, and which factors would affect its geographical structure, were unclear. This knowledge gap has seriously hindered comprehensive understanding and effective control of soil ARGs.

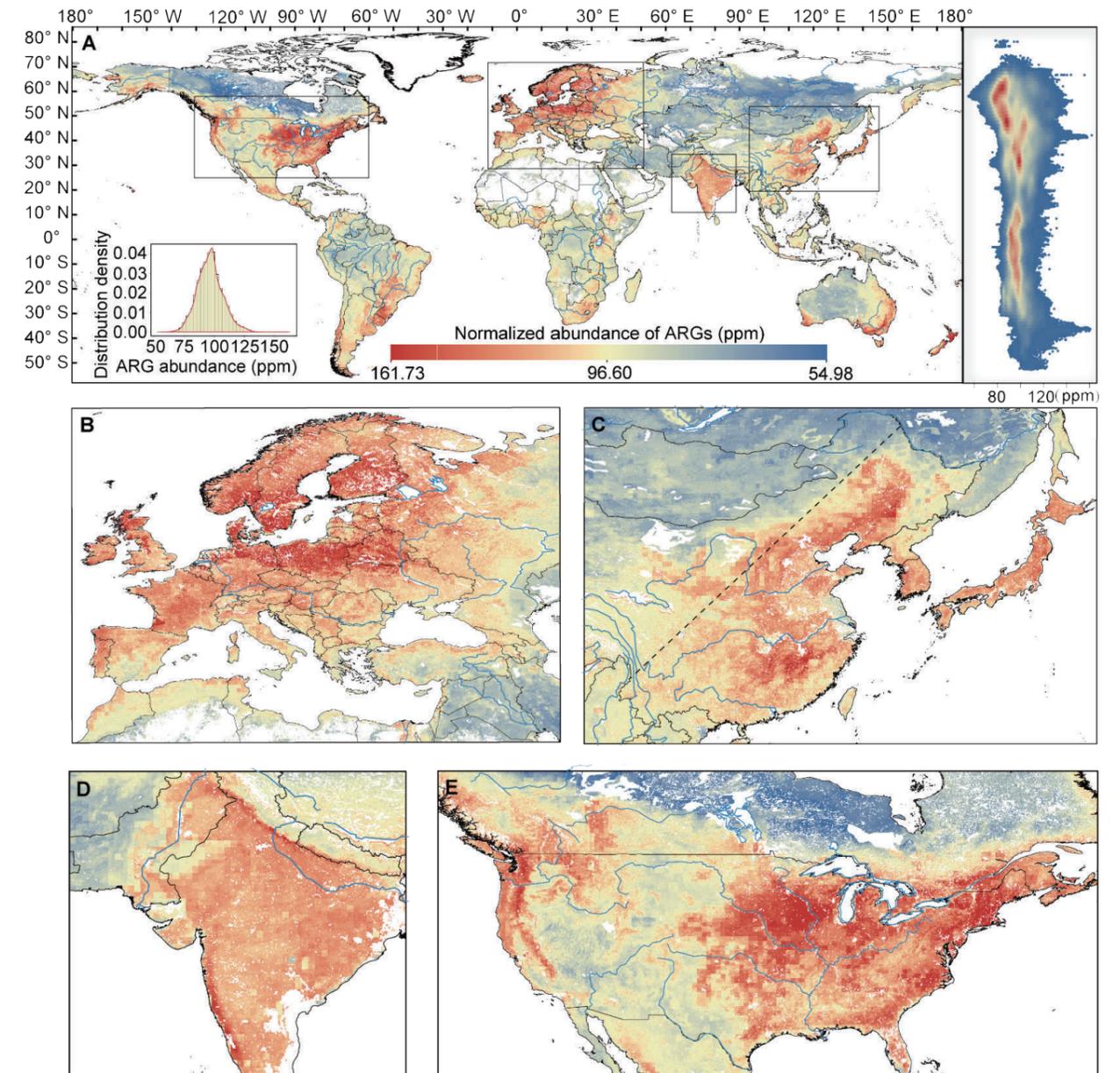
Based on the big data of soil metagenomics, Prof. Liu Min and his team annotated the ARGs in the global soil environment, discovering that the ARG abundance in agricultural soils was significantly higher than that in nonagricultural soils, and multi-drug resistance genes were the dominant type of ARGs.

Accurately identifying microbial hosts is the key to understanding the resistance level of soil microorganisms. After annotating the gene sequences carrying ARGs, the research team found that ARGs were mostly carried by gut microbes and clinical pathogens. Further analysis showed that human activities can increase the abundance

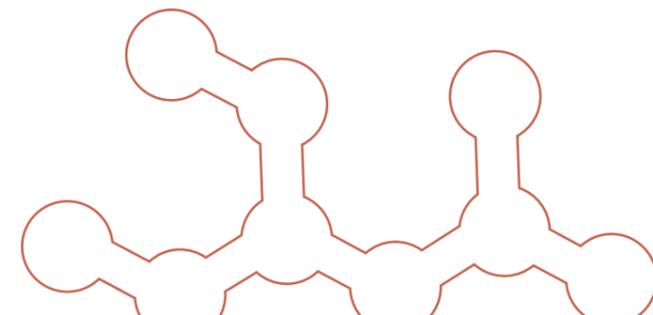
of soil ARGs by introducing gut microbes and clinical pathogens through the use of agricultural sludge and manure into farmland. In addition, geographical factors such as physical and chemical properties of soils, temperature and precipitation etc. can also indirectly increase soil antibiotic resistance by regulating the growth and reproduction of gut microbes and clinical pathogens.

For the first time, the research team used machine learning to draw a global map of soil ARG abundance, finding that soil ARG hot spots are mainly located in areas with dense population and well-developed agriculture and animal husbandry in East United States, West Europe, South Asia, and East Asia. Based on this, the research team proposed the necessity of controlling the soil ARGs in the above-mentioned areas by reducing the use of antibiotics, sewage irrigation and feces.

"From the perspective of big data mining and environmental geography, this study leads the direction of research into soil ARGs." Prof. Liu Min said, "The research results are of great practical significance to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3 -- Good Health and Well-being, and provide a basis for the implementation of the global action plan on antibiotic resistance launched by WHO and the Action Plan on Controlling New Pollutants issued by the State Council of China".



Prof. Liu Min from the School of Geographic Sciences, Prof. Hou Lijun from the Institute of Estuarine and Coastal Research, and Associate Prof. Yin Guoyu from the School of Geographic Sciences are corresponding authors of the paper. The graduate student Zheng Dongsheng and Associate Prof. Yin Guoyu from the School of Geographic Sciences are the first authors of the paper. ECNU is the first completion institute. The authors include Prof. Yang Yi, Prof. Zheng Yanling, postdoctoral student Li Ye of the School of Geographic Sciences, and Thomas P. Van Boeckel, an assistant professor from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich. The study was funded by the National Key R & D Program of China and the National Natural Science Foundation of China.



ECNUer

World-famous skyscraper designer Marshall Strabala joins ECNU



On September 21, 2022, Marshall Strabala, the world-famous architect and chief designer of the Shanghai Tower, was appointed by the School of Design of ECNU as a visiting professor.

Mr. Marshall Strabala and his Strabala+architects LLC have established a new major called “Architectural Art Design” in cooperation with the School of Design of ECNU to jointly cultivate MFA Master of Arts.

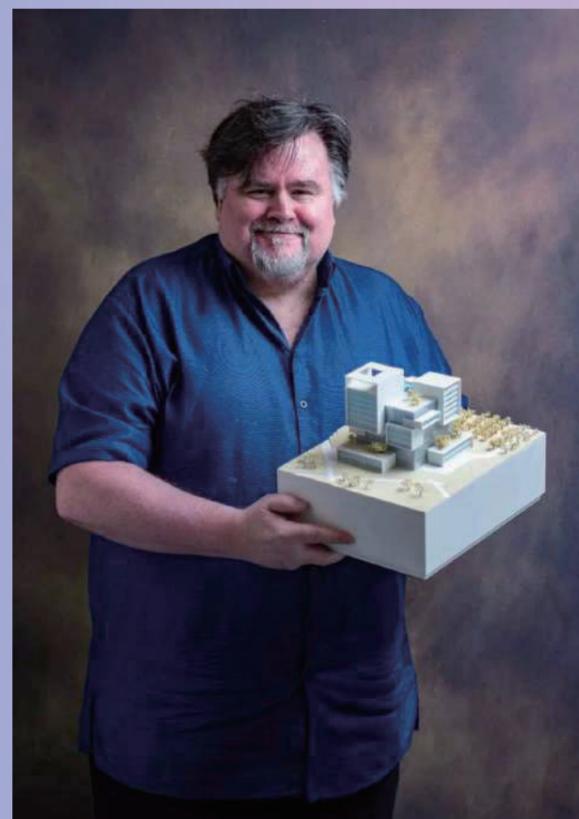
In cooperation with international top architects and design companies, the major aims to establish a training model in combination with internationalized education and industry-university-research, so as to cultivate first-class innovative architectural art design talents. The recruitment will be officially kicked off in 2023 with courses to be designed by Mr. Marshall Strabala and taught by him in person and his team.

Prof. Wei Shaonong, Dean of the School of Design of ECNU, issued a certificate to Marshall Strabala. After the appointment ceremony, Mr. Marshall Strabala communicated with the students who responded positively to his design philosophy of modern art and architecture, that is, “do more with less” that he has been always advocating. “I hope to establish a brand-new disciplinary theory regarding art and architecture design and an innovative teaching and talent cultivation model that integrates production and education in the cooperation with the School of Design of ECNU to jointly cultivate MFA Master of Arts,” said Marshall Strabala.

Mr. Marshall Strabala has designed 4 of the 20 super high-rise buildings already built in the world (828-meter Burj Khalifa, 632-meter Shanghai Tower, 450-meter Zifeng Tower) and the 560-meter super high-rise building Phnom Penh Twin Tower

under construction. Mr. Marshall Strabala is one of the few designers in the world who has designed so many super high-rise buildings.

Mr. Marshall Strabala’s classic works include the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center, London’s Canary Wharf, the Houston Ballet Center, and the Taihu Museum. In his 28-year design career, he has completed hundreds of designs covering various projects including super high-rise buildings, urban complexes, and public buildings. Mr. Marshall Strabala, a global architectural design master who has worked and lived in China, won the Shanghai Magnolia Memorial Award in September 2021.



Norwegian student returns to China after 3 years

On December 11, 2022, the 16th ECNU International Cultural Festival was held on Putuo Campus.

At the opening ceremony, Ole Eidskrem, a Norwegian international student representative of ECNU’s School of International Chinese Studies, passionately made a speech in fluent Chinese to express his sincere affections to China and ECNU.

“In this summer, when the plane landed in Shanghai, I exclaimed ‘I am finally back home!’” Eidskrem couldn’t help holding his excitement of getting back to the site of the ECNU International Cultural Festival.

Ole Eidskrem flew back to Norway in early 2020 due to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. At that moment, he didn’t expect the global pandemic to last for nearly 3 years, during which he kept in touch with his Chinese teachers and classmates in the hope of coming back to the place he calls his second home: China.

That’s why Eidskrem set out on his mission to return to China. In order to be one of the first international students to return, he paid extremely close attention to China’s entry policies during the pandemic. Every 3 months, he took the initiative to call the Chinese Embassy and contact the staffs for the latest messages. “One day afterwards, I finally received the message from the Embassy. In August this year, I became the first Norwegian student granted with the Study Visa to return China after almost 3 years!”

In Norway, he had to sleep at 6 p.m. and get up at 1 a.m. for online courses due to the time-difference. As a result, he gave up most of his social life for online courses. However, he never thought about quitting his study. His families and friends often asked, “Is China that charming?” He answered, “Of

course! China is a country full of charms, e.g., the long history, the profound culture, the picturesque scenery and the amicable people etc., all of which draw me back.”

On 19 August 2022, he finally was able to return to the ECNU campus. “I feel really elated to be in the beautiful campus with my familiar teachers and classmates. My heart always stands with ECNU and China.”

He loves Chinese cuisine so much that he even cooked it in Norway. Before returning to China, he made a wish list e.g., to have a hotpot in Chongqing, to drink beers in Qingdao, to eat Biangbiang noodles in Xi’an etc. In Norway, he also cooked Chinese food for his family, such as braised chicken feet and braised pork in brown sauce etc., leading his family members to understand and feel the true meaning of Chinese culture.

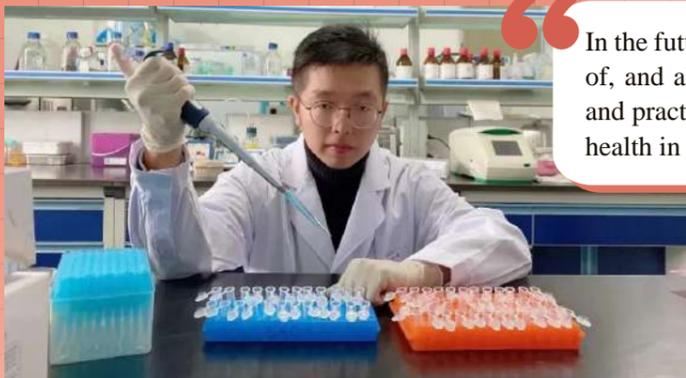
Eidskrem gradually figured out his goals while studying as an ECNU student. “I want to serve my life as a bridge between China and Norway, enabling more Norwegians to indeed understand China.”

In 2021, ECNU ushered in its 70th anniversary. To express how much he missed ECNU, he waved the flag of ECNU on a ship in Norway, sending his best wishes from Northern Europe.

After the speech, Eidskrem called his mother in Norway to invite her to visit him on the ECNU campus--the place where he studied and grew as an international student representative of Norway.



PhD ECNUer shares his story: 4 first-author articles in top journals and 12 patents



“In the future, I will persist in the academic path I am fond of, and also hope to continue to develop more valuable and practical cutting-edge technologies to benefit human health in a wider range of application scenarios.”

—Chen Liang, a PhD student from the School of Life Sciences at ECNU

Chen Liang, a PhD. candidate from the School of Life Sciences, is currently conducting scientific research in the team led by Faculty Professor Li Dali. With his main focus on gene editing technology, he has published 4 articles in *Nature Biotechnology*, *Nature Chemical Biology*, and *Nature Cell Biology* as the first author (including co-author) and applied for 13 patents (4 international PCT) with 2 granted.

Chen Liang continued his story: in 2018, I joined Prof. Li Dali's research team and officially initiated my postgraduate study. At first, the highly intense experimentation stressed me out. It was too tough because the BE team I was working in barely had any rest. However, the encouragement of my senior fellow apprentice Zhang Xiaohui (Now PI of the Institute of Systematic Medicine, Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences) inspired me to keep up.

Thanks to our working at full stretch, we have successfully developed hyCBEs and A&C-BE_{max}, which were published in *Nature Cell Biology* and *Nature Biotechnology* respectively, and the findings were also highlighted by *Nature Reviews Genetics* and *Nature Cell Biology*. These achievements were also acclaimed by *Chinese Science Journal*, *China Education Net* and other media.

I hope to overcome the shortcomings of canonical base editing technologies from the bottom up, and provide new editors with more clinical applications. However, breakthroughs in new technologies never happen overnight.

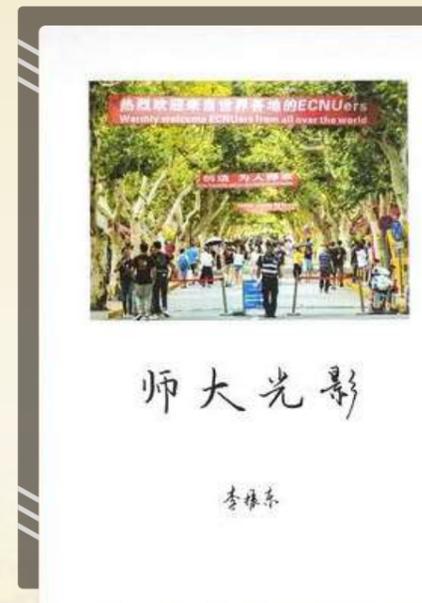
From May to August 2020, there were no good positive data outputs from thousands of repeated tests of transfection experiments in the early stage. During the pandemic in the first half of 2022, the stomach pain and eczema were getting worse, and the submission was rejected twice. Those days were very frustrating.

But finally, with the joint efforts of our mentor and team, we once again obtained two new technical breakthroughs. The first one is the successful development of a new generation of "precise and safe" adenine base editor ABE9, which has reduced DNA/RNA off-target events to the background level and effectively solved all kinds of potential off-target hazards of canonical ABE. Theoretically, it will provide a new precise targeting tool for correcting nearly 50% of genetically pathogenic SNVs. This important study was published in *Nature Chemical Biology*.

The other breakthrough is the development of the first novel CGBE/CBE series (Td-CGBE/Td-CBEs) which do not rely on the AID/APOBEC family of natural deaminases. It is expected to greatly improve the safety of future clinical applications, and this molecular modification strategy also provides new insight for development of novel gene editing technology and protein evolutionary engineering. A significant achievement was recently published in *Nature Biotechnology*.

I've always kept in mind "problem-oriented and demand-driven". I hope that technology we developed can really work for people's happiness. I also encourage my fellow students to go ahead with their ideas and then they will certainly witness unexpected "scenery" along the way!

Ph.D. graduate Li Zhendong presents a special gift to ECNU



Li Zhendong, a Ph.D. graduate in physical chemistry, who used his five-year campus life at ECNU to prepare a special album to the university - *The Light and Shadow in ECNU*, which has recorded the beautiful campus in four seasons through the lens of his camera.

After having read this album featuring a clear timeline and rich content, we felt curious about the process of creating *The Light and Shadow in ECNU* and the story behind Li Zhendong: as a Ph.D. majoring in physical chemistry, how could he embark on the journey of photography? And what's the story behind those photos?

Li Zhendong admitted that he was not a "talented photographer". In order to take vibrant photos, he had to immerse himself in the campus to get familiar with every plant on campus, capture the light and shadow of different seasons, and try different angles of composition.

"I'm fond of taking photos in which ECNU is recognizable at first sight."

During his studies at ECNU, he once participated in the follow-up of many news activities in the campus. These photos are more than a simple record of those incidents and scenes, but can also arouse the participants' common memories.

For example, in January 2020 when both domestic and foreign faculties and students gathered together to merrily celebrate New Year's Eve, there were no masks on anyone's face, and all of us were immersed in the atmosphere of singing and chatting. The warmth in the cafeteria is palpable in the photo – as if it were passing through the paper to the palm of each viewer.

The graduation ceremony in 2020 was also of special significance. Graduates who had been delayed by the pandemic finally returned to campus in late May to complete their farewell to the alma mater. Li Zhendong used his camera to record the figures of his friends. The happiness of graduation and the sadness of departure are intertwined, injecting distinctive feelings into the photos.

However, Li Zhendong's choice of the photographic perspective and his sense of beauty are not entirely naturalistic. During these years of "exploration" at ECNU, he has been constantly experiencing the natural scenery of the campus, bringing the scenery hidden in others' eyes to everyone through *The Light and Shadow in ECNU*.

In October 2019, Li Zhendong rode a bicycle to visit all residential areas in the neighborhood of ECNU in order to record the lighting ceremony on the Anniversary Day near the Putuo Campus from a bird's-eye view. After making several adjustments, he found the best angle for shooting the lighting ceremony from the terrace of the highest storey of a residential building. "The neighborhoods nearby all have access controls, so I surreptitiously followed local residents inside. During the filming process, I found my way around by myself."

Looking at this album, we can feel his ingenuity. "Compared with other friends fond of shooting huge scenes, I prefer to film ECNU campuses," says he.

In June of 2022, Li ended his five-year scientific research and officially bid farewell to his campus life. During his five years here, thanks to photography, he had chances to get connected with countless things and people that were unexpected before. The heavy stack of work permits symbolizes the best time of his youth, and will also guide his gaze on the world in the future.

Campus

Colorful celebrations at ECNU

ECNU held its annual Sports Day this year on October 25 and 26. This event aims at creating links between students and faculties focusing around sports, physical activities and healthy living.

The opening ceremony of the Sports Day kicked off on October 25 at the east track-and-field ground of Minhang Campus. The creative styles in which the faculties and students made their debut were one of the highlights of the opening ceremony.

Thirty phalanxes including the international student phalanx demonstrated their unique heritages and styles of different departments and schools through a plethora of costumes, props, banners and flags!

The games were divided into the student group and the faculty group, with athletes competing in a diverse selection of sports.

In addition, on October 26, participants competed in several unique fun-filled events, including basketball games, swimming competitions, and many more. There were also fun activities such as bridge, Sudoku, and Chinese chess.

Prizes and/or certificates were awarded to the winning teams and individuals to celebrate and cherish their sportsmanship.

Sports Day !!



ECNU holds the 16th International Cultural Festival



On December 11, 2022, the “Mini Expo” of the 16th ECNU International Cultural Festival was held on Putuo Campus. Students representing 44 countries from six continents participated in the Expo with more than 150 Chinese and foreign students engaged in the performance. Chinese and foreign staff and students participated in the event both online and offline to experience the joyful carnival of cultural integration.



Creativity
Character
Community

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