

A MODERN “ST. FRANCIS” CROSSED THE STRAIT BY WATER MOTERBIKE TO TKU

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In order to commemorate the 500th anniversary of St. Francis' birthday, a Spanish athlete, Marichalar, followed the ancient missionary route, crossing the ocean of Mainland China, Taiwan, and Japan by water motorbike. Accepting the invitation by Prof. Francisco Luis Perez, Dept. of Spanish, Marichalar made use of the chance of his disembarkation to visit TKU on May 11, and shared his abundant experiences in ocean-crossing.

Marichalar is a well-known water motorbike player of Spain. He began his adventure from navigating the Mediterranean Sea in 1990. By riding “Numansia”, a water motorbike in the size of a dolphin, he has created the record of crossing oceans for nine times, including the navigation from Rome to New York in 2002 and the navigation from Paris to England in 2003, in which he sailed cross the Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea, and the strait of Gibraltar.

Prof. Perez remarks that “In the time of St. Francis, there were many foreign invaders in Spain, and the Romans almost took control of the whole country. But citizens of the small town of Numansia fought against the invaders bravely and did not gave up till death, so Marichalar named his water motorbike after Numansia, which symbolizes the bravery of facing challenges.”

Marichalar points out that crossing the ocean of Mainland China, Taiwan, and Japan by water motorbike is a big challenge, but studying in college is a great challenge, too, because college students are preparing themselves for entering into society. Marichalar said, “Navigating all alone can make you see farther and have an insight to the truth. Of course, anything may happen if you stay in a room for two hours, but by navigating the ocean you

can encounter more novel things!”

Marichalar is very tall and handsome. He came into the classroom with casual clothes and a charming smile, and his friendly attitude instantly shortened the distance between him and the students. During the speech Marichalar showed the clip that recorded the process of his fighting with two-or-three-meter-high waves, which made the audience scream all the time. After watching Marichalar pass the ocean successfully, everyone gave him a big hand to his great achievement. Lastly, he was taken pictures with the students on the spot, leaving a wonderful memory of the trip to TKU. (~ Shu-chun Yen)

