

## **A Brief Analysis of China's Participation in Global Governance with Confucianism**

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**Abstract.** This study employs Alexander Wendt's constructivist theory as its analytical framework to examine the evolving role of Confucian culture in global governance and its shaping mechanisms in China's diplomatic practices. Grounded in the proposition that "ideas construct interests and culture shapes identities," it reveals how contemporary China creatively reinterprets core Confucian concepts—such as harmony in diversity (he er bu tong), the spirit of harmony (hexie jingshen), and the tianxia system—to construct a discourse system for global governance rooted in civilizational subjectivity. Confucius' philosophical tenets of ren (benevolence) and the ethical order of "self-cultivation, state governance, and global peace" (xiu shen qi jia zhi guo ping tianxia) provide cultural foundations for the vision of a "community with a shared future for mankind," extending individual moral practice into international normative frameworks and elucidating culture's role in identity construction. This bidirectional interplay of cultural identity and norm-building not only legitimizes China's peaceful development path but also counters the "China Threat Narrative" by reshaping the cognitive framework of "national identity–international responsibility." Confronting global developmental challenges and civilizational conflicts, China's innovative reinterpretation of Confucianism proposes new norms for international relations, positioning the "shared future" vision as a theoretically grounded and pragmatic global governance framework.

**Keywords.** Constructivism, Confucianism, Community with a Shared Future for Mankind, Global Governance, Chinese Code of Conduct

### **1. Introduction**

Alexander Wendt, a representative of constructivism, established the core position of ideas in international relations research and advocated that the identity and interests of a country are given meaning by ideas in social interaction. Ideas here refer to the cognition and understanding of the actor (country) of itself and others, which are

constantly shaped and reshaped in the process of interaction. 1)Based on the analysis path of culture and normative role, constructivism innovatively interprets the traditional international relations theoretical framework, reveals the constitutive role of international institutions and socialization practices on national actors, and the formation of national interests is shaped by the conceptual structure of the international system, while also reversely shaping the evolution of the international system through diplomatic actions. From the perspective of constructivist research results, there are two main paths for constructivist research. 2) One is based on Wendt's core view, exploring how identity affects the definition of an actor's own interests, that is, the interests of an actor are determined by his identity. The other is a study of the interaction between the international conceptual structure and the formation of national identity, focusing on how the external conceptual environment (international norms) affects the construction of national identity, and further how it affects national interests and behavior.

In the early days of the founding of the People's Republic of China, based on the complexity of the international situation and the needs of domestic construction, China stood in the socialist camp headed by the Soviet Union with a "one-sided" foreign policy. As Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated, China began to adjust its diplomatic strategy and actively develop friendly relations with neighboring countries.3) Since the reform and opening up in the 1970s, China has adjusted its strategic direction, established a market-oriented economic growth model and established friendly foreign relations. Recently, China has proposed the concept of "a community with a shared future for mankind", implemented the "Belt and Road" initiative based on this concept, and actively participated in global governance. The outbreak of the international financial crisis in 2008 exposed some problems in the global governance structure. With the deepening of interdependence between countries in the process of globalization, transnational challenges such as war conflicts, development deficits, and environmental pollution have exceeded the ability of a single country to solve, and require close cooperation among countries around the world. Against this background, the concept and practice of global governance have gradually transformed into the central issue of world politics and development. The Western Global Governance Commission and experts and scholars have integrated the concept of "good governance" into the field of international politics as a new path to solve global affairs. In practice, the governance strategy of sovereign states is implemented to promote the reform and innovation of international organizations and international institutions.

Western "global governance" promoters have promoted Western values of democracy, freedom and human rights to the world and embedded the democratization paradigm into the global governance system. 4) But looking at the current world situation, taking the United States as an example, when the ruling party changes, there is a dilemma of policy consistency. National development policies often have policy gaps due to the adjustment of policy priorities, resulting in a lack of continuity in policy implementation. This political cyclical swing has led to a credibility crisis in the diplomatic field, making it difficult to propose a consistent global governance plan, and

it is easy to damage the country's credibility due to unilateral breach of contract. Taking Trump's first term in office as an example, the United States announced its withdrawal from a number of important international agreements and organizations in just two years, including withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP), abandoning its commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement, announcing its withdrawal from the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNESCO, and unilaterally terminating the Iran nuclear agreement. After Biden came to power, the United States rejoined the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Paris Agreement, and other international organizations and multilateral mechanisms that the Trump administration had withdrawn from. After Trump came to power again, the United States withdrew from the World Health Organization and the Paris Agreement, two important international organizations. These decisions not only reflect his consistent foreign policy and the principle of "America First". 5) They also reveal the problems and challenges of the current global governance system. When responding to global challenges, the global governance system requires all countries to share the responsibility and demonstrate moral responsibility. The biggest shortcoming of contemporary global governance is the "lack of morality". In essence, global governance is a choice when the national power structure is insufficient to deal with new global problems. The international community hopes to seek solutions on a global scale through binding international rules or treaties. 6)

In order to achieve a more perfect global governance system, China has not only actively contributed to the reform of international mechanisms in the process of deeply integrating into the existing international system, but also put forward governance concepts and specific measures with Chinese characteristics. Chinese leaders have mentioned that in order to let the world better understand China and know China, it is necessary to have a deep understanding of Chinese civilization. 7) Chinese culture, including Confucianism, has important implications for the problems facing contemporary mankind. 8) Since 2008, the Chinese government has officially begun to attach importance to cultural development. From the time when Hu Jintao mentioned that the strategy of building a strong cultural country has become China's highest-level strategy, to the proposal of the Chinese plan for global governance during the Xi Jinping period, it can be seen that China's party system guarantees the consistency and durability of policies.

Confucius, a representative of Confucianism, once said: "Govern with virtue, the North Star stays in its place and all the stars revolve around it." 9) Confucius firmly believed that moral models have a strong influence, that is, rulers should set an example to govern their subjects, so as to maintain and cultivate virtues. The core concepts of Confucianism, such as "benevolence", "propriety" and "righteousness", emphasize the harmonious relationship between people and countries, and promote cooperation and mutual trust in global governance by emphasizing relationship governance. Since the concept of "building a community with a shared future for mankind", the core concept of China's global governance, was passed by the United Nations Human Rights Council in March 2017, this concept has gradually become an international consensus. China

has promoted the implementation of global development initiatives, global security initiatives, global civilization initiatives, etc. China's development has proved China's determination and effectiveness in reforming and improving the global governance system. This article summarizes and analyzes Confucianism as a cultural resource that can participate in global governance from the perspective of constructivism. Explore the application of constructivist theory, the connection between the construction of a community with a shared future for mankind and Chinese Confucian ideas, and the impact of these ideas on global governance and China's foreign policy. Because the diplomatic behavior of a country is influenced by ideas, culture and identity, China's diplomacy emphasizes peaceful development, win-win cooperation, and the construction of a community with a shared future for mankind. Therefore, it is easy to explain China's diplomatic behavior using constructivist theory. First, constructivist theory emphasizes that state behavior is not only determined by material forces, but also deeply influenced by culture, norms and social relations. From this perspective, the concept of "benevolence" proposed by Confucius provides the cultural essence for China's construction of a community with a shared future for mankind. This culture extends individual moral practice into the concept of international order through the construction of the identity order of "cultivating oneself, starting a family, governing the country and pacifying the world", revealing the key role of culture in identity construction. Winter's discussion provides theoretical support for this and points out the importance of cultural factors in international relations. Further, the study focuses on the construction of a community with a shared future for mankind, explores how this concept is rooted in the Confucian ideas of the Chinese people, and then explores the source of China's soft power. The values of harmony and benevolence in Confucianism provide rich ideological resources and cultural background for the proposal of a community with a shared future for mankind, reflecting the unique perspective and contribution of Chinese civilization in the construction of the concept of global governance. Finally, the application of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind in global governance practice is described, and how this concept has profoundly influenced China's foreign policy and national security strategy. It not only establishes a positive and responsible image for China on the international stage, but also provides theoretical support and practical paths for China to play a greater role in global affairs. The focus of this article is to analyze the intrinsic connection between Confucian ideas and the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind from the perspective of constructivism theory, as well as their profound impact on global governance and China's foreign policy.

## **2. Constructivist theory and China's code of conduct**

### **1. Constructivist Theory and State Behavior**

Alexander Wendt's core argument for state behavior is that national identity is not a pre-set and unchanging existence, but a dynamic construction process generated by the interaction of the international community. The dynamic nature of this identity construction determines the logic of interest cognition. When a country forms identity cognition through interaction in the

international system, it will define its own interests based on this identity. National interests will be dynamically adjusted with the change of identity cognition. 10)

The construction of national identity is influenced by ideas and culture. Different definitions of identity lead to differences in the interests recognized by the country. Interests are also constantly constructed through social interaction. Multiple interests drive actors to adopt different action strategies. The interaction process of actors is constantly constructed, and then reshapes ideas and identities. New ideas and new identities update the definition of interests and reconstruct the international order by changing the distribution of interests. The essence of the evolution of the international order lies in the mutual construction between ideas, identities, interests and interaction processes. This evolutionary process is often embedded in the global governance system and is gradually adjusted through the existing governance mechanism. Other paragraphs are indented (BodytextIndented style).

Constructivism re-establishes the important position of ideas in international relations research and interprets the role of ideas. When there are multiple policy options, ideas can often determine the final choice of actors. This is the argument that "ideas are roadmaps". 11) And ideas have dual functions. Ideas influence and guide the policy choices and actions of actors through "causal effects". For example, when the United States regards maintaining its global hegemony as a core concept, its overseas garrison operations and the construction of its alliance system will appear. On the other hand, the more fundamental role of ideas is "construction function", which is reflected in the construction of the identity and interests of actors. Winter emphasized that: Even if the appearance seems to be an objective reality in the "material" category, its essence is also constructed by ideas. If ideas are simplified as variables parallel to material factors, the fundamental attribute of ideas as construction is underestimated. Therefore, ideas construct identity, and identity determines interests. The ideas of constructivism specifically refer to shared ideas, that is, culture. 12) The core driving force of changes in the international order lies in the regeneration of shared ideas.

From the perspective of sociological theory, the interest category is divided into two dimensions: objective interest and subjective interest. Objective interest focuses on the need level and functional requirements, and is an indispensable factor in identity reconstruction and social role positioning. Subjective interest focuses on the actor's cognition and judgment of the path to achieve its own identity, and the strategic beliefs formed on how to achieve identity recognition. Objective interest is the basic support for the existence of the actor's identity, and is the interest internalized in the actor's identity, while subjective interest is the direct motivation for behavior. 13) Identity determines subjective and objective interests, and actors with different identities have different levels of needs. For example, the great power identity of the United States will make the United States focus its subjective interests on the formulation of international rules, and its objective interests depend on global economic and military hegemony; on the contrary, the small and medium-sized countries of Southeast Asian countries will make their subjective interests focus on balancing relations between great powers, and their objective interests depend on local development and regional security. Interests will drive the behavior pattern. The United States will implement the "Asia-Pacific Rebalancing" strategy to maintain hegemony, and Cambodia will join the ASEAN cooperation mechanism to balance relations between great powers. This is the behavior formula proposed by Winter: desire + belief = action. China has become an economic powerhouse and seeks to exert greater influence

in international affairs. This global ambition is formed by history, tradition, culture and economic strength. For more than 2,000 years, Confucianism has been an important guiding ideology and has had a profound impact on the governance of successive dynasties. Today, the government is driving Confucianism as the foundation to promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind and encourage its foreign investment and trade cooperation.

The ontology of constructivism is idealistic. 14) It emphasizes the ontology of ideas rather than the ontology of materials. Winter calls it "weak materialism". How the material world affects, shapes and changes human behavior and the reaction mechanism of human behavior on the material world depends on the cognitive and normative interpretation of the material world. This interpretation is not fixed, but constantly updated with social and cultural changes. 15) In "Social Theory of International Politics", Winter proposed that "anarchy is a structure of ideas, culture, and state-shaped". Anarchy is not a fixed "law of the jungle". The state can shape Hobbes' anarchic culture or Kantian anarchic culture. To support this point of view, Winter used a classic metaphor: "500 nuclear weapons have completely different meanings between Britain and the United States and between North Korea." So he emphasized that the effectiveness of international mechanisms does not directly depend on the power distribution pattern. Although powerful countries may dominate the construction of mechanisms and intensify system conflicts, the functioning of these mechanisms is ultimately regulated by the cognitive framework between subjects. 16) In other words, the influence of material forces does not exist in isolation, but depends on the shared concepts among actors, such as the concept of sovereignty and the understanding of anarchy. These international institutions, including sovereignty and anarchy, are realities jointly constructed by actors in mutual interaction and practice. This theoretical extension can understand China's transformation from a "revolutionary country" to a "responsible major power". The evolution of national interest cognition is not the inevitable result of the growth of material strength, but through participating in UN peacekeeping, joining the WTO and other institutionalized practices, the role expectations of self and others are reconstructed in the interaction between subjects. Therefore, constructivism has two meanings in ontology: objective material factors gain social significance because of people's interactive practical activities, and social facts are created and established because of people's interactive practical activities.

## 2. Confucianism and Chinese Code of Conduct

The social core contained in the constructivist ontology determines that the theoretical orientation must pay more attention to the structure of social relations, the generation mechanism of value norms, the interactive process between subjects and the constructive power of ideas. 17) From the perspective of identity construction, Qin Yaqing innovated the framework in the book "Relationship-based and Process Construction": he proposed "relational constructivism" to supplement Wendt's construction theory. He said that process and relationship are important elements in Chinese social culture. Culture is the most important embodiment of a national spirit. It has a greater influence and constraint on national behavior than other rules. It can be regarded as a deep-level rule. The traditional Chinese way of thinking and cultural concepts represented by Confucianism emphasize the interactive process between people, moral concepts and social systems in ontology. Confucianism emphasizes the use of benevolence to adjust the relationship between people. Its core concept is fully reflected in

Confucius' "Book of Rites-Li Yun". As a specific practice of Confucianism, ritual system is a unique historical experience and cultural construction in China. The core of ritual system is "people", and social order is maintained through the spirit of benevolence. Confucius advocated that his disciples should be filial at home, respectful to their elders outside, cautious and trustworthy, and love all people and be close to the benevolent. This spirit of benevolence begins with filial piety and respect for elders, gradually expands to "trust" towards friends, and is ultimately extended to the general public.

Wendt's constructivist theory emphasizes the important role of culture in shaping state behavior and international order. From this perspective, we can find the profound influence of Confucian culture on China's code of conduct. The spirit of "benevolence" in Confucianism is not only a manifestation of personal cultivation, but also a social ethical principle and moral norm. Confucius' ethical code of "do not impose on others what you do not want others to do to you" 18) is applicable not only to the level of interpersonal communication, but also to the communication between countries. Confucian culture emphasizes moral self-consciousness rather than the implementation of external precepts. This internal moral driving force is an important foundation for China's social code of conduct. As a specific practice of Confucianism, ritual system is fundamentally based on the maintenance of moral concepts. Under the influence of Confucianism, Chinese people gradually formed a common cultural identity and behavior pattern, which in turn shaped China's social structure and cultural environment. The holistic way of thinking combined with moral concepts and rules and systems together constitute the cornerstone of China's code of conduct.

As a theoretical framework, one of the core views of constructivism is to recognize the variability of objective things, which is in sharp contrast to rationalism in mainstream international relations theory. Rationalism tends to regard anarchy and power politics as the core characteristics of the inherent international society and believes that these are unchanging entities. However, constructivism claims that most social facts are essentially constructed by human practical activities. For example, anarchy is not an objective and unchanging fact, but is created by state behavior; similarly, sovereignty systems and power politics are also products created by people themselves, so they are all likely to change. 19) This view of constructivism provides theoretical support for the great social changes that China has experienced since the reform and opening up. China's internal development has not only profoundly affected itself, but also had a wide-ranging impact in the field of international relations. With the rise of China, it has begun to participate more actively in international affairs and assume more international responsibilities. At home, China is committed to building a harmonious society; internationally, it strives to promote the construction of a harmonious world. This concept of a harmonious world is deeply rooted in the principle of "harmony but difference" in Confucianism. This principle emphasizes seeking consensus in diversity, respecting differences between different cultures, and pursuing common values and goals. In the thousands of years of cultural history, the integration of northern nomadic culture, Central Plains farming culture, and southern mountain culture has been achieved with open and inclusive values, building a "pluralistic and unified" national cultural community. With the development of globalization, sociologist Fei Xiaotong proposed the concept of "harmony and harmony, world peace", and incorporated the cultural value of "harmony but difference" into the global system. 20) This idea provides new

theoretical guidance for international exchanges and promotes the construction of a new international order of partnership without alliance. This reflects the extended logic of "cultivating oneself, managing the family, governing the country, and pacifying the world" in Confucian culture, that is, starting from personal cultivation, gradually expanding to the governance of the family, the country, and even the world.

In analyzing state behavior and international order, constructivism emphasizes the dual role played by ideas. On the one hand, as a causal factor, ideas guide the policy choices and action directions of actors after their identities are established. On the other hand, ideas also have a constructive function, which can shape the identities of actors and define their scope of interests accordingly. Under this theoretical framework, the construction of China's code of conduct and international status shows its unique characteristics. China has been deeply influenced by Confucianism since ancient times. This cultural foundation has not only shaped China's national character, but also provided profound guidance for its behavior on the international stage. China is committed to exploring a development path that is both in line with its own national conditions and in line with the trend of the times. It promotes the growth of the country and the peaceful improvement of its international status by innovating the discourse system and reconstructing international norms. However, in the historical process of the past 150 years, China has faced the dilemma of identifying with the international system. This identification issue is the core issue of constructivist theory. According to the logic of realist theory, China's development seems to inevitably move towards regional and even global hegemony, conflicts and even wars with major powers such as the United States, and peaceful development seems to be impossible to achieve. However, constructivism provides us with another perspective. It believes that China's future direction is not fixed, but depends on the interaction of multiple factors, and is affected by both domestic structural factors and international interactions. Specifically, domestic political and economic transformation and social development, as well as China's international exchanges, together constitute the key variables of identity construction. In this interactive framework, China's role recognition and self-positioning in the international community are not fixed, but malleable. It is based on this constructivist logic that China's choice of peaceful development is realistic. 21) In this context, China places more emphasis on the concepts of peaceful development and harmonious coexistence. These concepts not only reflect the spirit of benevolence, courtesy and harmony in Confucianism, but are also closely linked to China's unique cultural characteristics and models. By emphasizing these concepts, China has increased its international appeal and is more easily accepted by the international community. At the same time, it also provides more opportunities for building national soft power and strength. On this basis, China is working hard to create a new set of international principles to promote the widespread acceptance and recognition of morality in international politics.

### **3. The concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind and Confucianism**

1. The historical and social contact between building a community with a shared future for mankind and Confucianism

Constructivist international relations theory emphasizes the core role of ideas in international relations, while not ignoring the existence of material forces. Instead, it regards material and ideas as a mutually constructive relationship. Under this theoretical framework, the formation of a country and its international order is not only based on objective material conditions such as territory, population, and organizational structure, but is also deeply influenced by ideas, culture, and identity. Wendt's "weak materialism" view provides an important perspective for understanding the relationship between material and ideas, pointing out that material forces can only play a role in international relations through ideas.<sup>22)</sup>

Since 2010, China has become the world's second largest economy by gross national product (GNP), and has a strong material foundation, which provides a realistic possibility for promoting the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind. However, in practicing this concept, the Chinese government does not overemphasize material power, but pays more attention to the guidance of ideas, culture and value norms. Confucianism, as the core of Chinese traditional culture, emphasizes the role of interpersonal relationships, moral concepts and social systems in maintaining social order. Confucianism plays a great role in internal governance and foreign policy. Internally, it prevents division and solves the gap between the rich and the poor caused by rapid economic development. Externally, it improves the international image and solves the China threat theory. By projecting Confucian culture into the concept of global governance, China has provided its own unique ideas and practical solutions for building a community with a shared future for mankind and improving the global governance system.

The concept of "community" in the West originated from the political philosophy of the ancient Greek city-state. With the city-state system as the material carrier, public good governance was formed. In *The Republic*, Plato envisioned justice as the core value of the city-state community, and Aristotle used the concept of "political community" to connect individual happiness with the survival of the city-state. With the rise of modern social contract theory, the cognition of community has changed. Hobbes used "Leviathan" to metaphorically represent the origin of the contractual community of sovereign authority, while Rousseau used social contract theory to form a moral community with "general will" and reconstruct the identity of community members. After World War I, the theory of international order continued to develop in the reflection of historical experience. The theory of hegemonic stability and the theory of clash of civilizations have emerged one after another, promoting the concept of community to expand in multiple dimensions. Compared with the collective good governance of the ancient city-state community, modern sovereign states mainly pursue the governance paradigm of checks and balances. The contemporary global governance model focuses on the realistic characteristics of globalization and focuses its main energy on the effective response and resolution of global challenges.<sup>23)</sup>

The official expression of the concept of "community of shared destiny" was in 2007 when Hu Jintao first used this concept at the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China to explain the special relationship between mainland China and Taiwan based on the principle of "one China". With the advancement of China's diplomatic practice, this concept has gradually expanded to the field of international relations. In November 2011, Wen Jiabao

proposed at the 20th anniversary summit of the establishment of dialogue relations between China and ASEAN (10+1): "As strategic partners committed to peace and prosperity, the two sides have built a community of shared destiny with shared responsibilities and interests through multi-faceted cooperation." This marked that the Chinese government began to formally apply the "community of shared destiny" to the strategic framework for handling state relations. At the level of conceptual progression, the prototype of the concept of "community of shared destiny for mankind" was released in the white paper "China's Peaceful Development" in the same year, which systematically discussed the interdependence of the international community under the background of economic globalization. This document broke through the traditional narrative of sovereign states and proposed the proposition of "interdependence of countries with different systems, types and development stages". 24) Although the expression "community with a shared future for mankind" was not used directly, the interpretation of the global governance paradigm of "you are in me, I am in you" marks a change in China's cognition of the transformation of the international system. From then on, China began to systematically promote the construction of a "community with a shared future for mankind" and build a new framework for international relations.

There is a close and profound connection between the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind and Confucianism, which has been a practical and pragmatic doctrine since ancient times that emphasizes practice and application. Confucius spared no effort to promote his ideology and culture in order to calm the turbulent social situation in the late Spring and Autumn Period and restore his ideal social order. 25) The "rule of virtue" or "rule of ritual" proposed by Confucius, that is, morality and ritual are regarded as the supreme principles for governing the country, and this idea is fully elaborated in the *Analects*. In the "Yan Yuan Chapter", in response to Zhonggong's inquiry about "benevolence", Confucius taught: "Go out as respectfully as if you were receiving a distinguished guest, and use the people as carefully as if you were hosting a major sacrifice. Don't impose on others what you don't want. Don't be resentful when serving as an official in a vassal state, and don't be resentful when serving as an official in the home of a nobleman." This is intended to advise rulers to govern the country with empathy and avoid imposing anything they don't want to bear on the people. In the "Zilu Chapter", Confucius further emphasized: "If the ruler himself behaves properly, things can be carried out smoothly without issuing orders; on the contrary, if he behaves improperly, the people will not obey even if he issues orders." This highlights the importance of rulers as moral role models and the core position of benevolence in national governance, requiring rulers to integrate benevolence into every aspect of governance.

At the same time, in the field of Western philosophy, Aristotle, who lived in a similar period to Confucius, also conducted a profound discussion on "Goodness" and regarded it as the core of knowledge. Aristotle subdivided "Goodness" into individual goodness, family and village goodness, and collective (city-state or country) goodness, and divided the research scope of ethics, economics and politics accordingly. He clearly pointed out that politics is more important than other disciplines because politics carries the ethical mission of "the highest good" and is essentially an institutional search for "good life" and "happy life". 26) Aristotle's political theory not only promoted human society to move towards democracy, peace, freedom, equality, fairness, justice and good governance, but also resonated with Confucius'

"benevolence" in moral pursuit. Although there are differences in the way of expression and specific content between the two, they both deeply insight into and think about the essence of morality, character and human nature, and show the coincidence of Eastern and Western wisdom in the pursuit of noble governance concepts. This cross-cultural resonance provides rich ideological resources and historical references for the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind.

## 2. Confucianism and the Construction of China's Soft Power

Constructivist theory emphasizes that social reality is constantly constructed and reconstructed through the interaction and common understanding among members of society. Under this theoretical framework, the status and influence of Confucianism in China's historical changes can be seen as a process that is constantly constructed and reconstructed by members of society (including rulers, scholars, and the public). For nearly two thousand years, Confucianism, as a philosophy, ethics, and national ideology, has influenced China's thoughts and worldview. Its status in China's historical changes is not static, and it has been criticized, encouraged, and supported from time to time. In different historical periods, the official attitude towards Confucianism was often influenced by many factors at the time, such as politics, economy, and culture. After the founding of New China, Confucianism was suppressed and criticized for a period of time. Mao Zedong and other revolutionary leaders condemned Confucianism as a philosophy and feudalism from the imperial era. During the Cultural Revolution, Confucianism was one of the "Four Olds" to be eliminated. The hostility towards Confucianism did not end until Mao Zedong's death. Under the supervision of the Communist Party, scholars applied Marxist historiography to the study of Chinese history. At the same time, there were also cases of support for Confucianism. For example, Liu Shaoqi often used the words of Confucius and Mencius as moral guidance for party members. In 1979, Deng Xiaoping began the socialist reform with Chinese characteristics. With the deepening of reform and opening up and the advancement of socialist modernization, Confucianism has gradually been re-examined and evaluated. Under Deng Xiaoping's governance, scholars allowed Confucianism to be studied as a philosophical system through modernization reform. The "three-step" strategy proposed by Deng Xiaoping is aimed at the ideals and concepts of Confucianism. It is hoped that through political practice, the Confucian ideal society, namely the Great Harmony Society, will first solve the problems of food, clothing, housing and transportation, and double it from 1991 to the end of the 20th century, reaching a well-off level and basically eliminating poverty. By 2050, the 100th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, a harmonious society will be built where all people live a good life. By the end of the 20th century, China will have completed the development goals of the first two stages as scheduled. According to statistics, the national per capita GDP reached US\$848 in 2000, marking a stage-by-stage leap from subsistence to a well-off life. With this ideology, China has successfully built a "Chinese model" to improve the productivity of backward China while promoting reform and opening up. This Chinese model has enabled China to successfully avoid the economic failure of developing countries that accept the Western neoliberal model and has become a resource for China's soft power. 27) In October 1992, Jiang Zemin proposed the strategy of "ruling the country with virtue". Later, in 1994, the International Confucian Association was jointly established by Confucian academic groups from 25 countries and

regions, marking the gradual formation of a transnational collaborative model for Confucian studies. After entering the 21st century, cultural development strategies and political concept construction entered a stage of coordinated development. In November 2002, Hu Jintao proposed the epochal proposition of "the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation". Then in 2004, the Office of the National Steering Group for the International Promotion of Chinese Language (abbreviated as "Hanban"/Confucius Institute Headquarters) was established. As of 2011, Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms covered 104 countries and regions, totaling 726. In October 2006, Hu Jintao proposed the strategic concept of "harmonious society". In the 21st century, which is facing a period of diversified transformation, the idea of "harmony" is advocated to respond to the strategic needs of "peaceful rise" and "peaceful development".

28) Cultural integration is used to resolve value conflicts.

At the opening ceremony of the 29th Beijing Olympic Games held in China in August 2008, director Zhang Yimou skillfully incorporated the essence of Confucius culture, showing 3,000 disciples holding bamboo slips and reciting the words from the Analects of Confucius, "All people in the four seas are brothers", in order to convey Confucius' humanistic philosophy - "harmony is the most precious". This performance also used the profound Tai Chi pattern to slowly unfold to the world a long scroll of Chinese history and civilization depicting the harmonious coexistence of man and nature. The opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympic Games not only demonstrated the global symbolic significance of the revival of Chinese Confucianism, but also greatly promoted the publicity of the Confucian revival movement. In January 2011, a bronze statue of Confucius, 9.5 meters high and weighing about 17 tons, was completed on the north side of the National Museum on the east side of Tiananmen Square in Beijing. This event quickly attracted widespread attention from domestic and foreign media, and "Confucius is back" became a hot topic. The statue of Confucius standing in the solemn place of Tiananmen Square undoubtedly aroused a wave of reports and comments from media on both sides of the Taiwan Strait and even internationally. Taiwan's United Daily News published a commentary pointing out that Confucius, as the core of Chinese thought for thousands of years, was erected next to Tiananmen Square. This move contains the following three important implications: First, it symbolizes the spiritual transformation of the Chinese nation from "spurning and denying" to "returning" to Confucius' thought; second, it indicates that "China's rise" is moving towards returning to the roots of Chinese culture and achieving a "qualitative" leap; third, in the face of the various irreparable defects exposed by civilization and mechanisms under the contemporary capitalist system, the "Chinese model" of China's rise, although still insufficient, provides mankind with a new choice different from Western values.

29) In terms of foreign relations, China's attitude towards participating in global governance has changed from a passive and cautious attitude to an active participation with the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China as the dividing line. With the changes in the international power structure and the rise of emerging countries, China, as an emerging power, has taken the opportunity of hosting home diplomacy to actively promote the construction and reform of the global governance system.

In June 2018, Xi Jinping made a statement at the Central Foreign Affairs Work Conference that "China is currently in the best period of development since modern times, and the world is in a major change that has not been seen in a century." 30) This statement has a dual connotation:

it refers to the realistic challenges of the current complex international situation and the major changes in achieving the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. China has now become a rising power. It emphasizes strengthening domestic governance and promoting the harmonious development of the economy and society. It actively participates in international work such as the United Nations, promotes the improvement and reform of the global governance system, and contributes to maintaining world peace and stability. Some scholars point out that the traditional international communication order is monopolized by Western powers, whose discourse power dominates the world, excludes developing countries, makes them lose their discourse power and are in a passive position. From China's perspective, China hopes to have more say in global political, economic, security, and environmental affairs. This is why rebuilding the global order, especially emphasizing China's discourse power, is an important and urgent task. How to make other countries believe in China requires the world to recognize that the source of this concept is rooted in China's traditional culture and has a deep cultural heritage and theoretical basis. This kind of cultural resource must be reflected as an ideology that can be accepted by people all over the world. From this perspective, Confucianism in Chinese culture can be said to be an ideology that can demonstrate the charm and suitability of Chinese culture. The core essence of Confucianism is reflected in the concepts of loving the people and governing by virtue, and its inherent ethics and moral power have won the wide recognition of the Chinese people. Confucius' outstanding reputation and the lofty status of his thoughts in the world have undoubtedly become the key point of convergence for the dissemination of Chinese culture to the international community. In addition, Confucianism is rooted in China and has formed a unique tradition in the East Asian cultural circle, which is deeply integrated into the daily life and cultural heritage of the East Asian people. This deep cultural foundation gives China a strong global expansion and influence in the dissemination of Confucian culture.

### 3. The cultural foundation of a community with a shared future for mankind

#### (1) The idea of "harmony but difference"

With the rapid development of China's economy and the increasing international status, some countries have promoted the "China threat theory" to protect their national interests. At the same time, there are also many voices questioning China. People are worried that it will replace the established international order and generally accepted laws. Western academic circles are skeptical about China's development path. The negative narrative represented by the "China threat" and the positive interpretation of "China's rise" are actually double discourse projections of the same fact. The former is a negative presupposition with the perspective of others, and the latter is a subjective value judgment that emphasizes the legitimacy of the rise of emerging powers. The cognitive differences of the international community on China's rise essentially reflect the deep conflict of concept construction. Constructivist theory points out that the international system is not determined by material strength in a unilateral way, but is the product of the interaction of ideas between actors. 31) This theoretical perspective provides a unique path for deconstructing the "China threat theory" - when we turn our attention to the concept of a community of shared destiny proposed by China, it is not difficult to find that it has formed a dialogue across time and space with the Confucian idea of "harmony but difference", and

together constitutes a discourse practice system of new international relations. China has recently focused on eliminating the Western "China threat theory". China's peaceful rise will also be a diplomacy of development opportunities for neighboring countries. China's active participation in international organizations and regional multilateral cooperation is to demonstrate its responsibility and commitment in the global governance system. The concept of a community with a shared future, as the core concept of China's diplomacy, reveals the inherent logic of human social development. It is not only the embodiment of a community of interests, but also the integration of a community of values and a community of emotions. Common interests are the basis for maintaining a community. However, the identification, evaluation and maintenance of common interests cannot be separated from the support of shared values. Furthermore, these common values are not created out of thin air. They are rooted in deep emotional exchanges and resonance. The metaphor of "global village" and "world family" vividly depicts the close connection and interdependence of today's global society. Although conflicts of economic interests and differences in values are inevitable, it is these differences that constitute the premise for mutual understanding, tolerance and cooperation among family members. The core of family maintenance lies in the emotional communication and resonance among members, that is, the construction of an "emotional community". In contemporary society, the core of the communication problem lies in how to ensure that people who hold different views but are interdependent can achieve effective cooperation in solving common challenges. This issue is essentially about how to seek consensus in differences, promote cooperation in disagreements, and thus promote the harmonious development of the community. "Harmony but difference" 32) as the Confucian meta-rule for dealing with differences provides ethical support for the community of shared destiny: the communication ethics of "gentlemen are harmonious but different" corresponds to the inter-subjectivity emphasized by constructivism, advocating the construction of a new identity on the premise of recognizing differences; therefore, building a community of shared destiny and promoting emotional communication is not only the key to maintaining family harmony, but also an important way to promote the harmonious development of the global society. By strengthening emotional exchanges and enhancing mutual understanding, we can jointly explore new ideas and methods for solving global problems on the basis of respecting differences, and jointly promote the prosperity and progress of human society.

## (2) "Spirit of Harmony"

The core concept of the community of shared future for mankind is to build a global collective identity. This identity does not pursue absolute identity, but emphasizes the elimination of the boundaries between "self" and "other" in the process of interaction, and generates a limited but stable sense of identity through specific practice. Winter emphasized that role identity and category identity are the key to building identity. The former gives others specific role expectations through the interaction of actors, and the latter forms value resonance based on cultural commonality. The community of shared future for mankind aims to provide a governance solution for the world. It contains the harmonious spirit of traditional Chinese culture. The "harmonious spirit" reveals the inherent mode of human interaction in social culture and life. It provides ideological support for the socialist modernization construction of contemporary China. It does not pursue "clash of civilizations", but under the influence of the

current discourse hegemony of "Western-centrism" and the "end of history" trend of thought, conflicts around the world are constantly intensifying, and the Confucian advocacy of "harmony is the most precious" reflects its value. Under the reality of economic globalization and world multipolarization, even countries with different national conditions still have the structural necessity of international cooperation. The mechanism of a community with a shared future for mankind coordinates role differences within the framework of value consensus. It inherits the traditional wisdom of "harmony and coexistence" of Chinese civilization, and responds to the challenges facing human society through win-win cooperation.

The idea of great unity expressed by Chinese Confucianism opposes military conquest and emphasizes the moral priority of conflict resolution. China's proposal of a community with a shared future for mankind is closely related to its national conditions of complex geographical features and a wide variety of ethnic groups. In Confucian culture, the word "harmony" has rich philosophical connotations. From the political view of "the use of rituals is harmony" to the cosmic view of "all things grow together without harming each other", Confucian scholars have constructed a set of order dominated by harmony. It includes dialectical harmony that seeks unity in differences and inclusive harmony that recognizes diversity. In today's world, economic globalization, political multipolarization, cultural diversity and ecological changes have brought unprecedented historical changes. This change is also accompanied by the political, cultural and ecological invasion of developing countries by Western capitalist countries, which has disrupted the fair and reasonable order of the world and brought great harm to human civilization. In January 2017, Xi Jinping attended the "Consulting and Building a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind" speech at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, and elaborated on the motivation, vision and implementation path of the concept. The speech mentioned that "China has always maintained the position of safeguarding the world, because of the value inheritance of Chinese civilization of 'harmony among all nations' and 'harmony is the most precious'. History shows that even in its heyday when China's GDP accounted for 30% of the world, it did not embark on the path of external aggression and expansion." The historical development process shows that China has successfully achieved the transformation from a country with a weak economic foundation to the world's second largest economy by relying on the hard work of its people and the maintenance of peace. Economic growth can be achieved through non-military and non-colonial peaceful means. This is China's constructive solution to effectively solve problems from a cultural perspective and promote the common development of mankind in order to promote the integration of various countries.

### (3) The "Tianxia System"

Winter proposed that the cognitive basis of international cooperation is composed of the formation mechanism of collective identity. He reconstructed the connotation of "knowledge", that is, when certain ideas are widely accepted through the socialization process, they are transformed into "knowledge" with ontological significance. Knowledge is divided into endogenous knowledge and exteriorized knowledge. Endogenous knowledge often comes from the country's own practical experience and ideological sedimentation. In the process of diplomatic interaction, local knowledge is transformed into conceptual form. When it breaks through geographical restrictions and gains international recognition, the "layered evolution"

of the knowledge system is realized. 34) This process has contributed to the formation of a shared knowledge system with cultural cohesion.

In the 16th century, French scholar Jean Bodin pioneered the theory of sovereignty in the modern sense. He argued that the essential characteristics of the modern state are composed of the absoluteness and indivisibility of sovereignty, which means that the state as a political entity has supreme ruling authority. Westerners consider the concept of "state" and are committed to how to serve the state. In contrast, modern China has gradually begun to pay attention to the issue of "sovereignty" due to its humiliating history of foreign invasion and colonial rule. However, these values originated from the West and are not endogenous knowledge of Chinese traditional culture. Traditionally, China prefers to regard "country" as "the world" and is not used to considering issues only from the perspective of its own interests.

The traditional Chinese concept of Tianxia is an ideal society of world peace, which is different from the desire in Western values to dominate the development path of other countries. With the rapid development of the economy and the growth of China's strength, it is far from enough to only consider one's own country. It is necessary to consider the whole world, so it is particularly important to use what values to consider the problem. The proposal of the community of human destiny is rooted in the ethical paradigm of "Tianxia" in the traditional Confucian culture. In traditional Confucian culture, "Tianxia" as a political imagination that transcends regions and nations constructs the moral community consciousness of "all people in the world are brothers" and the ethical paradigm of "home and country are the same", which is consistent with the goal of the community of human destiny facing all mankind today. In the past, the Chinese replaced the concept of the country with the concept of Tianxia, such as "worrying about the worries of the world first, and enjoying the happiness of the world later", "the rise and fall of the world is the responsibility of every man", "taking the world as one's own responsibility", etc., which reflects the unity of the Chinese people's political ambitions and cultural belonging. In the face of troubled times, Confucius proposed "moral saints", and Mencius advocated "benevolent government", etc., which are all ideas about advocating the construction of a moral and civilized order.

In September 2015, Xi Jinping innovatively quoted the Confucian idea of "the world is for all" in the general debate of the 70th United Nations General Assembly to elaborate on the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind. The core proposition can be summarized as peaceful development, fairness and justice, democracy and freedom are the common values of all mankind and the lofty goals of the United Nations. With the deepening development of globalization, sovereign states are undergoing a transformation of a multi-dimensional and interdependent governance model. Therefore, a community with a shared future for mankind is the shared knowledge and culture advocated by China, which can not only help individuals or a country realize their ideals, but also show the potential for their own transformation to the international community.

The concept of a community with a shared future for mankind is still an ongoing paradigm. From a theoretical perspective, the Confucian idea of a world of great harmony under heaven provides a development path for China to achieve moderate prosperity first and then great

harmony after the founding of the People's Republic of China. China has also successfully developed its economy to get rid of poverty. However, to achieve a world of great harmony, it requires not only changes in the social system, but also a higher economic foundation. Since Confucius proposed the concept of a world of great harmony, from the pre-Qin period to the present, it has experienced the enrichment and evolution of many eras, but there is still no precedent for achieving a complete world of great harmony. Therefore, some people will question whether the concept is too idealistic, but its practical value in global governance has gradually emerged. The concept of a community with a shared future for mankind has been written into the United Nations resolution, which can be regarded as a contemporary transformation of the concept of "great harmony". Therefore, China has made certain progress in the realization of this idea. Although there is still a lack of a way to fully realize it, it provides new ideas and directions for international cooperation.

#### **4.A community with a shared future for mankind and the practice of global governance**

##### **1) The practice of the Belt and Road Initiative**

China considers the United Nations to be the most authoritative and representative international organization in the world. China did not formally resume its legitimate seat in the United Nations until 1971. As its economic strength grew, China increased its participation in the United Nations, especially in peacekeeping and development programs. The Confucian ideas and behaviors embedded in the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind have influenced China's practice of global governance centered on the United Nations. China is a "latecomer" to the current international order and has undergone a transformation from a "participant" to a "contributor" in global governance. Since joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, China has invested and traded around the world. Over the past two decades, China has become the world's second largest economy, the largest commodity trader, the second largest commodity consumer, and the largest holder of foreign exchange reserves. The economic rise has provided the basis for China to play a greater role in global governance, and since Xi Jinping came to power in 2012, the trajectory of economic, social and foreign policy has been modified and changed. China's "Belt and Road" Initiative (BRI) was launched in 2013. Xi Jinping's plan is to develop new trade routes to connect China with the rest of the world. The plan includes building infrastructure such as railways, roads, bridges and airports, while providing Chinese state-owned enterprises with a global market. The Belt and Road Initiative is also a platform for the government to stimulate growth in China's underdeveloped provinces and encourage enterprises to compete and cooperate. After years of development, the Belt and Road Initiative has evolved into a transnational economic cooperation project with distinctive characteristics. With the concept of consultation, cooperation, joint construction and sharing of results, it connects Asia and Europe to form a new economic corridor combining land and sea. The academic community regards the Belt and Road Initiative as a concrete practice of China's reform of the global governance system. From the perspective of concept, the global governance concept proposed by China is inherently consistent with the principles that need to be followed in the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative, indicating that the initiative is China's main way to move from national governance

to regional governance and even global governance. Despite the opportunities of the Belt and Road Initiative, there are still many voices of opposition, believing that there are geopolitical concerns involving the economic, political, social and environmental aspects of countries and regions. In general, "the Belt and Road Initiative itself is uncertain and requires long-term construction. During this period, it is inevitable to be questioned and speculated. These doubts are likely to turn into actual resistance, especially in the context of a developing rising power, which can easily lead it to fall into the Thucydides Trap described by traditional Western international relations theory. However, China is first committed to its own development and uses this as a basis to contribute China's strength to global governance. First of all, domestically, the Chinese leadership hopes to use Confucianism to solve social problems. Although the implementation of reform and opening up has achieved rapid growth, the growth-oriented policy has led to a widening gap between the rich and the poor in the country and more acute social contradictions. In this case, the leadership believes that the moral norms of Confucianism are an important spiritual resource for solving social unrest, and are also a way to face the influx of Western culture and the emergence of various moral concepts. The treatment of multiple problems, through the values of "benevolence" and other values to alleviate the moral disorder derived from the reform, provides a stable domestic foundation for global governance. In foreign countries, although China has achieved economic growth and improved its international status compared with the past, China's image has not improved much. The perspective of vigilance against China's rise, such as the China Threat Theory, is expanding. Therefore, in order to improve the image of the country, the Chinese leadership actively uses the content of Confucius and Confucianism as a means of propaganda to improve China's negative image, and wins the trust of the global South with the diplomatic principle of "do not do to others what you do not want others to do to you". The "Belt and Road" does not attach political conditions. China positions itself as a responsible major country, practices the global governance concept of consultation, joint construction and sharing, and promotes the construction of a community with a shared future for mankind as the main line of diplomatic work. The "Belt and Road" initiative is the core practice platform for the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind. It constitutes a systematic cooperation framework with the global development initiative, the global security initiative and the global civilization initiative. It is China's idea of participating in the reform and construction of the global governance system.

## 2) Global Development Initiatives in Action

China strives to build an ethical system that is compatible with the concept of "a community with a shared future for mankind" and actively participates in trilateral aid cooperation by combining and applying the existing international development discourse system. The international development aid system is an important part of global governance and a major mechanism for maintaining the global multilateral system and enhancing global cooperation. At present, the energy crisis, food crisis, debt crisis, and insufficient global climate governance in the global governance deficit show the drawbacks of lack of mutual trust and consensus in international relations. The willingness of some developed countries to participate in global development governance has declined, and the supply of development public products has become increasingly insufficient. Although global development issues are mostly concentrated in developing countries, developing countries have limited voice and influence in

relevant governance mechanisms. Now, with the emergence of emerging donors, the "global South" of emerging market countries and developing countries has rapidly risen as an important international political force, and South-South cooperation has also been recognized by the international community, including developed countries. China's aid belongs to the category of South-South cooperation, which is based on the principles of equality, mutual benefit, common development, and no political conditions. China established the National International Development Cooperation Agency in early 2018, aiming to fully integrate and improve China's foreign aid and international development cooperation in terms of policy, planning, coordination, management and resource allocation, and change the previous situation of fragmented foreign aid projects and compartmentalized management. 36) The establishment of this agency is a manifestation of China's active fulfillment of international responsibilities and promotion of building a community with a shared future for mankind. Xi Jinping said at the BRICS Business Forum in 2023 that "China is also a developing country" and a member of the global South, sharing the same fate with other developing countries. It clearly stated the willingness to cooperate with southern countries. In the process of building a "global southern community with a shared future", China safeguards the common interests of developing countries and promotes various forms of South-South cooperation. China's international development cooperation is based on South-South cooperation. The National International Development Cooperation Agency integrates foreign aid resources and provides development support to more than 160 countries through various means such as grants, concessional loans, and technical cooperation. For example, the "Ten Thousand Villages" project implemented in Africa has connected 25,000 villages to satellite TV signals, directly improving the lives of 50 million people. 37) This practice forms a mutual verification of theory and practice with the core proposition of "promoting common development of mankind" in the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind. By 2024, the proportion of the global South in the world economy has exceeded 40%, and the South-South trade volume has exceeded that between developed countries. This trend reflects the rise of the economies of the global South, and also shows China's positive attitude in global economic cooperation as a responsible major country.

### 3) Practice of Global Security Initiative

The purpose of the Global Security Initiative is to promote global security governance and promote the joint construction of a human security community by all countries in the world. In recent years, China has played the role of a "mediator" in managing conflicts between countries in the global South to assume responsibility and strengthen its image as a responsible major power in response to issues such as war and conflict, peace and stability. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the Middle East is one of the focuses of global attention, involving the core issues of security and international relations in the Middle East. The Israeli-Palestinian issue has not been resolved for a long time because of the complex historical, religious, geopolitical and other reasons behind it. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict in 2023 affected the interactive relationship between major powers, changed Iran's strategic environment, and triggered a chain reaction of a series of international hot issues. After the outbreak of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Western countries gave priority to aiding Israel and reduced military and economic aid to Ukraine, which to a certain extent relieved the pressure on Russia. Putin took this opportunity to engage in

diplomatic dealings with the West. 38) China has been deeply involved in promoting the Palestinian-Israeli peace process, and has repeatedly called on both sides to exercise restraint and resolve disputes through negotiations and dialogue. China has continued the special envoy mechanism for the Middle East issue established by China in 2002, and established a trilateral peace talks mechanism between China, Palestine and Israel. China has also used multilateral frameworks such as the China-Arab Cooperation Forum and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to conduct consultations on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. China called on the Security Council to promote the restart of the "two-state solution", enhance the sense of urgency of the international community, and increase investment in the Palestinian issue. In 2023, China successfully promoted the various Palestinian political factions to reach the "Beijing Declaration" and other actions. This achievement provides an opportunity for internal unity in Palestine. In order to ease the humanitarian situation in Gaza, China provided \$2 million in emergency humanitarian assistance through the Palestinian National Authority and UN agencies, provided humanitarian supplies worth RMB 15 million to the Gaza Strip through Egypt, and promised to continue to respond to Gaza's needs. It also maintains cooperative relations with Middle Eastern countries such as Iraq and Syria, eases regional tensions through the "development-security" model, promotes infrastructure construction in Iraq through the Belt and Road Initiative, and helps Iraq restore its economy and improve people's livelihood. In Syria, emergency material assistance is provided through UN agencies to support reconstruction work and help alleviate the humanitarian crisis caused by the war. Through diplomatic mediation and dialogue mechanisms, China has played an important bridging role in restoring diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Today, the two sides have not only exchanged ambassadors, but also cooperated in military, economic and other fields. In terms of governance mechanism innovation, the International Organization for Mediation (IOMed) established in 2025 has become a symbol of the institutional breakthrough of the initiative. It is an intergovernmental international organization initiated by China and established by all parties through consultation and based on treaties, and is committed to resolving disputes and handling differences in a peaceful and friendly manner. The establishment of the International Organization for Mediation is a concrete implementation of the Global Security Initiative at the practical level.

#### 4) Practice of the Global Civilization Initiative

China is actively participating in global cultural governance through the Global Civilization Initiative. The fundamental goal is to deconstruct the hegemony of Western discourse and turn to constructing Chinese discourse. The initiative consists of four "joint initiatives", namely respecting the diversity of world civilizations, attaching importance to the inheritance and innovation of civilizations, strengthening international cultural exchanges and cooperation, and promoting the common values of all mankind. In terms of practical paths, China adopts the "world view" moral governance paradigm and adopts a demonstration and leading strategy (such as the "Belt and Road" people-to-people bond project, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) cooperation, and the World Health Organization (WHO) public health governance) to promote cooperative governance, pluralistic governance and relational governance to replace the hegemonic governance model. In the innovative global

governance system, there will be no identity difference between "dominant countries and subordinate countries". Building a mutually respectful and peaceful partnership, regardless of the size, strength or weakness of the country, is an indispensable participant in the global governance system. From historical experience, the "ping-pong diplomacy" between China and the United States has proved that cultural exchanges between countries with different political systems and ideologies can establish communication and reduce misjudgments. Culture can build more collective identities and gain more emotional recognition and promote the integration of countries, which can effectively solve problems. China has embedded the civilization initiative into the global governance framework. The "Young Scientists Exchange Program" established by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has facilitated 1,400 cross-border scientific research collaborations within five years. This cross-border scientific research cooperation forms a community cognition in the process of jointly solving technical problems. China-Africa cooperation is the deepening of this practice: at the 2024 China-Africa Cooperation Forum, China promoted modernization coordination with "mutual respect, inclusive coexistence", and continued the "resources-production capacity-people's livelihood" closed loop through the ten major partner actions and 360 billion yuan of financial support to enable Africa's sustainable development. So far, China has formed a multi-level community of shared future practice framework (2013-2024): from bilateral to multilateral fields, with the civilization initiative as a link, it reflects China's practice of promoting the building of a community of shared future for mankind at different levels and in different fields. This is China's process of seeking more perfect global governance. However, the current initiative practice still faces a core contradiction, which is the gap between the actual contribution of China's actions and the effectiveness of discourse communication. This contradiction The shield is reflected in two major challenges. The first is the right to compete for discourse. The West understands the initiative as "cultural expansion". Cultural soft power is an important part of national competition. However, by observing China's official statements, it feels that China's diplomatic discourse prefers comprehensive concepts. Chinese discourse pursues a grand narrative approach and is accustomed to summarizing the essence of Chinese diplomacy with a few abstract concepts (such as "harmony but difference"), emphasizing overall value and weakening regional adaptability, which is completely opposite to the Western approach of moving from the individual to the whole. Therefore, even if China has adopted positive policies, the discourse construction still lacks customized narratives for different regions. In fact, China has indeed done good things, but it is not clear about what it has done, which has led to a passive position in the discourse framework set by the West. African grassroots organizations call for reducing "project-based output" and demanding the transfer of independent design rights. This appeal directly points to the shortcomings of the implementation mechanism of the initiative and triggers vigilance against China's rise. If China wants to convince the world, it must support the propositions expressed by these concepts with specific and detailed policies.

## **5. Conclusion**

This paper explores the core concepts of constructivist theory from a constructivist perspective and explains why this theory fits China's global governance concept - a community with a shared future for mankind. Winter's constructivist theory particularly emphasizes the importance of social relations, the guiding role of value norms, and the powerful power

contained in ideas. The peaceful development path and the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind advocated by China are deeply rooted in the essence of Confucian culture, "the benevolent love others". This concept, through the ethical expansion logic of "cultivating oneself, managing the family, governing the country, and pacifying the world", elevates personal moral cultivation to the wisdom of global governance and regards the world order as an extension and amplification of the domestic Confucian thought system. Specifically, China's concept of participating in global governance is deeply rooted in the idea of "harmony but difference" in Confucian culture, which embodies the spirit of harmonious coexistence and the concept of common interests of "the world is for the public". These concepts together constitute China's concept of global governance and international power. Analyzing China's diplomatic behavior from a constructivist perspective can be found to have significant explanatory power. This practical path of reconstructing national identity through cultural norms precisely verifies the core proposition of constructivism, namely, "ideas construct interests, and culture shapes identity." Constructivist theory provides a powerful analytical framework for us to understand China's global governance concept and reveals the deep cultural logic behind China's diplomatic behavior.

China has transformed from a developing country to a major economic power, and as a global economic power, China seeks more say in global affairs. In China's soft power policy, Confucianism, represented by Confucius, has been used in China's domestic politics and foreign policy. Although the political needs of different periods are different, now when Confucianism is linked to China's "Belt and Road" initiative, it can be seen that Confucianism has influenced the value system of China's leadership. China's power is based on benign values, traditions, methods and practices. The Confucianism established by Confucius proves the concept of benevolence and admires the emperors who rely on moral authority and moral power rather than coercion and the use of force. The Chinese believe that the kingly way is more desirable and will eventually defeat hegemony, which is the practice of the United States. China's concept is essentially peaceful and cooperative. Since the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind was first proposed in 2013, it has undergone a process of continuous deepening and expansion. In 2017, the concept of "building a community with a shared future for mankind" was first included in the United Nations. Since then, this concept has been continuously enriched and played a leading role in global governance practices. The process of building a community with a shared future for mankind has significant social interaction characteristics. It abandons the interest-oriented cooperative mindset in the traditional cooperation model, and emphasizes dialogue and consultation between countries to achieve co-construction and sharing. In the process of interaction, it promotes the reconstruction of cognition between countries and internalizes the sense of community into international norms. China uses Confucianism to convey goodwill through diplomacy and other means. This cultural diplomacy forms a synergistic effect with the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind, which helps other countries reshape their cognition of China. Through a series of initiatives such as the "Belt and Road Initiative", this concept has been expanded from bilateral to multilateral, from regional to global levels, and practical results have verified the feasibility of the concept. Human nature is benevolence, and the profound essence of Confucianism belongs to all mankind. The Belt and Road Initiative effectively helps countries along the route to move from self-interest logic to mutual benefit and win-win by

generating common interests, forming an effective demonstration on a global scale and having an impact on concepts. China can further promote the global governance concept of "joint consultation, joint construction and sharing", thereby achieving peaceful rise.

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