

Edited by Chen Xuehui

MEMOIRS of ORDINARY PEOPLE



NEW WORLD PRESS

Edited by Chen Xuehui

MEMOIRS of ORDINARY PEOPLE



NEW WORLD PRESS

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

百姓记忆: 英文 / 陈学慧主编 ; 许松慧译. -- 北京: 新世界出版社, 2014. 4
ISBN 978-7-5104-4973-4

I. ①百… II. ①陈… ②许… III. ①社会主义建设成就—中国—英文 IV. ①D619

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2014)第066755号

Memoirs of Ordinary People

百姓记忆

主 编: 陈学慧
翻 译: 许松慧
责任编辑: 乔天碧 李淑娟
英文审定: 许靖国
图片提供: 经济日报社
装帧设计: 贺玉婷
版式设计: 清鑫工作室
责任印制: 李一鸣 黄厚清
出版发行: 新世界出版社
社 址: 北京市西城区百万庄大街24号 (100037)
发 行 部: (010)6899 5968 (010)6899 8705 (传真)
总 编 室: (010)6899 5424 (010)6832 6679 (传真)
<http://www.nwp.cn>
<http://www.newworld-press.com>
版 权 部: +8610 6899 6306
版权部电子信箱: frank@nwp.com.cn
印刷: 北京京华虎彩印刷有限公司
经销: 新华书店
开本: 787 × 1092 1/16
字数: 150千字 印张: 10.5
版次: 2014年6月第1版 2014年6月北京第1次印刷
书号: ISBN 978-7-5104-4973-4
定价: 48.00元

版权所有, 侵权必究

凡购本社图书, 如有缺页、倒页、脱页等印装错误, 可随时退换。

客服电话: (010)6899 8638

First Edition 2014

Edited by Chen Xuehui

Translated by Xu Songhui

Cover Design by He Yuting

Copyright by New World Press, Beijing, China

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means without permission in writing from the publisher.

ISBN 978-7-5104-4973-4

Published by

NEW WORLD PRESS

24 Baiwanzhuang Street, Beijing 100037, China

Distributed by

NEW WORLD PRESS

24 Baiwanzhuang Street, Beijing 100037, China

Tel: 86-10-68995968

Fax: 86-10-68998705

Website: www.newworld-press.com

E-mail: frank@nwp.com.cn

Printed in the People's Republic of China

Preface

The stories in this book reflect the great accomplishments of *Economic Daily*, China's No. 1 economic newspaper, in helping set this trend. Launched in 1983, *Economic Daily* has grown rapidly along with the Chinese economy. An important channel for the government to publicize economic policies and data, it is also one of the most authoritative and credible financial newspapers in China. Diverging from its usual focus on the central government's financial and economic policies as well as on opinion makers in the economic sector, this series mainly narrates the life stories of ordinary people over the recent decade. Some have made distinctive achievements, while others are still at the initial stages of their careers. Although not about the ups and downs of great figures, these stories of ordinary people still are very interesting and appealing.

Few dry or obscure economic terms are used in narrating these stories. A succinct context is provided before and after each story to offer readers a comprehensive understanding of the protagonists with the careers they are engaged in.

The first decade of the 21st century saw the restructuring of the Chinese economy, with people's social lives changing profoundly as their destinies experienced ups and downs. Economic restructuring has caused the reduction of jobs in some traditional industries, while stimulating careers in many new

industries, including those for the shield tunnel machine operator, piano tuner, industrial designer, Taobao shop owner, patent agent, digital copyright service provider and pet physician. The work of a volunteer museum interpreter, conservationist and traditional handicraft inheritor in non-economic fields goes beyond the basic need of supporting the family. While there is increasingly fierce competition in society, there are also more possibilities. People's lives show that contemporary China has provided greater chances for people to realize their potential.

It is not possible to present in a book all the stories of ordinary people in a country with a population of 1.3 billion. This book serves as a window on contemporary China only, and the stories in the book will enable the reader to observe the life of ordinary Chinese from different aspects.

The Editor

November 2013

Contents

A Media Director

A Bridge to Learning Science 1

A Countryside Doctor

Staying in a Rural Corner Dedicated to a Virtuous Cause 10

A Volunteer Commentator

Delivering Knowledge and Sharing Its Charm 18

A Piano Tuner

Hope Soars Through Striking the Right Notes 25

An Industrial Designer

Opening the “Door of Creativity” Through Originality 32

A Shield-tunneling Machine Operator

Driving an “Unrivalled Giant” to Build a Subway Network..... 40

A Nature Reserve Worker

Protecting a National Treasure in Remote Mountains 48

A Cadre Sent to Aid Tibet

Giving Something Back to the Snowy Plateau 56

A Taobao Shop Owner

Building a Buy-and-Sell Platform to Promote Domestic Demand and Achieve
Win-Win Results..... 64

A Qiang Embroidery Artist

Advancing Minority and Folk Arts..... 72

A Blind Health Masseur	
Holding Up the Sky Through Self-reliance	80
A Journalist Reviews the South-to-North Water Diversion Project	
Resettling Thousands of Miles Away for the Larger Family	87
An Arcticologist	
Exploring the Secrets of the Earth's Three Poles	95
An Intellectual Property Judge	
Guardian of an Innovative Economy	104
A Plateau Road Maintainer	
Witness to Transformations in the "Road to the Skies"	112
An Ombudswoman Handling Complaints and Visits	
Ordinary People's Affairs Are the Most Important	120
A Woman Dedicated to Public Welfare and Charity	
Doing Small Things with Great Love	129
A Large-scale Grain Grower	
Who Says Farmers Are Not Happy?	137
A Digital Copyright Service Provider	
Growing Along with Digital Publishing in China	146
A Pet Physician	
Fun Through a New Career	154



A Media Director A Bridge to Learning Science

Interview with Li Shuanke, by Wang Jin

Li Shuanke was the captain of China's first scientific expedition team to the North Pole. He took over *Geographical Knowledge* in 1997, making the magazine widely popular. He is now a researcher with the CAS (Chinese Academy of Sciences) Research Institute of Geographical Science and Resources and director and chief editor of *Geographical Knowledge*.

Despite having to endure the extreme vagaries of weather and harsh environment for a decade, I still have the chance to witness beautiful scenes that many people would never see throughout their lives. Meanwhile, I encountered dangers as well as hardships. Yet I loved it and never felt bitter or sad.

In 1980, I was just 16 years old. For the first time, I left my home in Pingliang, Gansu Province, and came to Beijing. After I majored in geography at Beijing Normal University, I did further studies to obtain a master's degree. After graduation, I chose to work out in the field for the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Climbing mountains and getting close to nature require large amounts of fieldwork, which is indispensable for gathering samples, forming perceptions and making firsthand judgments.

When I was young, I was very healthy and outgoing, and I performed well academically. The Chinese Academy of Sciences organized scientific expedition teams to the South Pole, the North Pole and the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. I was chosen after a strict selection process to be the leader of the first North Pole scientific expedition.

What are the South Pole and the North Pole like? Well, everything there is ice and snow. And on the vast expanses of whiteness, you won't encounter many people like us wandering in this vastness. When winds blew fiercely, we had to secure ourselves to rocks in order not to be blown away. At such times, the passion and curiosity of youth overcame all fear.

I've witnessed scenery many people will never see throughout their

whole lives — gazing up at the interchanges of discrete aurora in the afterglow of Crux, enjoying the fascinating visions of shining ice crystals, confronting wild wolves in the Altun Mountains, watching boiling hot springs rise from a glacier in Hoh Xil. Under the guidance of Polaris, I've also crossed the shear zone and the circumpolar regions, where ice floes thrash about, to a place where we couldn't tell which direction was north.

We stayed at the South Pole for a year and a half, having overwintered there. Humans are social animals. There were no more than 20 people living together. We didn't have telephones at that time, and we could only rely on a long-wave transceiver. We could only hear an "oh" in reply, after shouting "hello" several times and pausing for a minute. We sent and received important information by telegraph, shouting loudly one word after another, like "Li...", "Ah?" and "Li..." — a telegram with only ten characters could take an hour; by the time the telegram was successfully sent, everybody would know the information. Things are much better nowadays; there is TV, Internet, telephone and fax at the South Pole — the technology having become much more advanced.

Over the last decade, I've encountered various dangers. Yet I loved the adventure and never felt bitter. In 1997, I took over the magazine *Geographic Knowledge*. We had only a few people on staff and a sales volume of fewer than 20,000 copies. Each editor had management tasks, which I thought was against the rules. In recent years, the biggest change in our magazine has been the insistence on the separation of editing and marketing — the editorial staff is not allowed to be involved in management activities, and the management division cannot intervene in the work of the editorial department. Our principle is "Content comes first."

I like things that change rather than boring schedules; perhaps this is a common pursuit among people who like the outdoor life and getting closer to

nature. When we go out, we are not interested in a place if it looks like our hometown. It's the same with work. I always hope to find changes that inspire me and give me a feeling of sparkle. Each step brings us toward new scenery; in doing the magazine, we are satisfied with the changes each year brings and with our progress over every issue. It's like raising a child — it's very exhausting, but it brings ineffable joy when you see the child grow up day by day.

Among the natural sciences, geography is the most unknowable subject, with the most non-uniqueness and highest law of probability. This is the appeal of geography.

Literally, geography refers to the principles of the Earth. In 2000, *Geographic Knowledge* was formally renamed *Chinese National Geography* — adjusting our goal as a scientific medium. The concept of our magazine is to “open the door to geography and reveal humanistic and cultural sentiments.” Nature comes first, but the steps of nature fall on humanity and culture because we are concerned with the relationship between nature and humans.

There are many uncertainties in geography. Among the natural sciences, geography is the most unknowable subject, with the most non-uniqueness and highest law of probability. For example, rainfall may be the result of different factors and bring about different consequences. This is the appeal of geography — there are many explanations of one cause and many causes of one result. Many geographic research subjects can't be measured by time or other countable means. Humans have limited knowledge when facing this infinite world; the whole of society is full of curiosities.

China abounds in geographic resources. Compared with our international

peers, we can get the best at the lowest cost — not the cost of human resources but natural ones. Of the ten world natural ecosystems, China has nine, exceeding any other country. The most amazing aspect of geography is diversity. China has rich natural resources, offering abundant scope for our research. The topic on which we focus today will inspire new insights in the future. For instance, we come to a mountain today; 50 or 100 years later, if our descendants come here again, they may find it more amazing compared to our pictures today.

The beauty of geography lies in its diversity and change. I've been to numerous places, but my curiosity never diminishes. The more places I go, the more I find I do not know. I've been to Tibet many times, and I feel it's totally different depending on the varying region, season or year. The more familiar you are with a place, the more you will feel like this: It's different in each season, and it's even different on the morning and the evening of the same day.

Media personnel must have ideals and dreams; otherwise, they are not cut out for media work, especially working in media like ours. It's very exhausting to travel up and down over hill and dale. Sometimes we need to drive 18 hours a day and suddenly encounter blizzards, hail, typhoons and even road accidents. When we get out of the car after arriving home at two or three hours before dawn with swollen legs, we really don't want to eat anything. I think the success of our magazine may be attributed to the success of the editorial department, and I am proud that we have a powerful and excellent team. Our personnel all have dreams, and they are passionate, persistent and dedicated. Success grows through persistence, and quality stems from the details. Some people always want to seek opportunities and shortcuts, but I think persistence is essential. Persevere in what you are doing, and you will surely see the bright dawn of success.

Our enterprise culture advocates, “Dare to surpass and encourage to innovate.” The articles published in our magazine must be scientifically valid. While selecting topics, we have to first listen to scientists’ opinions, then go find and present the stories; in the end, the scientists might edit our articles. We implement careful decisions for our website in topic selection, design and production. The production cycle of our magazine is quite long. For example, the special on Inner Mongolia took us three years. It was really painstaking. As to the final draft of a topic, we will do Internet searches on the title, subtitle, introduction, abstract and key words of each article, so as to avoid any duplication. If there is duplication, we withdraw the article and rewrite it. We want to be original and unique so as to make it valuable. We are always concerned about the scientific stories behind the hot issues, along with difficult problems, and controversial issues in society. Our topics must be visionary. Moreover, we keep in close contact with scientific circles and try our best to keep up with the hot issues of society.

I have been engaged in scientific research for many years, and I am now dedicated to changing people’s perceptions of geography. As to why our magazine sells, I think it is the presentation of scientists’ new discoveries, viewpoints and developments and how we tell stories in specific fields of nature.

Our targeted readers are well-educated, with mature life views and values, passions and dreams — with socio-economic advances, this group is growing.

The average monthly circulation of *Chinese National Geography* is about 800,000 to 900,000 copies — 70 percent of which is sold on newsstands. We have also founded the children’s version of *Chinese National Geography* —

Natural Science, edited and published the magazine *Chinese Heritage*, established a distribution company and advertising agency, a film and television company, a publishing house, a mobile phone newspaper, a website, an e-journal, mobile terminal downloading and so on.

The main external reason for the rapid development of our magazine is that Chinese people are becoming wealthier. When I completed my postgraduate studies in 1987, I could only earn 119 yuan per month, and my greatest wish was to own a bicycle of the “Forever” brand. At that time, who could even dream of owning a car? Nowadays, with the advancement of communication technology, satellite technology and wireless networks, we have become “clairvoyant” and “clairaudient” — able to see, hear and travel to distant places. We can reach more places, and naturally we desire more scientific knowledge about geography. The soil is brown in Inner Mongolia, yellow in Beijing, red in Jiangxi and black in the northeast. Why? Your curiosity would be piqued by our magazine. Catering to this demand, our magazine can develop rapidly.

Over the last decade, the reforms in our cultural system have brought new vigor to our traditional magazine. *Chinese National Geography* has issued versions in simplified Chinese, Taiwan traditional Chinese, Macau and Hong Kong traditional Chinese, Japanese and English, and so forth. It’s the first Chinese magazine whose copyright was integrally exported to developed countries. From 2003 to 2006, our magazine entered into a period of rapid growth, its circulation doubling each year. In 2008, our magazine entered into a period of stable growth, maintaining a growth rate of eight to ten percent each year, which was similar to the economic growth rate of China.

Our targeted readers are well-educated people with mature life views and related values, passions and dreams. With social and economic development,

this group has been increasingly growing larger, which will further increase our circulation and influence. These days, people have become more and more interested in science. The continuous improvement of their income levels, scientific and educational levels and educational standards is the foundation of our development.

If we want to produce a truly scientific medium, we need to have the proper spirit, ideas, interaction, voices and feedback. We have to spread interesting scientific stories to the public in our own way. Our medium sets up a bridge between science and the public — so science is popularized to the public, and the public can learn science.

A geography magazine should not be content with beauty alone, because beauty only brings “exclamation marks!” Excellent geography magazines should not only have “exclamation marks” but also “question marks” — they should raise questions and thoughts and make associations. Our goal is to become a powerful and leading scientific medium. So far, we don’t have such an institution in China, but we surely will have one in the future.

Major Breakthroughs in Media Reform

Since the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, significant reforms in the press and publishing system have already been achieved. In June 2003, 21 print-media publishers were listed as cultural units of pilot reform. Since then, the press and publishing industry has overcome numerous difficulties and progressed dynamically to enable restructuring, transformation, public listing, diversified financing, trans-regional and trans-departmental cooperation, joint ownership and reorganization. A group of large-scale media and publishing enterprises has developed from scratch and flourished, becoming the “jet engine” to lead the development of the press and publishing in China.

Over the last decade, press and publishing system reforms have gone through stages of positive explorations, pilot reforms and expansion and

achieved accelerated development and rapid progress. A series of significant achievements has been made at different stages, and productivity in the publishing industry has been liberated, with the effect of publishing thriving greatly, the industry developing rapidly, and the transmissibility and competitiveness of the whole press industry leaping forward.

According to statistics, nearly 370,000 types of books were published in 2011 — 200,000 more than the 170,962 types released in the year 2002; while 162,000 types of books were republished or reprinted in 2011 — 90,000 more than the 70,269 in 2002.