

《U.S. facility dedicated to ancient Chinese relics》

Much of East Asian culture can be traced to early Chinese civilization. Now the Tang Center, established at Columbia University in New York City, is unfolding ten millennia of China's cultural history and highlighting its importance today. It's a combination of scholarship and public outreach.



Oscar Tang



U.S. facility dedicated to ancient Chinese relics

Academics and archaeology buffs gather for the opening of the Tang Center for Early China.

Its goal is to promote research and understanding of so-called "Early China", which refers to the period from 10,000 B.C. to 220 A.D., when the Han Dynasty ended.

Chinese-American philanthropist Oscar Tang, who donated five million dollars to the center, says those interested in modern China would benefit from learning about its earliest history.

"Modern China, if you will, can only be understood in any great depth if you also have an appreciation for the origins of the civilization and the ideas, institutions and so forth that were created in its early days," Tang said.

Those early days are getting a revival thanks to numerous archaeological discoveries made over the past few decades.

China's rapid development has led to lots of construction and the unearthing of countless artifacts.

The Tang Center, which is housed here at Columbia University, will be bringing some of those discoveries to the west by hosting Chinese archaeologists and academics who will be invited to speak about their latest findings at an annual symposium.

The center will also offer grants and scholarships and organize events for the public.

While the center may be looking at the past, Tang says much of that era is still relevant today.

"I think there's a conception that China's current development comes out of the blue, and that couldn't be further from the truth. Chinese values, Confucian values for example - continue within the society," Tang said.

During the Cultural Revolution, much of China's past relics were destroyed, but it appears now is their time to shine once again.

