

## Discuss Chinese Tianxia View in Foreign Exchanges from Ancient Times to the Present

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### Abstract

China is not a simple nation-country, but a "Civilizational state" that has integrated "nation-country" with "civilized countries" and the strengths of the two. Chinese thinkers had their own thoughts of the world early. It is from "the world belonging to all" to Chairman Xi's "a community of common destiny" and finally it is refined to be the specific "tianxia view". This paper discussed Chinese Tianxia view in foreign exchanges from ancient times to the present. It will analyze the practical significance of the "tianxia view". This paper will from the basis of non-aggression in Sino-foreign exchanges and the foundation of foreign exchanges. In the future of global affairs' handling and disposition, and contribute Chinese wisdom to the cause of world peace and development.

### Keywords

Civilizational state; Tianxia view; The world belonging to all; A community of common destiny.

### 1. Introduction

In the 21st century, China's role and status on the world stage have undergone historic changes. Against this historical background, the political concept of "a community of common destiny" [1] was born in 2013. It was first proposed by Chairman Xi Jinping on behalf of China. It was written into an important document of the United Nations in February 2017. Therefore, this work can explore why China is the first proposal today. This requires us to have a clear and accurate understanding of what China is and what China's view of the world is. Only on this basis can understand that this political idea is rooted in The Chinese civilization and mainly evolved from the idea of "tianxia". "the world belonging to all", "Coordinate circumjacent countries" constitute the core of Chinese civilization's view of the world. Chinese concept of world has a history of more than 3,000 years. Throughout this long course of development, although the specific expression of the view of the world has been changing, but its core thought has not changed, which is non-aggressive.

There are many subjects on the theme of the world by scholars. Among them, Zhao Tingyang is the most influential one. His theory "tianxia system" was not a problem-solving strategy, but a philosophical thought [2]. "Tianxia system" is a prospect, a framework for thinking, and a "possibility". Because it cannot ignore that it is the "tianxia view" that makes the Chinese people have global awareness and global awareness. Therefore, this paper will analyze the practical significance of the view of the world from the basis of non-aggression in Sino-foreign exchanges and the foundation of foreign exchanges, and contribute Chinese wisdom to the cause of world peace and development.

## 2. The "Tianxia View" Bred by the Chinese Civilization

"Civilizational state" refers to a country where an ancient civilization that has lasted for thousands of years almost completely overlapped with a super-large modern country, namely China. This concept is originated from the original Chinese discourse of Zhang Weiwei, a scholar. He believes that today's China is a "civilizational state" that integrates "nation-state" and "civilized country" and combines the strengths of both. Under the guidance of this idea, I began to think carefully about the relevance between this and "Modern China is the continuation and development of Chinese history" said by Xi. I think the connection between core subjects is Chinese civilization, but if only from the dimension of view of the succession and development of the internal civilization, it is narrow. So I will fall in the ancient China's world view, and the world of China, because from this dimension, Chinese civilization will not only Chinese civilization, but also the contractible world civilization.

What is "tianxia", in short, the concept of "tianxia" came into being from the objective natural geographical environment and the origin of civilization, but it was in turn solidified by the subjective Chinese political philosophy, which together constituted the core concept of "tianxia politics" in the tradition. Therefore, observing the rules of heaven and earth, understanding the rules of the operation of heaven and earth, and thinking about the laws of human survival have become the thinking mode of the sages of ancient China and the generation of Chinese wisdom. The formed "tianxia view" has become the earliest and most systematic philosophical thought in the world to view and deal with problems from an overall and overall perspective.

Mr. Liang Qichao once said: Since the Chinese people are civilized, they have never regarded the country as the highest group of mankind. Its political theory often takes all mankind as its object, so the purpose is that the tianxia peaceful, and the country only forms one of the "tianxia" stages with the family. It can be said that "human" is the Oroot of Chinese culture's view of the tianxia. "Mencius" cloud: "the foundation of the world is in the country, the foundation of the country is at home, the home is in the people", "people" is the key to living between heaven and earth. This paper believe if it want to truly achieve the "tianxia", it must put people in front of the country.

## 3. A Historical Investigation of Chinese "Tianxia View" in Sino-foreign Exchanges

### 3.1. Overview of Chinese Foreign Exchanges

As the first American diplomat to visit New China, Kissinger was recognized as the "person who knows China best" in the contemporary United States. When putting forward the issue of how to properly handle China-US relations in the new era, it puts a special emphasis on the influence of — Chinese history and culture." China is unique," he lamented. "No country enjoys such a long civilization, or is in the history and tradition of its ancient strategy and political strategy." Since it has early developed a highly developed civilization and never encountered "others" far stronger than itself, traditional China has always regarded itself as the center of the world. China's view of the world does not have the impulse to expand abroad, but more emphasizes influence. " Because of this, China's history has rarely seen large-scale expansion abroad, and it has never colonized overseas. When Zheng He went to the Western Seas, he never claimed territory. The pursuit of peace, amity and harmony is deeply rooted in the spirit of the Chinese nation and deeply rooted in the blood of the Chinese people.

Xunzi said: "Establish the common interests of the people of the world and remove the common scourge of the people, then all the world believe them. [3]" which is based on the concept of public governance. This concept has been well applied to China's foreign exchanges. Take the exchanges between China and Iran as an example. As early as the 11th century BC, silk from the

Western Zhou Dynasty of China began to enter Egypt via Iran, indicating that China and Iran had economic exchanges 3,000 years ago. In the 7th century BC, a trade route from China through the Steppes of Siberia to the northern shore of the Black Sea emerged. This was the so-called "Scythian Trade Route", which was the earliest prototype of the Silk Road. With the friendly exchanges between the two countries, the Silk Road opened up a new era of economic and cultural exchanges between the two countries.

With the Silk Road as the link, the Chinese and Iranian have overcome numerous difficulties to carry out extensive material, spiritual and cultural exchanges. This two-way interaction on an equal footing has enriched the material and cultural life of our two peoples. There are many similarities between Iranian culture and Chinese culture due to the long history of exchanges. First, both cultures are ancient cultures that have not interrupted their cultural traditions. Second, just as ancient China faced the Huns and Mongols, Iran also faced the Arab invasion. Third, China faced "Western pirates" in the 16th to 20th century, and Iran also faced "Mediterranean pirate nation" in the same period.

After entering modern times, both China and Iran were invaded by the western powers and became a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. The people of the two countries have shown solidarity and sympathy for each other in the difficult environment of fighting against imperialism and feudalism and trying to save the nation from extinction. On June 1, 1920, China signed the Treaty of Friendship with Iran in Rome. It opened a new chapter in the relations between the two countries.

Through the exchanges between China and Iran, it is not difficult to see that China has always practiced the view of the world in foreign exchanges since ancient times, and the core essence of this tianxia view is "the world belonging to all". This is a cornerstone of Chinese culture. In the Ming Dynasty, Zheng He's voyages to the Western Seas won the trust and respect of the countries he visited. Needham once said, "the navy in the history of Ming dynasty could be better than any Asian countries, even contemporary of any countries in Europe, so that all European countries together, say cannot on naval match the Ming dynasty", and it is such a navy, never to put forward in the path of territorial claims, did was to expand trade and spread Chinese culture, to enhance friendly exchanges and economic and cultural exchanges between China and other countries. And what it want to do today, is to let the Chinese people's view of the world bloom again in the new era, show brilliance.

### **3.2. Inheritance and Development of the Tianxia View -- From "the World Belonging to All" with "A Community of Common Destiny"**

In the event of major historical events, it can also see the Chinese ideal of the world. The sudden outbreak of COVID-19 in 2019 has made the concept of "a community with a shared future for mankind" more fully reflected and more truly felt by the world. In the face of the sudden outbreak, China adheres to the concept of building a community of common destiny for mankind, scale and efficiency rarely seen in the world to slow down the global spread of the virus at great cost.

The past hundred years have been called by the Chinese as a century-old history of humiliation. It was at the lowest point of that history and in the face of national subjugation that China have begun to regain their tianxia ideals. China's theory and practice of tianxia politics since ancient times has always been the starting point of taking "the whole world" as a political issue. It is also fundamentally consistent with today's concept of building a community of common destiny for mankind. From the side of China, "tianxia is bigger than countries, tianxia is prior than countries", the two conventional "tianxia" political principle are the very two principles global politics are supposed to follow: humankind is bigger than all sovereign countries, humanind is prior than all sovereign countries. This is just what I have concerned, core of Chinese tianxia

view—"human". If it want to deal the foreign contact genuinely, it must put the status of human in front of countries.

By today's era of globalization, the tianxia has become the world, the "public" has expanded to all mankind, "The world belonging to all" should be interpreted as: the world is shared by people in the world. For this ideal, it have been constantly in the positive practice. At the beginning of the founding of new China, our country began to pursue an independent foreign policy, with the Soviet union and other 17 countries establishing diplomatic relations, in 1953, premier Zhou Enlai met with Indian delegation about Tibet, put forward the five principles of peaceful coexistence. In 1955, when Premier Zhou Enlai attended the Bandung Conference, he put forward the principle of "seeking common ground while shelving differences". Since the resumption of China's legal seat in the United Nations in the 1920s and 70s, it has been more active to participate in the governance of international things. The Belt and Road Initiative is an important platform for China to build A community of common destiny. In governance practice, human destiny community concept adhering to the "discuss, build, sharing" governance, called on the world in the global governance system but different responsibility, multilateral exchanges on global issues and then reach general consensus and action.

#### 4. Tianxia View Under the "New Normal" of Globalization

Since entering the new era of globalization, the risks of economic globalization have spilled to other fields of politics, security, society, becoming the main source of political turmoil, social chaos and national fragmentation in many countries. As a result, the Chinese "tianxia view" to get more international recognition, must adapt to the new normal of globalization, actively deal with new challenges.

In order to better adapt to the new normal of the world in globalization, it must hold the core thought of tianxia view firmly to practice. First of all, the work need to properly handle Chinese-foreign economic relations. The integration of the world economy is unstoppable. China can make full use of the three existing international economic organizations, abolish the unequal international economic rules, further expand multilateral and regional trade, consult with other countries, and effectively guard against and deal with various financial risks. Second, the work should promote coordination and cooperation between China and other countries. There are more than 200 countries and regions in the world. There must be a need for exchanges and mutual learning between great civilizations, and stable and unimpeded channels between them must be led by non-aggressive nations. Therefore, the non-aggression must be an important basis for China to grasp foreign exchanges.

In the work, all know that prejudice and conflict between countries are largely due to social and ideological differences, and these differences are the most difficult to reconcile. What we've been doing is trying to balance the biases that are created by "difference" rather than eliminate them. Nowadays, the interdependence between China and foreign countries has become an inseparable whole. Therefore, how to better balance differences will be a very important research direction to further promote the building of a community of common destiny.

#### 5. The Conclusion

In 2015, Chairman Xi attending the 70th UN General Assembly, said in an important speech: "A public spirit will rule all under the sky when the great Way prevails[4]." Peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom are the common values of all mankind and the lofty goals of the United Nations. Only by embracing the global vision of "one world, one Family" and pooling the wisdom and strength of people around the world under the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind can overcome difficulties and obstacles on the road to human progress and realize the true ideal of the tianxia.

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