

## Reminiscence: Chinese Research Fellows in the Department of Dermatology, Fukushima Medical University in 1993-2005

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### ABSTRACT

This manuscript is a personal reminiscence of the collaboration with our young fellows and research fellows from China in the Department of Dermatology, Fukushima Medical University, Japan, in 1993-2005. As demonstrated in the bibliography, they left excellent clinical and fundamental papers then and now back in their own country. They are actively studying and raising next generation in their country. I would like to introduce their study works and activities in our department. In honor of the 100 years memorial of Dermatology Department in People's Hospital, Peking University, I would like to describe their lives in our country at the time as a short report.

**Key words:** Personal reminiscence; Our young research fellows and Chinese fellows; 100 years memorial of People's Hospital; Peking University

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### RECALL

On the first day of December, 1987, I was appointed as Chairman and Professor of Department of Dermatology, Fukushima Medical University from Hokkaido University School of Medicine following Professor Susumu Ijima. Since then, my research projects regarding clinical and dermatological assignments were shared with young doctors who wished to go work in my laboratory.

When I attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Joint Dermatological Meeting of China and Japan held in Shanghai, 1992, Professor Shengqing Ma from Beijing University (Figure 1) asked if a young Chinese research fellow could be accommodated for clinically basic studies in our department. A year later, a young doctor, Jian-zhong Zhang, who was able to speak some Japanese, joined us as a research fellow for two years, 1993-1994. With Mr. Koji Maruyama, who came from private enterprise, Dr. Zhang started to study the immunological influence of keratinocytes treated with vitamin D3 (VD3) because it was one of our clinical reach projects for treatment of patients with psoriasis (Figure 2A). During his stay, we attended several international academic events such as "The Tri-Continental Dermatology Meeting" to be held in Kyoto, Dr. Zhang also gave a talk on his own research work and tried to see the town after the meeting (Figure 2B). Dr Zhang met Dr. Martin Black and late Mr. Balbir Bhogal from St. John's Institute of Dermatology on a return visit to Fukushima to attend the Eastern Japanese Dermatology Association Meeting in 1996. At that time Dr Black's wife, Dr. Anne Kobza Black, also visited our Department (Figure 3). Dr. Zhang contributed publications of many English research papers during his stay as listed below. It was a pleasant surprise that he sent us an excellent essay entitled "Two year stay in the Department of Dermatology, Fukushima Medical University" written in Japanese. Dr. Li-jun Zhou (Figure 4), who was a harb?? doctor from Tianjin Medical School, joined us to help Associate professor Ichiro Ono's work on "wound healing" in our laboratory. Dr. Ono was a plastic surgeon. The second doctor from Beijing University

was Dr. Gangwen Han. He joined the study group of Dr. Keiji Iwatsuki, who was a lecturer in the department. Dr. Iwatsuki's main work was on malignant lymphoma (ML) and bullous dermatoses (1996-1998). After his 2 year stay, Dr. Han left to go directly to the USA. In 1998, Dr. Zi-gang Xu from Beijing Children's Hospital joined also to work on T cell ML affected by Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) with Dr. Iwatsuki. Dr Zi-gang Xu demonstrated with Dr. Iwatsuki that T cell ML was mainly distributed in the East Asia regions. After returning to China, he was invited as a lecturer with his boss Dr. Rim Ma to the Japanese Dermatological Meeting for Children's Diseases to be held in Tokyo (Figure 5).

In 2000-2001, it was first time that a female Chinese doctor, Shu-king Chen, from Sichuan University School of Medicine, joined our department. 2001 was a most splendid year in which Dr. Keiji Iwatsuki was promoted to Chairman and Professor of Department of Dermatology, Okayama University School of Medicine, and he sadly left our department. Also, Associate professor Dr. Ichiro Ono left to go to Sapporo Medical University. In their place, Dr. Koichiro Nakamura, a lecturer of Tokyo University, who previously was a research fellow in Harvard University, USA, joined our Department as Associate professor. We also received Dr. Xueyi Zheng (Figure 6) from the First People's Hospital of Guangzhou, Guangzhou Medical

University, as the 7<sup>th</sup> research fellow from China. It was a pleasure that during his stay for two years he proceeded with his dissertation at our University. In 2003-2004, Dr. Hongwei Wang joined from Peking Union Medical College Hospital and studied the complement system in Behcet's disease (BD) with Dr. Nakamura. The last person from



Figure 3 This is a photograph showing from left, Mr. Bhogal, Dr. Anne, Dr. Martin Black, Dr. Ken Hashimoto and Mrs. Hashimoto in 1996.



Figure 1 Professor Shengqing Ma from Beijing University and I at the reception of 2nd Joint Meeting of China and Japan to be held in Shanghai, 1992.



Figure 4 Dr. Li-jun Zhou (1994-1999) who was a harb doctor from Tianjin Medical School, joined to help Associate professor Ichiro Ono's work of "wound healing" in our laboratory.



Figure 2 (A) Dr. Jian-zhong Zhang preparing to find keratinocytes influenced by vitamin D3 in our Laboratory, in June, 1993. (B) Dr. Zhang attended and demonstrated his work at Tri Continental Congress to be held in Kyoto, October 30, 1993. (from left, Drs. Zhen, Kaneko, Mr. Maruyama).



Figure 5 In 1998, Dr. Zi-gang Xu from Beijing Children's Hospital also joined to work malignant T cell lymphoma affected by Epstein-Barr (EB) virus with Dr. Iwatsuki's research group. This is a photograph exhibiting a reception of the Japanese Meeting for Dermatology of Child to be held in Tokyo, 2002. A central lady was Dr. Rim Ma, and Dr. Xu who looked tall and smart. They were invited to talk. My wife and I were joined at the reception.

China was Dr. Xi-xue Chen from the First Hospital, Peking University School of Medicine and she also studied BD with Dr. Nakamura in 2005. We enjoyed the stays of all these Chinese researchers in our department thanks to Professor Dr. Shengqine Ma.

In 2006, I retired from Department of Dermatology, Fukushima Medical University and restarted as a practising dermatologist in the Institute of Dermato-Allergy and Immunology, Southern TOHOKU Research Institute for Neuroscience located in Koriyama City, Fukushima Prefecture. I sincerely wish to say "Congratulations on 100 years Anniversary of People's Hospital, Peking University School of Medicine".

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Figure 6 Dr. Zheng (center rear) with the members of our Department including Dr. Koichiro Nakamura (right) assembled at the year-end party in my home.

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