

Introduction of Major Institutions

The Institute for Global History of Beijing Foreign Studies University

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The Institute for Global History (IGH) is an academic entity established in 2014 at the Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU). Our faculty and staff are composed of six researchers and teachers, two foreign professors and two supporting staff members. We offer a number of cultural and history centered courses to help students fulfill the general education requirements of the BFSU. We also prepare students for a career in various professional research fields through our undergraduate, graduate, doctoral and postdoctoral programs.

The Institute focuses on the study of world history since the Age of Discovery and Chinese history since the modern period. With a global perspective, we seek to understand history from interactions and emphasize the interconnectivity and interrelationships of all the entities involved. The Age of Discovery witnessed the surge of globalization, and the development of national history is also characterized by this trend. Therefore, it is necessary for us to transcend the traditional disciplinary boundary between Chinese History and World History, and to take a holistic approach as well as a global view in the studies of Chinese history and other national histories. In light of this, we established the “Research Center for the History of Ideas” and the “Research Center for Knowledge Transfer and Scholarly Exchange” in May 2017. Our aim is to investigate how China interacted with the world and thereafter facilitated the evolution from a pre-modern society to a modernized country by tracking the history of certain ideas, the exposure and influence of the overseas Chinese students in certain periods and the Eurasian transfer of knowledge.

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To be specific, the Research Center for the History of Ideas deals with concepts used to express modern ideas which appeared after the Age of Enlightenment in the west, which, although bear similar forms in ancient Chinese classics, have different meanings after being borrowed in Japan and then returned to China. These concepts helped to construct a modern China in various aspects such as national institutions, social organizations, cultural communications and social life etc.

The work of the Research Center for Knowledge Transfer and Scholarly Exchange is centered on the study of overseas Chinese students from the latter half of the 19th century onwards. Through analysis of the archives and documents of these students, we aim to trace their academic lineage and thereby reveal and better understand the routes of knowledge transfer between China and the West, as well as between China and Japan.

Our goal is to break down the limitations resulting from a narrow field of vision. The institute also expands its research agendas to include fields like the history of world trade, immigration, missionary activity, language contact, science and technology, diseases, ideas, and translations etc.

Since its establishment, the institute has hosted nearly 20 conferences, most of them international, such as “The 9th Annual Meeting of the Society for Cultural Interaction in East Asia”, “Symposium on Advanced Studies of Chinese and German Humanities”, “Kumārajīva and Knowledge Transfer in Eastern Asia”.

The institute has also established formal agreements with over 50

universities from 29 countries and regions, including databases, publications, conferences, lectures, student exchanges etc. Furthermore, the institute has developed its own multi-language databases and a literature center of “Global History Studies”. We have also set up “A Database of Scholarly Exchanges in the Twentieth Century” in cooperation with the Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg in Germany.

We are now editing or co-editing four journals (two in German): *Global History and China*, *Seeking, minina sinica*, *Orientierungen*. We also edited or fund four scholarly book series and translated works, including *Cambridge Concise History*, *Studies of Global History & East Asia Cultural Interaction*, *Complete Edition of Karl Jaspers (Karl Jaspers Gesamtausgabe)*, *Series on Global History and China*.

From 2015 to 2017, the Institute has presented a lecture series titled “Global History and China”. The range of topics includes the discipline of global history and its relevance to the study and understanding of China. The 48 lectures so far were delivered by celebrated scholars such as Alfons Labisch, Ralph Kauz, Jörn Rüsen, Aktita Shigeru, James Lee, Li Bozhong, Shen Guowei, Liu Xincheng and others from China and abroad.

Based on the institute, we established the History School of BFSU on December 10, 2017. Our future research will focus on cross-cultural interactions and transnational correlations between China and other civilizations. For more information, please visit our website: <http://www.globalhistory.cn/index.htm>.

