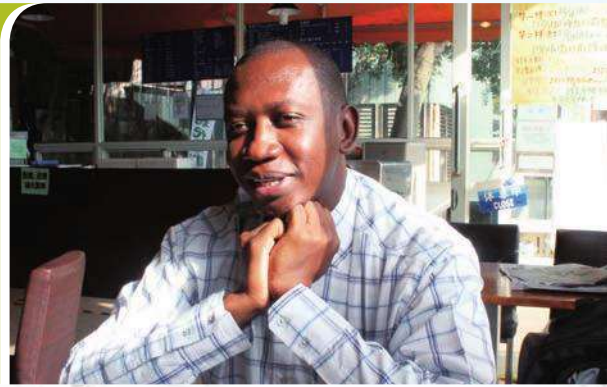


陽明是一所研究型大學，也是政府發展「國際一流大學」的重點學校。在校園裡，我們常常可以看見許多外籍學生。他們來自世界各地，雖然國籍不同，但是他們與本國籍學生一樣，都是陽明的一份子。由於語言上的隔閡，很少在校內中文刊物上聽到他們的聲音。這次本刊特別訪問到國際學生會會長吳若祖同學，希望透過對他的訪問，瞭解外籍生在陽明的概況。

外籍生在陽明 專訪國際學生會 會長吳若祖



編輯：吳若祖先生，是否能夠請你簡單的介紹自己和你的國家？

吳若祖：我的名字叫 Wourozou Olivier Constantin Sanon，不過我比較喜歡別人稱呼我 Olivier，因為對許多人來說，這個字發音比較容易。我是個牙醫師（DDS），來自布吉納法索。我目前是陽明大學國際衛生學程（International Health Program）二年級的碩士生。

關於我的國家，「布吉納法索」一詞是從其中一種布吉納語言創造出來的，意思是「誠實人民之國」。布吉納法索是一個開發中的內陸國家，位於西非中部，土地面積約 274,000 平方公里，居民有 1,600 萬人。這個國家有豐富多元的文化，居住著大約 60 種不同的族群，每一種族群都有自己的文化和傳統。最重要的族群仍然是 Mossi（50%）、Fulani（7%）、Bobo（5%）。

首都是位於中心地區的瓦加杜古（Ouagadougou），而位於西部的第二大城 Bobo-Dioulasso 是個有名的經濟都城。

官方語言是法語另外有三種主要方言：Moore、Dioula 及 Fulfude。在宗教方面，55% 的人口是伊斯蘭教徒，25% 基督教徒（主要是羅馬天主教），還有 20% 信守傳統宗教。

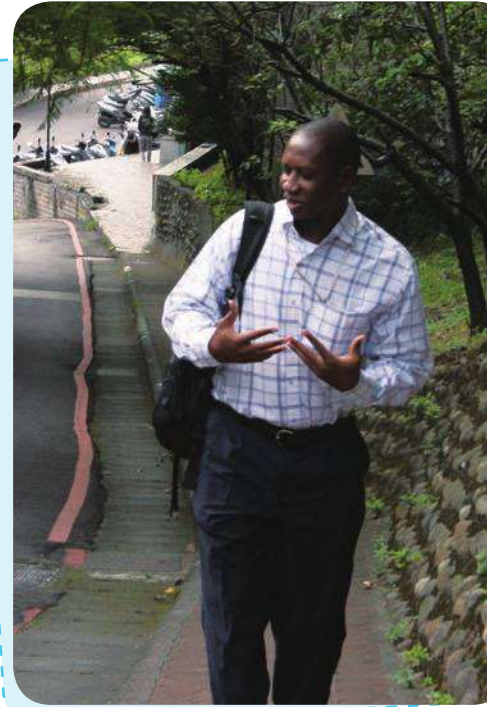
布吉納法索是目前仍與台灣（中華民國）保有正式外交關係的主要國家之一。自 1990 年代開始，便由民主政權統治，是個非常穩定的國家。

編輯：請問你為什麼選擇到陽明大學就讀？

吳若祖：我是不是真的選擇了陽明大學？對於這個問題，可以說「不是」，也可以說「是」。說「不是」的原因是我當初只有一個選擇，說「是」的原因是我申請了陽明大學的國際衛生學程。

現在我可以說，陽明大學是我所做出的最佳選擇。我有極佳的機會能受教於傑出的教授，他們都是聲譽卓著的世界級大學校友，包括哈佛大學、約翰霍普金斯大學及牛津大學等等。陽明大學的組織制度完善，學生能夠在這裡遇到非常著名的教授和學者（諾貝爾獎得主），這是種非常罕有的機會。此外，陽明大學的教職員，不論是否與學業有關，真的都很支持學生，雖然他們的工作量都很大，但學生通常可立刻找到他們，他們也很願意配合學生，提供協助。

陽明大學是一所很特別的大學，它讓我們這些國際學生有機會在這裡互相學習並培養關係，這些都可能有助於未來全球性的合作。



編輯：在學校裡，你有沒有特殊的經驗可以跟讀者分享？

吳若祖：不論在台灣還是在學校，我都有很多的經驗可談。不過現在我只跟讀者分享兩個主要經驗。

第一個經驗跟組織和資訊有關。就像我先前所提的，陽明大學整個學年的制度組織是非常完善的，所以能夠順利進行所有學生活動，從宿舍挑選、大一學生身體檢查到選課等都是。對於會影響學生學業和社交生活的事項，學生都會被充分告知。

我想要強調的第二個面向跟陽明大學的教授和教職員有關：教授都很願意指導學生做研究，他們的助理也都很樂意協助處理任何可能發生的困難。

我想要分享的另一件事情是，學生在做研究時，可以輕易地透過圖書館和網路找到文件和資訊。我們一個星期七天、一天24小時都能進入網路校園和線上圖書館。

除了學術領域，陽明大學還有美麗如畫的環境，非常適合讀書，也適合身體鍛鍊和運動，就像古老的拉丁諺語所云：「健康的精神寓於健康的身體」。

編輯：身為「國際學生委員會」的會長，您認為外籍學生遇到最困難的問題是什麼？

吳若祖：我們都知道，一旦你離開自己的國家，到外國去唸書，會遇到很多困難。即使台灣提供很安全的生活環境，外籍學生還是必須面對好些困難。



我認為第一個困難是「文化衝擊」，包括語言障礙、飲食文化等等。跟說不同語言的人生活在一起，但又不理解他們說的任何一句話，這樣會感到很挫折、很無知。有時候，即使你（外國人）試著說中文，但是因為語調很奇怪，別人也聽不太懂。當你想要問路或在餐廳點餐時，這尤其令人受挫。

外籍學生要面對的第二件最困難的事情當然就是孤單，缺乏在自己國家的自在感。有些學生長途跋涉超過24小時，現在住在離他們家人和所愛之人18,000公里的地方。唯一的「有形」聯絡就是透過網路和電話。有些學生為了跟家人和所愛的人保持聯絡，花了非常多的錢。

我認為國際學生遭遇的困難大多源自於語言障礙，語言障礙讓國際學生很難融入當地文化，讓他們無法參與某些活動，且加深了他們與當地學生的隔閡。

要如何克服這些困難呢？

陽明大學國際學生會已成立，目的就是要處理這些困難。這個學生會的目標之一是為國際學生以及當地的學生建立一個友善的環境。

我們甚至可以制訂國際學生日，來打破外國學生的「恐懼」或迷思。

編輯：您覺得陽明的「英語環境」對外籍學生來說是否方便？

吳若祖：我想要把「英語環境」區分為兩個部分：在課堂上（授課時），以及在課堂外（在校園中）。

我可以說，陽明大學的教授都做了充分的準備，可以用英文授課，尤其是那些來自國際

衛生學程的教授，而且他們隨時吸收當前最新的資訊。國際衛生學程計畫的教學媒介語言是英語，所以在教室上課時，一切都很方便，我們也感到很自在。

在校園中，因為語言障礙，跟當地的學生互動便有些困難：當地的學生大部分都說國語，所以溝通有點困難。另一方面，有些課程教學只用中文，這樣一來，國際學生就很難參加這些課程（質性研究、社區衛生等）。

我想建議學校開英文課，讓當地的學生和國際學生都能改善英文程度（說與寫），並促進國際學生與當地學生的互動。事實上有時候，好像有一道無形的牆隔離了國際學生和當地學生，這很可能妨礙彼此的互動和之後的學習。

我想要藉此機會誠摯地感謝陽明大學的教授和教職員，謝謝他們提供便利的學習環境給學生，也謝謝他們持續地協助學生、支持學生。

國立陽明大學是獨一無二的，因為它有優良的教學品質、學習環境、美麗如畫的自然景色，還有來自世界各國的國際學生所創造的文化多元性。

我可以很有自信地說，我從這種豐富的多元性學習到很多，而且還在學習。國立陽明大學的座右銘是：「今朝是學生，明日成巨人。」畢業自陽明大學的學生都體會到：從陽明大學畢業後，他們大部分都在自己的國家或地區層級擔任決策（領導）職務。這表示他們都是今日的巨人。所以我們可以說：「今朝是學生，明日成巨人，共同創造更美好的世界、更光明的未來。」

Sanon's Life at Yang-Ming University

By Deborah Fang

Yang-Ming University, a research-oriented university, is one of the many universities in "The Top University Plan" that the Government is now developing. On our campus, we can see many foreign students from around the world. Though they are different in nationality, they, like other Taiwanese students, are also members of our Yang-Ming University. But due to language barriers, we seldom "hear" their voices in our school publications. This time, we have the honor to invite Mr. Sanon, president of "International Students Committee" to be interviewed, and we hope that through this interview, we can learn more about the situation of foreign students at Yang-Ming.



Deborah: Could you introduce yourself and give us a brief introduction about your country?

Olivier: I am Wourozou Olivier Constantin SANON; but I prefer to be called, Olivier which is easier for many people to pronounce. I am a Dental surgeon (DDS). I come from Burkina Faso. Currently, I am a second year of Master student in the International Health Program at the National Yang Ming University.

To introduce my country, Burkina Faso is coined from one of the Burkinabe languages which means "the country of honest people". It is a developing country located somewhat in the middle of West Africa. It is a landlocked country with an approximate land area of 274,000 km² and 16 million inhabitants. Burkina Faso offers a rich cultural diversity with approximately sixty different ethnic groups, each with its own culture and traditions. The most important

groups remain Mossi (50%), Fulani or Peulhs (7%), Bobo (5%).

The capital is Ouagadougou in the central region, and the second town also known as economic capital is Bobo-Dioulasso in the west.

The official language is French, with three main local languages: Moore, Dioula and Fulfude. In terms of religion, 55% are Muslim, 25% Christian (*mainly Roman Catholics*) and 20% follow traditional religion.

It is one of the biggest countries maintaining diplomatic relations with Taiwan (R.O.C). Burkina Faso is very stable country ruled by a democratic regime since 1990's.

Deborah: Why did you choose Yang-Ming University to study?

Olivier: Did I really choose Yang Ming University? I can say “no” and “yes”.

“No”, because I had only one choice; “yes”, because I applied for International Health Program provided by the NYMU.

Now I can say NYMU is the best choice I have made. I have a great opportunity to be taught by eminent professors who are alumni of prestigious world-class universities including, though not limited to, Harvard, John Hopkins, and Oxford. The system in school is well organized and offered the unique opportunity to meet very famous professors and researchers (*Nobel Prize winners*). In addition, NYMU staff, including both academic and non-academic, is really supportive and readily available at our disposal despite their heavy workload.

The NYMU is special because we, as international students, have opportunity to learn from each other and to foster relationship which could be helpful in the future global cooperation.

Deborah: Have you had any special experience in school that you would like to share with the readers?

Olivier: I have so many experiences in school as well as in Taiwan. I’ll just share two main experiences with readers.

The first is related to the organization and information. As I mentioned earlier on, the system in NYMU is meticulously organized throughout the year. This allows for smooth

conduct of all student sessions ranging from dorm selection, medical examination for freshmen, courses selection, etc. Students are kept well-informed about issues affecting their academic and social life.

The second aspect I’d like to stress on is related to NYMU officials and their staff: professors are available to guide students in their research, and their staff also shows supportive hand to tackle any difficulties that may occur.

The other thing I’d like to share is the easy access to documentation and information in the research process through library and internet. Access to the e-campus and the online library are both 24/7.

Beside the academic domain, NYMU offers a beautiful and picturesque environment favorable for study as well as for physical exercise and sport as the old Latin adage goes: “*Mens sana, in corpora sano*” (*a healthy mind in a healthy body*).



Deborah: As the president of “International Students Committee”, what do you think it’s the most difficult thing that foreign students would encounter?

Olivier: We all are aware that once you leave your home country to study abroad, you will encounter difficulties. Even though Taiwan offers a safe living environment, International students have to face several difficulties.

The first difficulty, I think, is the “cultural shock” including among others language barrier and food culture. Living with people speaking different language and not understanding any single sentence of what they are talking about really make you feel bad and illiterate. Sometimes, even if you (*as a foreigner*) try to speak mandarin, people hardly understand because of the intonation and tones. This specifically puts you off when you want to ask for directions or order food in a restaurant.

The second most difficult thing that international students face is naturally loneliness and the lack of home comfort. Some students traveled more than 24 hours and are now living 18000 km far from their families and loved ones. The only “physical” contact is internet and telephone. Some students spend large amount of money to keep in touch with their families and loved ones.

I think most of the difficulties international students encounter stem from the language barrier, which impedes their integration, prevents them to participate in some activities,

and widens the gap with local students.

How to overcome these difficulties?

The NYMU International Students Council was created to cope with these difficulties. One of its objectives is to build a friendship environment among us as well as with local students.

An international student day could be held in order to break the “fear” or the myth of foreign student.



Deborah: Do you think the “English Environment” is convenient enough for International students in Yang-Ming?

Olivier: in the class (during the lecture hours), and outside the class (on the campus).

I can say NYMU professors, particularly those from the international Health Program (*IHP*), are well prepared to provide courses in English and are up to date with current information. The medium of instruction in the IHP programme is

English; so all are convenient and feel at ease in the lecture rooms.

On the campus, the interaction with local students is made difficult because of the language barrier: local student express mainly themselves in Mandarin that make communication difficult. In the other hand, some courses are only provided in Mandarin, and therefore it become “impossible” for international students to attend these courses (*qualitative research, community health, etc.*).

My suggestion would be to provide English class in order to improve the English level of both local and international students (*speaking and writing*) and to facilitate interaction with local students. In fact sometimes, it seems like there is an “invisible wall” that separates international from local students, and that tends to prevent interaction and subsequent learning from each other.

I take this opportunity to warmly thank NYMU officials and their staff for the convenient study environment they offer to students, and for their constant availability and supportive attitude towards us.

NYMU is special because of the teaching quality, the study

environment, beautiful and picturesque nature and the cultural diversity of international students coming from various countries.

I can confidently say that I learnt from this rich diversity and I am still learning. The National Yang Ming motto is “Today’s Students, Tomorrow Giants”. Graduate students from NYMU already experienced this: after being graduated from the NYMU, most of them hold decisional (*leadership*) position either in their home country or at regional level. Meaning they are today giants. So let’s say “Today’s students, tomorrow giants in order to build a better world, with a brighter future”. 🌸

