

China in the World: The Emergence of a New Worldview¹

China en el mundo: el surgimiento de una nueva cosmovisión

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Abstract

“A Community of Common Destiny” (CCD) has been an important concept introduced and promoted by the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government for over the past decade. Through the conceptualization and comparison between two previous conceptual worldviews of Chinese civilization named here “China’s World” and “China and the World”, this article seeks to place the CCD concept in its proper historical context and proposes that its contemporary development and promotion among the Chinese leadership signifies a fundamental advancement in Chinese civilization’s worldview referred to here as “China in the World”. This implies a new global mission for the future of the world, inclusive of China’s growing contributions concerning international responsibility and reciprocity (Xi, 2017b).

Keywords: Community of Common Destiny; Chinese Worldviews; “China’s World”; “China and the World”.

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Resumen

“Una Comunidad de Destino Común” (CCD) ha sido un concepto importante introducido y promovido por el Partido Comunista de China y el gobierno chino durante la última década. A través de la conceptualización y comparación entre dos visiones del mundo previas de la civilización china, denominadas aquí “El mundo de China” y “China y el mundo”, este artículo busca ubicar el concepto de CCD en su contexto histórico y propone que su desarrollo y promoción contemporáneos entre los líderes chinos implica un avance fundamental en la cosmovisión de la civilización china a la que se hace referencia aquí como “China en el mundo”. Esto implica una nueva misión global para el futuro del mundo, que incluye las crecientes contribuciones de China en relación con la responsabilidad internacional y la reciprocidad (Xi, 2017b).

Palabras clave: Comunidad de Destino Común (CDC); Cosmovisiones chinas; “El Mundo de China”; “China y el Mundo”.

A “Community of Common Destiny” (CCD) is a concept which has been forcefully promoted in recent years by the Chinese authorities and is under broad discussion among the global community in terms of China’s foreign policy. This article will first reflect on how the CCD concept initially developed historically over time within China’s mainstream political content. Then the second part of the article will offer an explanation as to why China has created and begun vigorously promoting the CCD concept, at this particular moment of Chinese civilizational history, by demonstrating how the aspiration toward a Community of Common Destiny signifies a historical transition that has occurred at the level of Chinese civilization’s fundamental worldview.

The “Community of Common Destiny” as a concept went through a steady progression both in Chinese leaders’ speeches and in the government’s official documents. It was first mentioned by President Hu Jintao in the Party report of the Communist Party of China’s (CPC) 17th National Congress in 2007 concerning cross-strait relations between China and Taiwan. Hu had said that “the 1.3 billion mainland Chinese people and the 23 million Taiwanese are brothers and sisters deriving from the same ancestors and thus both sides should work together to build a shared future together” (Hu Jintao, 2007). Soon afterwards, The Chinese State Council published a white paper titled “China’s Peaceful Development” in 2011 wherein the “Community of Common Destiny” is mentioned twice. The CCD was first conceptualized there as

A community containing different countries, including those with different political systems, and at various phases of development, who rely on the support of each other and enjoy mutual interests in order to encourage multicultural communication and mutual learning, the seeking of common ground for humanity’s mutual interest and value, and the bridging of multinational cooperation that aims to overcome different challenges and to achieve inclusive development (State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China, 2011).

The meaning of this concept emphasizes achieving a shared global security and promotes the communication of different civilizations, while at the same time urging the global community to see itself from the perspective of the “Community of Common Destiny”.

President Hu further elaborated some of the details of the CCD concept during the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012 where he mentioned that

Win-win cooperation aims to promote the idea of a Community of Common Destiny. While in pursuit of the national interests of one country, other countries’ national interests should also be taken into account; And furthermore, in pursuit of one country’s economic development, other countries’ economic development should also be enhanced in order to promote better mutual interests for all of humanity (Hu Jintao, 2012).

For these reasons, a new and balanced global partnership is needed. Hence, the CCD concept, which was first parenthetically mentioned within a party report, has grown to become the principal international outlook and policy for the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government.

President Xi Jinping continued the institutional adoption of the CCD concept following his ascent to power in late 2012 at the 18th National People’s Congress (NPC) by having it formally written into both the Chinese national constitution and the CPC Party constitution. The intention was to first announce the CCD concept to the international community and make them aware of Beijing’s vision of the future and then begin promoting the concept internationally. First, Xi referred to “the Community of Common Destiny” abroad while giving a speech at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations in Russia in 2013. Following this, the CCD concept was repeatedly referenced on numerous occasions concerning countries like Cuba and ASEAN member countries. In both instances Xi had specifically mentioned the concept in relation to those partners building “a Community of Common Destiny for China and Cuba”, or building “a Community of Common Destiny for China and ASEAN”. In September 2015, Xi then attended the 70th United Nations Conference, where he gave a speech, not only focused on building a new type of international relations based on mutual cooperation and benefits, but which also made explicit reference to a practical five dimensional path forward that would bring the “Community of Common Destiny” into fruition (Xi Jinping, 2015). Later, on the 18th of January, 2017, Xi delivered a famous speech at the UN headquarters in Geneva titled “The International Community Working Together to Build a Community of Common Destiny”. It systematically illustrated the concept of building “a Community of Common Destiny” and generalized further about the practical five-dimensional path that would help build such a community. In Xi’s words the path forward will “insist on communication and negotiation and build a long-lasting peaceful world”, while also “insisting on sharing and joint-construction in order to build a secure world for all”, “insisting on cooperation and mutual benefit, to build a world of prosperity for all”, “insisting on cultural exchange and mutual learning, in order to build a more open and inclusive world”, and finally “insisting on building a green and low carbon world, in order to build and maintain a clean and beautiful world.”

These five dimensions further explain the practical path for the Community of Common Destiny's realization (Xi Jinping, 2017a). On February 10th, 2017, with the promotion of this plan by Xi, the phrase of "a Community of Common Destiny" was then incorporated into the UN resolution.⁴ And on October 19th, 2017, the National People's Congress of China passed a CCP amendment⁵ representing a historic symbolic moment of the CCD concept becoming more mature and comprehensive. Finally on March 11th, 2018, during the first meeting of the 13th NPC, an amendment to the Constitution of the People's Republic of China was passed that changed the words "develop the diplomatic and economic relations with foreign countries, and promote cultural exchange" to "develop the diplomatic and economic relations with foreign countries, promote the cultural exchange and to build a Community of Common Destiny".⁶

In retrospect, the Chinese government and Party's added emphasis on the concept of "a Community of Common Destiny", and it leads to the question of why this concept has become such an important and popular political idea in China? The answer can be found in a recent shift and reconceptualization of China's worldview.

The term "worldview" as a concept has a rich and extensive history and demands a further brief explanation as to the intended meaning here. The term is a translation from the German "Weltanschauung" that was first used by German philosophers in the late 18th century. At that time, and in the broad conceptualization of the term that followed, including the intended meaning here, "worldview" has been used to signify the foundational beliefs that form and shape human thought and action. Building on this approximate definition, worldviews usually contain a number of presuppositions that are typically left unquestioned by the masses of people, and only occasionally questioned throughout history by rare intellectuals, who only became fully aware of their civilizations operating worldview once challenged by a foreigner from another ideological universe (Sire, 2015). Over time as different civilizations meet and converge throughout the course of world history, new worldviews are then able to be conceptualized, including what is useful from other civilizations as a creative elite class attempts to meaningfully respond to the challenges posed to their civilization by a competing civilization. This pattern of challenge and response is quite apparent over the course of Chinese history as it is applied to how Chinese leaders, decision makers, and thinkers have seen the world, although it should also be kept in mind that the perspective of the Chinese creative elite has not necessarily been different from how ordinary Chinese people have learned to see the world. Chinese civilization, as will be seen shortly, has already been through two previous worldviews, referred to here as "China's World" and "China and the World", and is now in the process of transitioning to a third phase: "China in the World".

4 For the first time, a UN resolution contains the concept of 'building a Community of Common Destiny', Xinhua News Agency, February 11, 2017.

5 "The Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs talks about writing the "Belt and Road" construction into the Party Constitution: Demonstrating determination and confidence, Xinhua News Agency, October 26, 2017.

6 "Amendment to the Constitution of the People's Republic of China"-Adopted at the first meeting of the 13th National People's Congress.

The conceptual worldview of “China’s World” originated in ancient China from what has come to be known as “The Hua Clan Order” (华夷秩序, in which the world’s theoretical center was located in the Chinese imperial city, and where the emperor, also known as the “Son of Heaven”, was in charge of that power and represented the authoritative center of the world. Strictly speaking, Chinese emperors at that time had no possible opportunity to know the outside world beyond China owing to the geographical and technological limitations of the period, and the historical evidence suggests they also had little real desire to know it, based on their worldview placing themselves at the center of the world and thus the height of civilization. The theory of “Wufu” (五服)⁷, literally meaning “the five costumes”, classified the empire into five realms according to their geographical distance from the imperial city. The outer realms were all conceptualized to be secondary and inferior to the imperial center, and were ranked depending on their proximity to the imperial center with the closest always being superior to distant places. The realms outside of the imperial center consisted of the “Eastern barbarians (东夷), Southern barbarians (南蛮), Western barbarians (西戎), and Northern barbarians (北狄)”. The classification system was rigidly upheld in this hierarchical manner regardless of the **current** substantive economic development in peripheral cities, or other definite aspects of civilization, or education throughout the empire that may have been worthy of merit.

The notion of **concerning** a nation’s imperial city as the center of the world, in this way was in fact in no way unique to China or unusual in the history of the world. It is believed by contemporary historians and anthropologists that at an early stage of development, most of the world’s ethnic groups and nations held similar beliefs until there was cross-cultural communication between the world’s different regions, nations and civilizations. Although according to Chinese history, “China’s World” was unique in that it was more than simply an idea, or a short-lived phenomenon at the dawn of civilization. Beginning in the Zhou dynasty, and lasting until the end of the 19th century, “China’s World” was a lived political reality that was continuously implemented for over two thousand years with only brief interruptions, which some western scholars have termed “the tributary system” (Fairbank & Teng, 1941).

From China’s point of view during this period, all non-Chinese nations desiring further communication were first required to send a “tributary ambassador” to the imperial city. During the visit, the ambassador would present the emperor with the appropriate tributary gifts required by the imperial court and then in return also receive gifts from the Emperor. The King of the tributary nation would then be endowed with the title of “King” by the Emperor. It is important to note that within the conceptual framework of “China’s world” visiting nations’ Kings were all held subordinate to the Chinese Emperor. The “tributary system” viewed from the modern perspective of state sovereignty is a conspicuously “unequal” form of international relations. However, the purpose of describing the ancient worldview is not to dwell on the apparent inequalities of the past. The focus here is to get closer

7 “Five costumes theory” refers to the Chinese emperor as the center of a circle, according to the distance from the emperor and the closeness to draw five concentric circles. The area under the direct rule of the emperor was called Dianfu, the nation’s built around the emperor were called Houfu, the countries that were conquered outside of Houfu were called Suifu or Bingfu, and the other areas that could potentially be conquered outside of the known circles were called Yaofu or Huangfu

to how the Chinese creative elite, leadership and decision-makers, saw the world throughout the various phases of Chinese history.

There is a very applicable historical example that brings the Chinese leadership's ancestral vision to life, found in the 1793 diplomatic visit to China of the English ambassador Lord George Macartney. He arrived in Beijing, the imperial city of the Qing Dynasty, from the United Kingdom bearing the sufficient tributary gifts in order to attend the 80th birthday celebration of Emperor Kangxi. The United Kingdom, with its modern conception of the state had a request of its own, which Lord Macartney would fail to deliver. The main reason for the diplomatic failure can be summed up as a "fight over ritual". The Chinese chancellors had insisted that representatives of visiting subordinate nations should kneel down before the Chinese emperor to show their respect as was naturally customary according to the conception of "China's World". However, Macartney firmly dissented based on his own view that China and the United Kingdom were of equal status in the world. He was there on behalf of the British King and refused to bow. Eventually, the Emperor still agreed to meet with Macartney, but only after a long negotiation process determining how the interaction would occur. Although the meeting happened, Macartney failed in making his intended requests that were the reason for the visit.⁸

The incident not only represents the typical vision of the imperial court throughout the "China's World" historical phase, but also should be viewed historically as the symbolic event marking the beginning of the end of "China's World" and a transition toward a new worldview. The ancient Chinese ideology in the mid-19th century, was then further challenged by the first Opium War in 1840 that signified the start of China's modern history and the deathblow to "China's World". For the first time in China's long history it had encountered an undefeatable western world. From the time of the Opium Wars on China's wars with the western powers all ended in failure. The world was no longer filled with remote barbarian tributaries, but rather sovereign nations who were unwilling to pay tribute.

The conceptual worldview of "China and the world" represents a transition phase from the tributary system to full state sovereignty that culminates in "China in the world", where China's worldview has an active role in shaping the world. During this transition phase, China's creative elite had mixed-feelings about their status in the world, especially vis-à-vis the western powers. Their main goal throughout this period was to get rid of the unequal treaties imposed upon them by the western world, but at the same time they also sought to learn from western civilization. The western world had in this sense become China's world. What this article names "China and the world" should actually be understood as "China and the western world"; where China, in its new found powerlessness, is viewed alongside the world of western powers while not being integrated into that world and simultaneously ambivalent about how to approach it.

During "China and the World", the primary mission of Chinese decision-makers, academics and the common people was to get China out of the unequal treaties

⁸ There are many opinions about Macartney's envoy to China. For a more direct reference, you can refer to [English] Maarni, translated by Liu Bannong, "Longying Envoy's Attendance", Chongqing Press, 2008 edition.

that had been imposed upon them by the western world. To achieve this goal there were two potential directions: defeat and eliminate the western powers from China, or embrace the western world and then defeat it later over a course of civilizational learning and adaptation. The first path was clearly a dead end, based on China's unequal economic and technological development, while the second was more likely to be successful given the precedent of achievement in East Asia already set by Japan. Japan's success, especially during the 1894 Sino-Japanese War, was a bitter lesson that taught China that it too could be equal with the western great powers one day in the future. At the time, refusing the world by locking the western powers out of China or embracing the world by learning everything possible from western civilization became the two extremes in terms of China's foreign policy and resulted in two well-known Qing Dynasty campaigns known as "learn from foreigners, in order to contain them" and the "self-strengthening (westernization) movement".

The "China and the world" worldview, which was deeply influenced by the era of the late Qing Dynasty and its policies, contained two fundamental flaws. First, the conceptualization of "the world" indicated here, as previously noted, was largely referring to the western world or the developed world of the time, rather than a global world as a whole. And secondly, "China" and "the western world" were to a large extent divided, with both China and the western world being antagonistic toward each other. Still China's only real option at that moment was to attempt to become virtually indistinguishable from the west through giving up its own historical worldview.

Ever since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, and the full implementation of modern state sovereignty that ensued, a new worldview has gradually been conceptualized. "China in the world" can be defined first of all as a basic historical and geographical fact, as well as an implemented state of affairs. Ever since ancient times, Chinese civilization has thrived and developed alongside the Yellow river and the Yangtze river. To be precise, it has always been geographically located in the northern hemisphere's northerly region, the southern region of Eurasia, the northern and central regions of Asia and the western coastal region of the Pacific Ocean, from which it has never relocated anywhere else. Secondly, China has come to realize that it is "part of the world". Once China encountered the western world from their traditional perspective, some difficult lessons had to be learned owing to the prolonged ignorance and arrogance of the ancient Chinese system. China, especially after the implementation of the reform and opening-up policy, as it was gradually reviving itself and growing more prosperous, eventually began to realize that just like any other nation it was not a special member of this global community, in the sense of being the global center, but rather just like any other nation, although with some particularly unique historical experiences.

In the same way as the beginning of the transition from "China's world" to "China and the world" was marked by the diplomatic event of Lord Macartney's trip to Beijing at the end of the 18th Century, so there is a significant diplomatic event that can be highlighted here in order to reveal the beginning of the historical transition in worldview from "China and the world" to "China in the world". If the "China and the world" conception had its beginnings in the diplomatic misunderstanding as a

prelude to war with western colonial powers; then here it is argued that the third phase of “China in the world” begins through reconciliation with the western world, led not by a traditional colonial power, but the center of global imperialism the United States.

In the 1967 Foreign Affairs journal article titled “Asia After Vietnam”, then U.S. presidential candidate Richard M. Nixon called for the opening of relations with China and its inclusion among the nations of the world. This would later famously become his greatest success as the 37th U.S. President. The article presents a case for a policy that later would become known as the “Nixon Doctrine”, that called for a realist policy against land warfare in Asia and an enabling of Asian allied countries to provide for their own defense under the American nuclear umbrella. The main points of the article argued for a policy of anti-racism in global politics in a rejection of British colonial notions of difference, an understanding of structural differences in the international system and a willingness to accommodate them, a call for universal integration and anti-isolationism, a policy based on realism and not ideology, with an emphasis on pulling China back into the world community “as a great and progressing nation” (Nixon, 1967).

When Chairman Mao Zedong had read the article, he realized that if Nixon became President there would be an opportunity for good relations between their countries. Mao later had the article translated and then printed verbatim in Chinese newspapers and in 1970, while discussing with the American communist journalist Edgar Snow, Mao is quoted as having said, the Soviet Union had failed as China’s guide for development, “I now place my hopes in the American people.” (Pomfret, 2016). When later asked by an advisor in disbelief how the PRC could negotiate with the US, Mao replied with a simple truth: “The United States never occupied Chinese territory” (Pomfret, 2016).

After making private deals with the United States, the PRC ascended to the United Nations in 1971 and obtained a leadership role on the UN Security Council. Following this event, China’s diplomatic relationships in the 1970s were opened to the wider world, beyond the Soviet aligned socialist bloc and non-aligned powers. And finally, after winning the Presidential election in 1969, President Nixon was invited to make the first US state visit to China in 1972, ending 25 years of non-communication between the two nations.

Where the visit of Lord Macartney had pointed to future disintegration of a long-established ancient worldview based on the divergence of views between China and the colonial powers, Nixon’s article, followed by Mao’s ability to realize the diplomatic opportunity and seize the moment, was based on a convergence of interests between China and the non-colonial western world that formed a foundation for China’s growing embrace of a global world. The first event signifies a decline of an ancient worldview, while the second event should be interpreted as pointing toward the rise of China’s modern global vision of “China in the world”. From the beginning of this process until today, China has increasingly deepened its position in the world by becoming a member of multi-national institutions such as the United Nations and World Trade Organization, through the opening of diplomatic relations with other countries in the world system, and deeply integrating itself economically

as one of the world's largest economies. Along with the revival of China and the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation that followed, the western world and China have interacted with each other, enabling Chinese decision-makers, practitioners, and academics to gradually conceptualize the "China in the world" worldview.

China is now an integral part of the world inasmuch as its prosperity brings prosperity to the whole world, and its decline would likewise cause the decline of the world as well. In this sense, China and the rest of the world cannot stand or fall by themselves, but are inextricably connected. Most importantly this state of mind also indicates China's confidence, which shows the world is important to China, and at the same time emphasizes China's outstanding contributions to the world. China not only wants to participate as a member in the world, but also desires to shape the world, as can be seen in its ongoing creation of multi-national institutions such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001.

It can now be seen in recent times that "China in the world" has gradually become a key policy which has begun being implemented. After the 18th NPC, the new Chinese leader, President Xi Jinping, no longer chose to begin his first state visit to western countries as previous leaders had done in the past. For the first time since the founding of the PRC, China instead held a forum on 'neighboring diplomatic work' in October 2013, where China's diplomatic relations with Non-western neighboring countries were the main focus of the forum. The forum also brought up the policy of insisting on treating neighboring countries well in order to bring peace, security and prosperity to neighbors. These policies suggest that China is growing in confidence and beginning to see the world in a comprehensive way, where the worldview of China is not dominated or shaped by a world of western countries, but one in which China is sovereign and its friends are diversified in addition to the western countries. This is the meaning of China's third worldview of "being in the world" and not alongside it or at the center of it.

Of course, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its new corresponding ideology of "A Community of Common Destiny" are the best indicators of the shift in worldview to "China in the world". The BRI first began while president Xi was visiting two of China's neighbors, Kazakhstan and Indonesia respectively. At the former, he promoted a new "Silk Road Economic Corridor" in September 2013, and at the latter announced the "21st Century Maritime Silk Road" in March 2015. Once authorized by the State Council, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Commerce together jointly issued the "Vision and Actions for Promoting the Joint Construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road". The "Belt and Road" initiative has since become the starting point for thinking about China's foreign relations. In May 2017, the first "Belt and Road" International Cooperation Summit Forum was held in Beijing where 279 concrete results in five categories were reached and 76 items were achieved (Information Office of the State Council, 2019). A total of 29 foreign heads of state attended the summit, along with other heads of government, such as the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Chairman of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and many other important international organizations were represented. The second "Belt and Road" International Cooperation Summit Forum was then held in Beijing during April 2019 where attendance had grown to

include leaders of 38 countries, including heads of state and governments, as well as the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the President of the International Monetary Fund, who all attended the round table Summit. Furthermore, more than 6,000 foreign guests from 150 countries and 92 international organizations participated in the forum, achieving a number of important results in the process (Wang Yi, 2019). So far, China's Belt and Road Initiative has become one of the world's leading economic development plans, and has attracted enormous amounts of international attention.

The focus of this article is not on the specific content of the Belt and Road Initiative, but in short, BRI construction should be understood as a distillation of China's development experience over the past 40 years, in which the core idea has been "connectivity". Regions and countries with different comparative advantages can be connected together through infrastructure building, policy coordination, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and people-to-people communication, which come together to form the "five connectivities" policy under the BRI. Once these isolated nations and regions are interconnected, only then may large-scale economic exchanges begin to occur. Even now, in some places with underdeveloped infrastructure, the old slogan "If you want to get rich, first build roads" still applies. In this regard, the form of development China provides the international community through the BRI and MSRI (Maritime Silk Road Initiative) is entirely based on and in line with its own development experience. China has benefited from opening up to the world, and now it is China's responsibility to benefit the world through the BRI, which is now being welcomed by many countries in the world. Judging from the two international cooperation Summit forums, the BRI has expanded from the original geographic scope of Asia and Europe to the whole world. It is the belief of this author that the BRI has become an alliance of like-minded and willing volunteers (Zhang Zhenjiang, 2019). In an interconnected world, each region and country may become the center of the world because of its unique comparative advantages and innovative capabilities, the developmental trend of which has completely surpassed any lingering notions of "China's world".

Asian, African and Latin American countries have all become major partners, who have signed the BRI cooperation memorandum with China or are carrying out specific cooperation projects with China. Additionally, China also welcomes traditional western countries to join as well. It is clear that such a wide range of international cooperation and development projects have also completely gotten rid of the "China and the world" (China and the West) concept and made history of the idea "only the West but not the world". China welcomes the West to join but China now sees beyond Europe and the United States. The BRI in its conceptualization and implementation has completely surpassed the worldview of "China and the world" and has become the policy practice of the new worldview "China in the World".

If the BRI is a means to an end, then the "Community of Common Destiny" is tantamount to the ultimate goal. On the one hand, the CCD concept has a deep and strong Chinese philosophical foundation. This ideology is not only the result of the globalization of human society, but also conforms to ancient Chinese thoughts and practices such as "the integration of man and nature", "the great unity (of the world)", and the notion of "harmonious relations among nations" (Dellios & Ferguson,

2013). Yet, on the other hand, the idea of the CCD is a definitively modern outlook and distinctly represents “China in the world” and should not be confused with “China’s World”. From this perspective, China realizes it is a part of the world and can bring prosperity to the wider world, while at the same time, being responsible for the world and its partners. In this way, China and the world will either prosper or fail mutually together. To quote from General Secretary Xi Jinping’s words in the report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, “The destiny of the world is in the hands of the people of all countries, and the future of humanity depends on the choices of the people of all countries” (Xi Jinping, 2017b). Chinese people are willing to work with the people of all countries to build the Community of Common Destiny and jointly create a better future for humanity.

The world is currently undergoing major changes unseen in a century, mainly referring to the relationship between the West and the world. However, as far as the relationship between China and the world is concerned, it is a major change that hasn’t been seen “for thousands of years”. This change has been hard-won and requires careful attention and cultivation, because building a “Community of Common Destiny” will not be all smooth sailing and there are potential causes for concern on the horizon. Externally, whether the world, and especially the West, can accept the rise of a non-Western power is the biggest challenge; while internally, the two outmoded worldviews of “China’s World” and “China and the World” are still deeply rooted in Chinese culture, and still exist in the minds of many Chinese people today. Take for example how Chinese netizens reacted to China’s hosting of the Olympic Games in 2008 or China’s hosting of recent high-level international conferences, in these instances many praised the fact that “all nations would be coming to pay their tribute” (万国来朝). This kind of attitude is a clear indication of the two former worldviews emerging from the depths of the Chinese psyche and ought to be guarded against.

The world is undergoing major changes unseen in a century, and China continues to rise with the changes. The changes in China and in the world are reciprocal cause and effect and mutually integrated with the interactive processes inevitably shaping our common future. As China advances, it should pay more attention to practicing its internal strengths, while actively and unashamedly explaining its doubts to the outside world. Simultaneously remaining aware of the potential re-emergence of “China and the world” and guarding against the arrogance and rashness to prevent the resurgence of the dormant “China’s world” mentality. To borrow from Xi Jinping’s speech at the high-level meeting on “Consulting and Building a Community of Common Destiny” held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on January 18, 2017,

There is only one earth in the universe and human beings share one home... It is the expectation of the people from all countries and the responsibility of our generation of statesmen to let the fire of peace be passed on from one generation to the next, in order to allow the momentum of development to flow continuously, and allow the light of civilization to shine forth. China’s plan is to build a ‘Community of Common Destiny’ and achieve this kind of win-win sharing (Xi Jinping, 2017a).

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