

Friday, November 24, 2023

## World Conference on China Studies opens in Shanghai

Wan Lixin

WITH the theme of “Civilization and China’s Path — A Global Perspective,” the World Conference on China Studies · Shanghai Forum contributes significantly to a deepened understanding of the past and present of Chinese civilization in a global context.

The two-day conference opened in Shanghai on Thursday, with about 400 Chinese and overseas scholars sharing and exchanging ideas on a wide range of topics.

The conference is a significant development from the previous 10 forums over the past decade in the city, Zhang Xiping, professor from Beijing Language and Culture University, said at a briefing on the conference on Wednesday.

He noted that exchanges and discussions with overseas scholars will push forward China studies in the global context, facilitating people’s understanding of an ancient civilization that is as diverse as it is developed.

Zhang stressed that important academic consensus and concepts accruing from the previous forums will go a long way toward achieving conceptual clarity for the current conference, i.e. it would be chiefly about China studies

as generated outside China, and the conference would be a platform for dialogue between overseas and indigenous experts in the field.

Such studies tend to analyze and interpret a wide range of contemporary Chinese political, economic and social issues in light of prevailing social theories and by adopting an interdisciplinary approach, the professor added.

“Hopefully, this will mean carrying forward of the legacy, while also promising trail-blazing researches.”

A deepened understanding of ancient China will lead to a better appreciation of China today, and what to expect from China tomorrow.

Zhang observed that since the reforms and opening-up, indigenous Chinese researchers have exhibited immense enthusiasm for global China studies, with important results.

The conference will give the studies a big boost.

Huang Renwei, former deputy head of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, said that the participation of many entities for this year’s conference adds significantly to the networking capacity of the current conference, enlarging the scope of the

research, thus promising better results.

He said that the forum was initially conceived against the backdrop of China’s rise in the 21st century, which has been the focus of global attention, leading to China studies becoming a salient subject.

Thus from the very beginning the forum was an attempt at integration of academic inquiry in the context of China’s development.

From its original conception of a forum the effort has also blossomed into a more comprehensive system, complete with awards for select individuals who have made significant contribution to China studies, and hosting of workshops for young overseas scholars in China studies, mostly from developing countries.

The conference this year include four panels: Evolution: Understanding Chinese Civilization Through Ideas, Institutions, and Artifacts; Explorations: Chinese Modernization and China’s Path; Mutual Learning between Civilizations: Modern Chinese Civilizations from a Comparative Perspective; and Progression of Scholarship: Inter-generational Transmission and Paradigm Shifts in China Studies.



Visitors at the China Shanghai International Children’s Book Fair. The three-day book fair closed last Sunday. The fair celebrated its 10th anniversary this year, with over 30,000 new titles from around the world, a special exhibition analyzing non-fiction picture books from the last 15 years, and a variety of events.

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