

Tribute to a great botanist

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I had the privilege of meeting Professor Wu Zhengyi on my very first visit to the Kunming Institute of Botany in 2000. I vividly remember arriving at the Institute together with the then British Ambassador, Sir Anthony Galsworthy, and his wife Jan. Professor Li Dezhu had arranged for us to meet Professor Wu and introduced us over a cup of tea in a small meeting room. After a while Jan Galsworthy took out an envelope of photographs of the flowering plants she had encountered on her travels around China. At once Professor Wu became very excited. He examined each photograph in turn, holding it close to his eyes, to see it clearly. Of course, he immediately recognised every plant in each of the two dozen photographs and told us something about it: where else it grew, what it was used for and who had first collected. It was very clear that we were enjoying the company of someone with a botanical encyclopaedia in his head! Our conversation then moved on to the plants we might be lucky to find in Lijiang, which we were due to visit a few days later. Professor Wu was disappointed that he would not be able to come with us but said that he looked forward to seeing the photographs Jan would take.

I have good reason to be able to recall this meeting as though it took place yesterday. Every day, in my office at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, I admired the beautiful and symbolic painting which Professor Wu had presented at the twinning ceremony that formally celebrated the special relationship between RBGE and KIB. The painting shows two plants intertwining and growing together. One is red and gold, the colours of the flag of China, the other blue and white for the Scottish flag. Underneath is Professor Wu's calligraphy, marking the occasion of the twinning. It is a beautiful work of art which kept me company for the fourteen years when I was Regius Keeper. I miss it now that I have retired! Through this familiar and much-appreciated painting, I felt a warmth and gratitude towards Professor Wu before I had even met him. The painting played an important part in welcoming numerous visitors from China to the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. It was shown to numerous senior scientific and diplomatic visitors from China. Many of them admired the fine quality of Professor Wu's calligraphy and most took a photograph of the painting.



The author was wearing specially designed tie with Chinese Scottish tartan and taking pictures before the painting (painted by Zeng Xiaolian, with Wu Zhengyi's inscription), which was presented to Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden by KIB. 作者佩戴特别设计的苏格兰格子领带在昆明植物所赠送给爱丁堡皇家植物园的画作（曾孝谦绘，吴征镒赋四言）前留影





Stephen Blackmore was presenting Mary's botanical painting to Prof. Wu in 2004. (2004年, 史蒂芬·布莱克摩尔向吴教授展示玛丽·梅登的花楸画作)



Prof. Wu was presenting Honorary Professor to SB in 2004. (2004年, 吴教授授予史蒂芬·布莱克摩尔荣誉教授头衔)

The painting provided the inspiration for a work of art I commissioned specially from RBGE's talented botanical artist Mary Mendum who had published in Curtis's Botanical Magazine, New Plantsman, Flora of Bhutan and elsewhere. In 2001 I asked Mary to paint two species of *Sorbus*, one from China and one from Scotland, as the first in a planned series of paintings to celebrate the Twinning relationship between RBGE and KIB. She selected *Sorbus eburnea* from Sichuan and *Sorbus pseudofennica*, the Scottish Whitebeam, and painted them from specimens in the living collection at RBGE. Sadly, this proved to be Mary's last painting, she died early in 2002 after an extended illness. The original painting was presented to her family and high quality, limited edition prints were made. In 2004 when KIB very kindly appointed me as an Honorary Professor, I presented one of the *Sorbus* prints to Professor Wu and explained that the inspiration had come from the painting he gave to RBGE.

In 2005 I showed the painting to Mme Guo Guifang, the Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Edinburgh and explained the symbolism behind the colour scheme. Mme Guo became very excited about the red, gold, blue and white colours and explained that she had been thinking of designing a Scotland and China Friendship Tartan. Soon afterwards the design of the tartan was finalised and officially registered alongside the tartans of the Scottish clan families. The entry in the registration notes (which are on-line in the Register of Scottish Tartans at www.tartanregister.go.uk) reads:

"The Chinese Scottish tartan was originally created to signify the special relationship that exists between Scotland and China and between the Scots and the Chinese community in Scotland. The inspiration for this tartan came from Madam Guo Guifang, Chinese Consul General, who once spoke of the unique Scottish tartan as one of the major tourist attractions for the Chinese and suggested the idea of creating a specific tartan for the Chinese people. Designed by Heather Yellowley of the Strathmore Woollen Company of Forfar and facilitated by Angus Council and the Scottish Tartans Authority, the tartan incorporates the colours of the Scottish Saltire together with the red and yellow of the Chinese flag. These are interwoven with green bands to symbolise the great co-operation between Scottish and Chinese botanists in the Botanic



The Chinese Scottish tartan inspired by the painting. (受那幅画启发而设计的苏格兰中国格子呢)



Gardens of Edinburgh - home to the world's largest collection of Chinese plants outside China itself. The yellow crosses the red in five places which signifies the five stars of the Chinese Flag, the biggest and brightest being represented by the yellow cross in the middle of the red. The tartan was presented to Madam Guo on 6th April 2006 as part of the Tartan Day Celebrations which took place in the Scottish county of Angus.”

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported the launch of the new tartan and noted that “China's link with tartan goes back almost 3,000 years when an explorer in Xinjiang, Western China, discovered the burial place of a group of ancient Caucasian travellers wearing perfectly preserved tartans.” Since 2006, the tartan design has been used in many products and is always seen at formal events in the Chinese Consulate in Edinburgh.

In 2006, I was glad to be able to attend the special celebrations at KIB to mark the occasion of Professor Wu Zhengyi's ninetieth birthday. It was great event, attended by scientists from around the world and from every part of China, marking the affection and respect they felt for the great botanist. It was great sadness that he died shortly before the Symposium held in 2013 to mark the completion of the International Edition of the Flora of China which he and Peter Raven had led so effectively.

I will remember Professor Wu Zhengyi not only for his outstanding contribution to botanical science but also for the warmth of his friendship and, in particular, for his scientific diplomacy in building lasting relationships between so many institutions.

向一位伟大的植物学家致敬

史蒂芬·布莱克摩尔

英国二等勋位爵士，爱丁堡皇家学会会员，爱丁堡皇家植物园前钦定主管

在我2000年首访昆明植物研究所时，有幸拜见了吴征镒教授。我现在仍清楚记得与时任英国大使高德年爵士及其夫人一道访问该研究所的情景。在一间小会议室里，李德铎教授安排我们与吴教授进行短暂会面，我们一起喝了茶。过了一会儿，大使夫人取出一个装满照片的信封，照片上是她在中国旅游时拍摄的各种有花植物。吴教授马上变得兴奋起来，他依次查看每一张照片，并尽可能贴近照片以便看得更清楚。当然，他马上就认出了这二十几张照片中的每一种植物，而且对每种植物他都给我们做一番介绍，如该植物生于何处，有何用途以及谁是模式标本采集者等等。他的大脑好比是一部植物百科全书，与这种知识渊博的人在一起，我们都感到非常愉快。得知几天后我们将前往丽江，话题也转到我们将可能见到的植物种类，吴教授也因不能与我们同往表示遗憾，但他说希望能再看到大使夫人拍摄的植物照片。

我能如此清晰地记得这次见面，因为这一切宛如发生在昨天。在我爱丁堡皇家植物园中的办公室墙上，每天我都可欣赏那一幅美丽而又独特的画，那是吴教授亲手赠送给爱丁堡皇家植物园的珍贵礼物，以庆祝爱丁堡皇家植物园和昆明植物研究所结为姊妹园关系。画中的两株植物互相缠绕，生长在一起。其中一株红黄相间，就像中国国旗的颜色一样。而另一株则蓝白相间，好比苏格兰国



旗的颜色。作品的下方是吴教授亲笔题字，他赋四言一首以贺双方谊结姊妹。这幅画作伴随我度过了担任植物园钦定主管的14年时光。如今我虽已退休，仍甚是想念。通过这幅熟悉而颇受好评的画，我再次感受到拜见吴教授之前就已产生的温暖和感激之情。这幅画在我们接待采访的中国友人时，发挥过不可小觑的作用。很多来访的中国学者和贵宾看过此画，无不都对吴教授的题字赞不绝口，纷纷合影留念。这幅作品甚至还为爱丁堡皇家植物园的天才植物画家玛丽·梅登提供灵感。梅登在Curtis's Botanical Magazine, New Plantsman等期刊，以及《不丹植物志》上发表有很多作品。2001年我请玛丽以两种花楸属植物为题作一幅画，其中一种植物来自中国，另一种来自苏格兰，我打算把这幅画作为庆祝爱丁堡皇家植物园与昆明研究所建立姊妹关系的系列作品的第一幅。她后来以产自四川的*Sorbus eburnea*和苏格兰本土的*Sorbus pseudofennica*两种植物为原型，并参考了爱丁堡皇家植物园的活植物标本，最后才完成了这幅画。不幸的是梅登后来病情恶化，于2002年初病逝，这幅画也就成了她的绝笔。原画现在由梅登的家人留存，同时印刷了少量的高质量复制品。2004年，当我有幸被昆明植物研究所授予荣誉教授时，我把梅登的印刷画作赠予吴教授，并告诉他此画的灵感源于他当年送给爱丁堡皇家植物园的那幅作品。

2005年，我把梅登的作品介绍给时任中国驻爱丁堡总领事郭桂芳女士，并向她解释画颜色背后所蕴含的象征意义。郭女士对那些红、黄、蓝、白的颜色十分感兴趣，还说她正在考虑设计一款代表中国与苏格兰友谊的格子呢。再后来，格子呢设计完成，还被官方注册成为苏格兰氏族格子呢中的一员。这个格子呢的注册信息（苏格兰格子呢注册信息网可查，网址：www.tartanregister.go.uk）是这样写的：“这款中国苏格兰格子呢的设计初衷是为了纪念苏格兰和中国之间、苏格兰人和在苏华人之间的珍贵友谊。它的设计灵感来源于中国总领事郭桂芳女士。郭女士曾表示独特的苏格兰格子呢将会成为一种吸引中国人来苏格兰旅游的巨大吸引力，而且她还提出了为中国人设计这样一款独特的格子呢的想法。这款格子图案由安格斯郡斯特拉斯莫尔羊毛公司的希瑟·耶罗利设计，并且得到了安格斯议会和苏格兰格子呢图案管理局大力协助。它包含苏格兰圣安德鲁十字的颜色和中国国旗的红色与黄色。同时，还有绿色线条穿插其间，象征着两国植物学家在中国以外的最大中国植物种植基地——爱丁堡皇家植物园所开展的大规模合作。黄色与红色有五处相交，象征着中国国旗上的五星。而红色之中有一个大的黄色交叉点，象征着国旗上最大、最亮的那颗星。2006年4月6日，在苏格兰安格斯，这款格子呢成为格子呢日庆典的一部分展示给了郭女士。”

英国广播公司（BBC）报道了这款新格子呢的产生，并且提到“中国与格子呢的关系可以追溯到3000年前。当时，有一位探险家在中国北方新疆地区的埋藏地发现了一群古代高加索旅行者身上穿着的格子呢布料，而且还保存完好”。2006年以后，格子图案的设计被广泛应用于许多商品上，而且我们常常可以看到它出现在驻爱丁堡的中国领事馆举行的正式活动中。

我非常高兴能在2006年参加了在昆明植物研究所为吴征镒教授举办的90岁生日宴会。这是一次盛大的聚会，来自中国和世界各地的科学家们齐聚昆明，以表达对吴征镒教授这位伟大植物学家的爱戴与崇敬。2013年，在吴教授和彼得·雷文先生的鼎力支持下，《Flora of China》终于全部出版付梓，为了庆祝其发行而举办的座谈会也如期召开。然而，令人悲痛的是，就在座谈会即将召开之时，吴教授却溘然长逝。

我将永远记住吴征镒教授，不仅是因为他在植物科学上做出的杰出贡献，而且还因为我跟他深厚的友谊。当然，更重要的是因为他为许多研究所之间建立持久关系所发挥的科学外交作用。

（翻译：张全星）

