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with Shared Future

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**Community with a Shared Future for Mankind as a  
Humanistic and Symbiotic democratization in International  
Relations**



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The 21st-century international system is undergoing a fundamental change. The historic Western, especially American and European, dominance is being challenged by rising powers in the Global South, notably China. This change is more than a political and economic realignment; it is the



emergence of a new international order where values and visions from erstwhile excluded regions are coming to the forefront. The concept of a "hybrid and fragmented global war" (Merino, 2021) that the world is going through in transition, where not only conventional military power but also communication, economic, and energy tactics to influence global relations. Further more the West and the East, as seen in the Ukraine and Israel conflicts, highlights the intensifying polarization of global powers.

academics like Boaventura de Sousa Santos and Gladys Lechini highlight the Global South as a voice that is essential but usually marginalized in global conversation. The Global South, comprised of peripheral and semi-peripheral spaces, is a heterogenous collection of nations long excluded from dominant global powers. In the post-World War II period, these countries were all referred to as the "Third World," a term, while dated, still holding resonance in international politics today. It is this context that gives way to the emergence of a new international order, one that opposes Western hegemonic thinking and proposes a more universal, multipolar world.



At the center of this, China's role in international politics is undergoing significant changes. Since the mid-20th century, China has experienced profound transformations, both domestically and internationally. Under Deng Xiaoping's leadership China embraced "socialism with Chinese characteristics," a concept that has guided the country's policies on economic growth, foreign affairs, and law. This approach has been further refined by Xi Jinping's vision outlined at 19th communist party Congress in 2017. For a New Era further entrenched China's vision of an international order balancing national sovereignty with global cooperation.

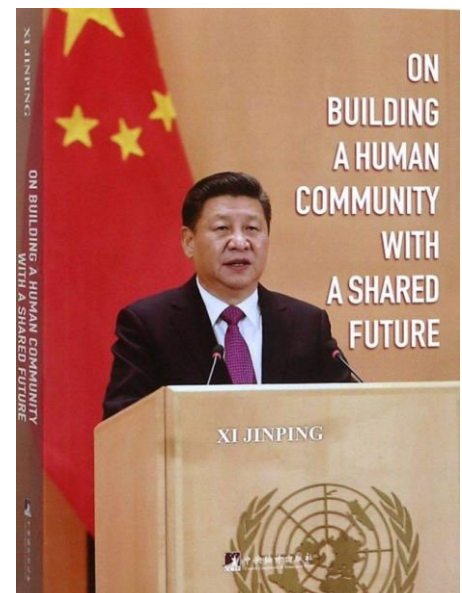
China's growing influence in global affairs is due to its changing approach to international relations theory (IRT), which pulls inspiration from traditional Chinese philosophies while adapting to modern realities. As the leader of global south, China's unique approach to international relations challenges traditional western theories, offering an alternative perspective that emphasizes collective cooperation, interdependence, and harmony. This fresh viewpoint enriches global discussion by providing new insights and promoting diverse understanding of international interactions which ultimately broadens the scope of global diplomacy. Chinese IRT is characterized by "relationality" and "interdependence," principles deeply ingrained in Confucian and Taoist philosophy.

One of the most important ideas to come out of Chinese IRT is that of "relational governance," which stresses the significance of relationships, morality, and trust in international relations. Chinese IRT, as expounded by Professor Qin Yaqing, is based on the premise that human beings and nations are inherently relational. This relational

approach is starkly different from the individualistic nature of Western political thought, where states tend to be viewed as discrete units vying for power and resources. Qin's approach promotes a "humanistic spirit" infused into social sciences, acknowledging the need for empathy and understanding in international relations.

In addition, Chinese scholars like Zhao Tingyang and Yan Xuetong have helped to construct a "Chinese School of International Relations" (CIR), which borrows from traditional Chinese ideas such as Tianxia (天下) and the ranking of states. Tianxia, or "all under heaven," captures a vision of international governance that goes beyond the existing state-centric order. Under this scheme, China regards itself as a key player in bringing order and stability to the international system on the basis of ethics, hierarchy, and identity.

Yan Xuetong's writing, in turn, stresses the necessity of "human authority" (王道) in determining international relations. Human authority, as Yan understands it, is more than mere force and hegemony; it is about moral leadership and the obligation of great powers to uphold world order. China's concept of a "Community of Shared Future for Mankind," is Xi Jinping's foreign policy approach. This vision imagines a world where nations work together on matters of common global concern, including security, economics, and the environment, Rather than prioritizing respective national interests at the others' expense.





The "Community of Shared Future for Mankind" is China's effort to redefine international relations in a broader, cooperative framework. The idea aims to establish a "five-in-one global community" that encompasses political, security, economic, cultural, and ecological aspects. The overarching idea is to ensure world peace and development through win-win cooperation and mutual benefit, expressive of China's preference for multilateralism and resistance to the unilateralism typical of Western powers.

At the center of this vision is the concept of "symbiosis" (共生, Gòngshēng), a biological science term that Chinese scholars have borrowed and used to represent the interdependence of nations. Symbiosis in Chinese IRT implies that nations are not independent of one another; they must rely on each other to guarantee stability and development. This interdependence, which opposes the view of nations as independent entities, is critical to addressing global issues like climate change, economic disparities, and war.

The Chinese legal system also embodies this vision of a common future. China's recent legal developments, such as the promulgation of the 2020 Civil Code, prioritize human rights, ecological sustainability, and the rule of law. The "green principle" incorporated in the Civil Code enhances environmental protection, further consonant with China's overall vision of global governance. This legal development is not merely a response to domestic agendas but also a signal to the world that China aims to contribute to a more just and sustainable international order.



The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), initiated by China in 2013, is another central element of this vision. The BRI seeks to promote global interconnection through infrastructure development, trade, and investment, with special emphasis on the Global South. This initiative is a challenge to neoliberal globalization, as it prioritizes inclusive development and cooperation over competition and domination. With the BRI, China is attempting to build a more interconnected world, one where nations of the Global South are enabled to shape their own destinies.

China has also focused more on multilateralism and global cooperation in recent years. In platforms like the United Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, China promotes a more democratic international community, where big and small nations alike have an equal voice. This is sharply contrasted to the hegemony of Western nations, which frequently try to foist their interests and values onto the world stage.

The concept of "Community of Shared Future for Mankind" also speaks to international demands for a more humane, sustainable world order. It transcends the classical West vs. Rest, optima-rhizomatic dichotomy, and prioritizes shared human values and collective responsibilities. This Chinese humanist vision presents an alternative to the centuries-old competitive, conflict-based model of global relations. It is a call for a new solidarity based on respect and cooperation that can respond to the urgent global challenges of the contemporary era. In summary, the vision of a "Community of Shared Future for Mankind" is a revolutionary new direction in global governance. By adopting principles of relationality, interdependence, and human sovereignty, China is proposing a new future for



global relations that goes beyond the old state-centric model. This vision is one of profound commitment to multilateralism, peace, and sustainable development, and it presents an attractive alternative to Western hegemony. As the Global South ascends to greater prominence, this vision could become the basis for a more just, equitable, and sustainable world order. The only question is whether the world is prepared to adopt this new paradigm.



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