Meet Prof. Man-Bo Li, Thieme Chemistry Journals Awardee 2024!

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Prof. Man-Bo Li *received his PhD from the University of Science and Technology of China. After three years of research work at the Chinese Academy of Sciences and a short stay at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (Saudi Arabia), he moved to Stockholm University for postdoctoral studies. At the end of 2019, he finished his postdoctoral research at Stockholm University (Sweden) and was appointed professor at Anhui University (P.R. China).*

Thieme: Which field of organic chemistry are you interested in the most and why?

Prof. Li: The research field of organic chemistry that I am most interested in is organometallics, because metal–ligand complexes or nanoclusters have the power to activate organic molecules with high efficiency. We can achieve certain catalytic activities and selectivities by modulating their compositions and structures. This is very attractive to me.

Thieme: Following that, what is the focus of your current research activity?

Prof. Li: We are currently focusing on metal nanocluster catalysis. We are trying to construct metal nanoclusters with atomically precise and diversified structures and then apply them as catalysts in organic transformations.

Thieme: What do you think about the modern role and prospects of organic chemistry?

Prof. Li: Intelligent and precise synthesis of molecules!

Thieme: Which difficulties are there for young upcoming chemists in your field? Do you have any tips?

Prof. Li: Sufficient funding! I always make full use of every cent.

Thieme: What is your most important scientific achievement to date and why?

Prof. Li: We achieved the precise functionalization of metal nanoclusters by a mild amidation reaction (*J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2023**, *145*, 12164–12172). This is one of our representative works that combines inorganic and organic synthesis. This work provides a generalizable strategy toward post-modification of atomically precise metal nanoclusters, which have potential in catalysis and optics, among others.

Thieme: Could you tell us something about yourself outside the lab, such as your hobbies or extra-work interests?

Prof. Li: I am very interested in basketball. I play with my group members outside the lab. I also like watching movies for relaxation.