

Dialogue on Mencius's thoughts held in Beijing

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Participants from home and abroad shared and discussed how the thoughts of ancient Chinese philosopher Mencius (372-289 BC) could help facilitate civilization exchanges and mutual learning between the East and West at an oriental civilization dialogue on Sunday in Beijing.

Mencius is considered the greatest after Confucius for his skill in interpreting the Confucian concepts, his zeal in spreading them and his formulation of the philosophy. Living during the chaotic Warring States Period (475-221 BC), during which seven states fought each other for supremacy, Mencius turned his attention to the hope of benefiting the rulers of the separate states by enlightening them through philosophy. Mencius believed in the inherent goodness of human beings and advocated for moral, benevolent governance.



The event featured keynote speakers from politics, business, economy and academia. Chen Xiaoxia, Director of the Mencius Institute, adeptly steered the thematic dialogue session. Distinguished participants including Guy Verhofstadt, a former prime minister of Belgium, Li Jianjun, president of Chinese Academy of Ergonomics, and Wang Tong, president of Chinese Academy of Development, engaged in profound discussions and exchanges under the overarching theme of Mencius' wisdom and the exchange and mutual learning of civilizations.

Verhofstadt said in his speech that the world today is difficult and brutal in which not peace but violence is predominant. The war in Ukraine and the ongoing war in the Middle East between Israel and Hamas remind us that dialogues between civilizations are urgently needed to restore peace.

The former Belgian prime minister also said that Europe had been dominated by violence and competition for centuries until the European Economic Community was formed in 1958, which is in line with Mencius' argument that good timing is not as good as being advantageously situated, and being advantageously situated is not as good as having harmonious people.

Jeffrey Meng Liang, chair of The Mencius Foundation, emphasized in his address the profound embodiment of human wisdom within both Eastern and Western civilizations. He underscored that fostering exchanges, mutual understanding, and the assimilation of ideas are inevitable choices in the trajectory of historical evolution. Throughout millennia, Confucianism, an integral facet of Chinese philosophy, has remained synonymous with the essence of "harmony" within the tapestry of Confucian culture. Meng stressed the pivotal importance of prioritizing harmony and problem-solving, identifying the principal contradictions and crucial aspects of issues. He articulated that only through such measures could nations collectively progress and partake in the shared accomplishments of civilization.

The Mencius Foundation and the Speaker Bureau co-hosted the event.

The "oriental civilization" dialogues would be staged monthly, with 12 events of different themes planned for 2024, according to Jeffrey Meng Liang. He said he hopes to build a small platform for civilization exchanges between the East and the West, engage more people with insights, and contribute to the development of humankind.

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