

## **On Chinese Cosmopolitanism (*Tian Xia*)**

*by Shan Chun*<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** The transformation of Chinese cosmopolitanism (*tian xia*) from the meaning of geographic space in the time of “Five Emperors (*wu di*) and Three Dynasties (*san dai*)” to the universal ethics based on human-heartedness (*ren*) in the time of the Qin and Han witnesses a critical change in the making of the Chinese people. The importance of Chinese cosmopolitanism is seen in its role in the preservation of a unified Chinese territory and in the integration of the Chinese people. Chinese cosmopolitanism also gave rise to an ethical liberalism of the Chinese style, sustaining Chinese people in their social lives and cultivating their individual achievements. Chinese cosmopolitanism does not only reflect the geographical and ethical experiences of Chinese people that originated in their “Families (*jia*)” at the stage of patriarchal society, but also symbolizes the Chinese people in their acknowledging of the wider “geographic world” and developing universal values over more than two-thousand years. During the current age of globalization we should aim at mutual communication and benefit between human-heartedness (*ren*) combined with rites (*li*, or proper conduct), as exhibited in Chinese cosmopolitanism, and universal human rights as exhibited in world pacifism.

**Key words:** cosmopolitanism (*tian xia*), geographic space, human-heartedness and rites (*ren* and *li*), universal ethics, Chinese culture, Confucianism.

The concept of cosmopolitanism (*tian xia*) is very important in the historical experiences and intellectual development of the Chinese people, theoretically guiding their unification amid diversity.<sup>2</sup> It also acts as a source of spiritual stimulation for the Chinese people in their individual cultivation. Chinese cosmopolitanism testifies that the tradition of any culture may positively meet new challenges posed at any time, provided its diverse resources are fully tapped.

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<sup>2</sup> Editorial Note: The concept of Tian Xia (literally ‘all under heaven’, implying the whole world) and its political and historical implications have become a matter of intense debate among Western and Chinese scholars, see recently Zhao, Tingyang “A Political World Philosophy in terms of All-under-heaven (Tian-xia)”, *Diogenes*, Vol. 56, Feb 2009, pp.5 – 18; Bell, Daniel A. “War, Peace, and China's Soft Power: A Confucian Approach”, *Diogenes*, Vol. 56, Feb 2009, pp. 26 – 40; Tong, Shijun “Varieties of Universalism”, *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 12, Nov 2009, pp.449 - 463.

## **Evolution of Chinese Cosmopolitanism**

Chinese cosmopolitanism is related to the legendary “Five Emperors (*wu di*)” and the historical experiences of the “Three Dynasties (*san dai*)”,<sup>3</sup> as confirmed by archaeological artifacts as well as literary documents, including geographical factors shaped by the constant migration of ancient Chinese people and the gradually-acquired ideal explanations for these spatial experiences.

In “The Records of the Five Emperors (*wu di ben ji*)” and “The Records of Xia Dynasty (*xia ben ji*)”, two chapters in the *Records of the Historian (shi ji)* by Sima Qian, the original spatial meaning of Chinese cosmopolitanism is expressed. The Five Emperors were then the ‘universal common masters (*tian xia gong zhu*)’ among tribal unions or dukedoms in central China. In their imagination, the geographic space under the influence of ancient Chinese was the entire world or ‘all under heaven’, being ‘all corners on which the sun and moon shone’, as well as ‘all boundaries struck with wind and rain.’ In fact, this geographic space conceptualized by ancient Chinese was the area where the ‘universal common master’ went hunting and touring, as well as applied to directly-controlled territory. The Emperor Shun, the last of the Five emperors, divided cosmopolitan space (*tian xia*), or ‘all under heaven’ into twelve provinces. In the Xia Dynasty, this cosmopolitan space again was divided into nine provinces and the tributary services of five classes. This knowledge represents the ancient Chinese perception of their original geographical and cultural domain.

In the succeeding Shang Dynasty (after the Xia Dynasty), the ancient Chinese made Yin (now Anyang, Henan Province) their new capital after constant migration, deeming that it was the center of ‘all under heaven’, with four remote areas in the north, south, east and west where there resided many tribal unions acting as borders and buffers for central China. These tribal unions maintained different tributary relations with the Shang government according to their distance from the Shang capital. The cosmopolitan space at this time was the geographic zone of Shang capital and its border tribes in four directions. When the Zhou Dynasty replaced Shang, more geographic extensions were added to this Chinese cosmopolitan space. In “High-quality Material (*zi cai*)” (in *The Classic of History, shu jing*, the “Book of Zhou”), we have this saying: ‘God has bestowed on the Zhou ancestors the Chinese people and territory.’ Also, in *The Classic of Poetry (shi jing)*, ‘Chinese territory’ and ‘China’ are employed to signify a Chinese cosmopolitan space comprising both the capital and its remote border areas. Mencius accepts the implications of a quotation from *The Classic of History*, which states:

Heaven populated the earth below,

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<sup>3</sup> The founding Five Emperors are viewed as the legendary founders of Chinese culture, which then evolved into its substantial form through the three early dynasties, the Xia, Shang (or Yin) and Zhou dynasties.

Made the people a lord  
And made him their teacher  
That he might assist God in loving them.  
“In the four quarters, neither the innocent nor the guilty escape my eyes,  
Who in the Empire dare be above himself?”<sup>4</sup>

Here we see that ‘all under the heaven’ is actually the geographic space where the rulers of each dynasty could exercise their influence. The meaning of the Chinese cosmopolitan space or ‘all under the heaven’ is equally expressed as ‘all the world under the heaven within the emperor’s territory while all people under heaven come into the category of the emperor’s subjects.’

Through historical experiences under the Five Emperors and Three Dynasties this Chinese cosmopolitan space had been defined as the common territory of central China and its remote areas in four directions. The concept of Chinese cosmopolitan space had evolved three aspects: first, it is the concept of natural geography; second, it is the concept of the political control from central power to all known remote areas; third, it is the concept of religious and ethical authority at their earliest stage.

In the Qin Dynasty, the concept of Chinese cosmopolitan space had evolved again into the ‘Six Directions (*liu he*)’, that is, the directions of above the earth, under the sky, east, west, south and north. The concreteness of this Chinese cosmopolitan space was seen in the phrase: “All lands in Six Directions come within emperor’s territory, west being in the great desert, east being in the east China Sea, south being in Bei Hu, north being in Da Xia. All the people under the heaven have been tamed as the Emperor Qin’s subjects.”<sup>5</sup> The rapid collapse of the Qin Dynasty allowed the succeeding Han Dynasty to rise to power and control the territories established by the Qin Dynasty. The territories of both the Qin and Han Dynasties constitute the Chinese cosmopolitan space in its geographic sense and it has remained largely unchanged through more than two thousand years.

Although official Chinese history records are all written from the perspective of a Chinese cosmopolitan space in which all the world under the heaven is China or vice versa, still Chinese, especially its intellectuals, had not associated China with actual world geography until the Italian missionary Matteo Ricci introduced the *World Map* to China’s Ming Dynasty. In *Foreign Countries in the Records of Ming Dynasty* we read this message clearly: “Italy is in the center of the Atlantic and has been unknown to Chinese knowledge. In the period of Emperor Wanli, an Italian named Matteo Ricci came to the Chinese capital, bringing with him the map of all countries in the world. Since then we have known that there are five continents under heaven, namely Asia in which there are more than one hundred countries with China among them.” This

<sup>4</sup> In *Mencius*, translated by D.C. Lau, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1970, Book 1, Part B, 3.

<sup>5</sup> In “Records of Emperor Qin”, Sima Qian, *Records of the Historian*.

initiated Chinese into the distinction between traditional Chinese cosmopolitan space and world geography. This knowledge of world geography also stimulated Chinese in their consciousness of the modern nation-state. Before this juncture, the Chinese had assumed the cultural superiority of central China to all the rest of the places ‘under heaven’, but with total ignorance of the rest of the world, in the sense of geography, political ideology or nationalities.

### **Cosmopolitan Space in Economic and Political Systems**

In the classical literature, the Chinese cosmopolitan space is also designated with political and economic significance. The frequently cited example is the system of “Five Kinds of Services (*wu fu*)”, which is outlined as:

Dian Service in Five Hundred Miles (*li*)<sup>6</sup>: people in the nearest area one hundred miles away from the capital should render their service by handing in all their harvests, people in the area two hundred miles away from the capital by handing in eared millet, people in the area three hundred miles away from the capital by handing in hard-skinned millet, people in the area four hundred miles away from the capital by handing in raw millet and people in the areas five hundred miles away from the capital by handing in refined millet. Hou Service in Five Hundred Miles away from the Extreme of Dian Service: people in the nearest area one hundred miles away from the extreme of Dian Service render their transport service for emperor, people in the area two hundred miles away from the extreme of Dian Service for their dukedom, people in the area three hundred miles away from the extreme of Dian Service for gathering intelligence of danger. Sui Service in Five Hundred Miles away from the Extreme of Hou Service: people in the area two hundred miles away from the extreme of Hou Service should apply the policies of their emperor, people in the area three hundred miles away from the extreme of Hou Service should fight to defend their emperor. Yao Service in Five Hundred miles away from the Extreme of Sui Service: people in the area two hundred miles away from the extreme of Sui Service should coexist in peace, people in the area three hundred miles away from the extreme of Sui Service should abide by the rules of the duke. Huang Service Five Hundred Miles away from the Extreme of Yao Service: people in the area two hundred miles away from the extreme of Yao Service should remain in their subordinate relations with the above-mentioned people, people in the area three hundred miles away from the extreme of Yao Service may choose to pay tribute or move away.<sup>7</sup>

This was the typical reflection of Chinese cosmopolitan space in the forms of political and economic systems before the Qin Dynasty.

However, in the Qin Dynasty, the Chinese cosmopolitan space was transformed into

<sup>6</sup> Note that the Chinese measurement is approximately one-third of a mile. The measurements in the paragraph should be taken as Chinese miles or *li* of this shorter length.

<sup>7</sup> In “Tributary System in Xia Dynasty”, *The Classic of History*. See a parallel text at <http://chinese.dsturgeon.net/text.pl?node=21107&if=en>

another form based on Provinces and Counties (*jun xian zhi*). Li Si, the prime minister of the Qin Dynasty explained it this way: “ Far back in the history of the Five Emperors China occupied the space within hundreds of kilometers with remote areas of different services. At that time the emperor had no way to compel dukes to pay tribute. Now your majesty Emperor Shi Huang Di has killed all the rebels and conquered all areas under the heaven. The Chinese cosmopolitan space has therefore been translated into the forms of provinces and counties and your directives are carried out in all areas. This situation has never occurred in previous history, even in the time of Five Emperors.”<sup>8</sup>

During the time of the Five Emperors China had already occupied a certain geographic space in the areas where political and economic systems had been established to maintain their relations with the rule of the emperor, though the efficiency of this rule decreased with distance from the capital. In fact, the more powerful the central government personified in the emperor was, the larger the geographic space that was brought under the emperor’s control. Here are two examples: the Chinese cosmopolitan space in the Xia Dynasty is expressed in the Five Forms of Service with one service type for each hundred Chinese miles. Yet the Chinese cosmopolitan space under the Zhou Dynasty is expressed in Nine Forms of Service with one service for five hundred Chinese miles. The distinction exhibited in the Chinese cosmopolitan space in the Xia and Zhou Dynasties demonstrates the enlarged sphere of influence from the Xia to the Zhou. In other words, the Zhou Dynasty evolved the Chinese cosmopolitan space to its extreme so that in the late years of the Zhou Dynasty each dukedom helped weaken the declining Zhou empire. The Zhou empire finally collapsed into the Warring States system, which was reunified by Qin Shi Huang in 221 B.C.E.

### **The Ethical Content of Chinese Cosmopolitan Space**

The concept of the Chinese cosmopolitan space before the Qin Dynasty reflects the experiences of geographic, political and economic systems at the early stages of the development of the Chinese people. However, by the end of Zhou Dynasty, the last leg of the Chinese ‘feudal’ societies, the ancient Chinese had enlarged their geographic space to the manageable extreme that ushered in a Warring States period (thereafter allowing Qin Shi Huang to reunite a long-divided China). Yet the geographic crisis forced ancient Chinese to invest ethical content into conceptions of government along with territorial control, thus establishing moral ideals and spiritual authorities that could provide the basis for imperial legitimacy.

We may not directly decipher the ethical contents from the classical documents of ancient China. Nevertheless, we may infer them indirectly from the way ancient Chinese thinkers observed the world around them. In the very beginning, Chinese

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<sup>8</sup> In “Records of Emperor Qin”, *The Classic of History*.

cosmopolitan space only represented the geographic experience embracing both China and her four border areas. The concept of Chinese cosmopolitan space then gradually acquired cultural significance, with the superiority of Chinese culture contrasted to the perceived inferiority of Chinese minority cultures in her distant four border areas. Rites (*li*) and the extension of human-heartedness (*ren*) into society were intentionally chosen to standardize and unify the values of the Chinese people.

One phrase in *The Classic of Poetry* is highly praised by Chinese thinkers: ‘Although Zhou is an old empire, yet her new mission is to revolutionize the world.’ Here the ‘old empire’ might be the core Chinese geographic space and the ‘new mission’ might indicate the ethical importance of Chinese culture. The transition from the geographic experience before the Qin to the cultural transformation of human-heartedness and rites witnessed the change of the Chinese cosmopolitan space from the emperors’ managerial spheres (*jia tian xia*) to the ethical imperatives of all Chinese people (*gong tian xia*). In the sense of agglomeration, the Chinese people committed themselves more to a system of ethical values rather than merely to a geographic or territorial identity at this juncture. They came to appreciate universal ethical values exposed in *gong tian xia* rather than the geographic experience implied in *jia tian xia*.

The key aspect of Chinese cosmopolitan space before the Qin was its geographic experience where the emperors’ influence was clearly felt. After the Qin dynasty the central ideas of the Chinese cosmopolitan space were the ethical values advocated in most Confucian works. The distinction between *jia tian xia* and *gong tian xia* is between geographic experience and Confucian ethical values. And this ethical value of the Confucian type can be further expounded as human-heartedness (*ren*). In *The Great Learning (da xue)*, one of the most influential Confucian classics, we have this judgment: “If human-heartedness is advocated by the emperor’s family, then the whole country may prosper through the principle of human-heartedness . . . . The Emperors Yao and Shun governed all under the heaven by the principle of human-heartedness and all people volunteered to be their subjects.” The concept of Chinese cosmopolitan space could never be extended to universal humanistic and ethical values or intellectual excellence unless ancient Chinese thinkers liberated themselves from the confinement set for them by a Chinese territorial space in the form of geographical experience, political and economic relations with central government, and relations with tribal unions in distant border areas. Fortunately, Chinese Confucian philosophers generalized the concept of human-heartedness from ancient Chinese patriarchal societies and made it the norm for people ‘all under the heaven’.

In practical social circumstances, human-heartedness is also expressed in the form of rites (*li*) or propriety. Many statements in classical Confucian works concern human-heartedness, yet the most popular exposition for human-heartedness is ‘to love all people.’ This is a phrase frequently quoted from the *Yan Yuan*, the Confucian *Analects*. Other phrases bearing the same meaning are: ‘To subdue oneself and turn to propriety

(rites) is perfect virtue (human-heartedness). If a man can subdue himself and turn to propriety, everyone under heaven would praise him as a man of perfect virtue'<sup>9</sup>; 'Is virtue indeed far off? I crave for virtue, and Lo! Virtue is at hand'<sup>10</sup>; 'The man of perfect virtue is one who, desiring to sustain himself, sustains others, and desiring to develop himself, develops others. To be able to draw from oneself as a parallel for the treatment of others, that may be called the way to practice virtue'<sup>11</sup>; 'Even for the space of a single meal the superior man does not go against virtue. In moments of haste, he cleaves to it. In seasons of danger, he cleaves to it.'<sup>12</sup> In every aspect of human affairs, from individual cultivation to the world order, human-heartedness should be followed as the supreme principle.

In *The Doctrine of the Mean (zhong yong)* we find the relations between human-heartedness and universal ethical value expounded this way: "to engage in politics is to behave in society, to behave in society is to improve oneself, to improve oneself is to follow the basic principle, to follow the basic principle is to personify human-heartedness. For human-heartedness is the very essence of human being and human being could never violate blood ties. So to nurse human feeling for the sake of blood ties is to demonstrate one's human nature; to demonstrate one's human nature is to identify oneself with ultimate will of the heaven." To act in accord with what heaven has revealed is to accomplish the absolute duty, so that "we love ordinary people, then ordinary people would encourage each other; we invite all kinds of artisans, then they could produce plenty of goods; we pacify people outside of our immediate territory, then people would come afar at our disposal; we subdue all dukes, then people under the heaven would show us their respect in awe." In this connection we may say the concept of Chinese cosmopolitan space has acquired the more abstract meaning of human-heartedness and human-heartedness in turn represents a more universal humanitarianism. Human-heartedness invariably bears the key feature of human nature, so we may say that "being human is defined by human-heartedness", "human-heartedness is demonstrated by loving the people" and "to act according to the human soul is to control all under the heaven." Here we may conclude that the transition of Chinese cosmopolitan space from a patriarchal geographic territory to universal ethical values finally allowed Chinese intellectuals to endow themselves with absolute spiritual authority.

### **The Importance of Chinese Cosmopolitan Space in the Making of the Chinese Nation**

In the making of the Chinese people, the Five Emperors and Three Dynasties, especially the Spring and Autumn (circa 771-475 B.C.E.) and Warring States (475-221 B.C.E.) periods, saw a historic transformation before the Qin (221-206

<sup>9</sup> Confucius *Analects* XII.1.

<sup>10</sup> Confucius *Analects* VII.30.

<sup>11</sup> Confucius *Analects* VI.30.

<sup>12</sup> Confucius *Analects* IV.5.

B.C.E.) and Han Dynasties which lasted until modern China met another unprecedented historic change. So, we have thus far experienced two key historic changes: for the first one we base our judgment on archaeological artifacts as well as ancient legends, and for the second we rely on abundant literary documents.

The concept of Chinese cosmopolitan space before the Qin Dynasty was based on the experiences of each emperor in his manageable territory, so the concept benefited the emperor or ordinary Chinese people in maintaining their tributary duties, while the dynastic tree of the emperor always remained the center of Chinese loyalties to the country under the name of *tian xia*. Yet after the Qin Dynasty, the concept of Chinese cosmopolitan space shifted to the ethical contents of a universal idealism which centered on the Confucian doctrine of human-heartedness. This shift helped Chinese transfer their loyalties to ethical doctrines appealing to both the elite and the wider population.

With the authorized support of Han Wu Di, Confucian ideology shaped the national character. Again the ethical contents of Chinese cosmopolitan space had been enriched with what the Confucian school advocated as meritorious notions, including human-heartedness (*ren*), righteousness (*yi*), devotion (*zhong*), generosity (*shu*), love (*ai*), respect (*jing*), filial devotion (*xiao*), and brotherhood (*ti*). These basic principles guided Chinese people as they emigrated from central China to border areas and vice versa, promoting the rapid assimilation of Chinese minorities into the Chinese mainstream. The universal ethical contents of Chinese cosmopolitan space diluted the conflict between mainstream Chinese and minority groups in their geographic and ethnic differences and consolidated the economic, cultural and historical ties between them under the policy of ‘all people are common in having minds and all minds are common in having rationality’. Since the national unification under the Qin and Han Dynasties, China also met with the harsh challenges during the Wei and Jin Dynasties when it was divided into North China under the control of non-Han nationalities and South China under the control of Chinese Han people. However, by then the ethical ideology of a Chinese cosmopolitan space exercised strong influence to maintain a solid national identity both for minorities and Han Chinese. All Chinese people, either minorities or Han, came back to a unitary nation with Chinese cosmopolitan space as their common ideology during the Sui and Tang Dynasties. The Tang Dynasty is another historical epoch of great prosperity shaping the Chinese nation. The people under the influence of Great Tang Emperor (*tang tai zong*) viewed him as The Mighty Emperor under Heaven (*tian ke han*), which showed the zenith of the powerful Tang Dynasty (*sheng tang*), exemplifying the Chinese cosmopolitan space in real political terms. The Tang Dynasty was followed by the historical chaos of Five Generations and Ten Kingdoms (*wu dai shi guo*) and China was again thrown into the separation of Southern and Northern regimes. Yet all regimes, no matter whether they were established by powerful tribal groups or by the Han people, still adhered to the principles rich in the ethical content of a Chinese cosmopolitan space that inherited

the traditional cultural and economic systems of previous Chinese dynasties.

In consequence, we may infer that the Qin and Han Dynasties did not only establish China with a unified territory and its political and economic systems, but also accomplished the transfer from patriarchal systems in central China to the cultural authority of a Chinese cosmopolitan space, thus introducing a unifying and stabilizing development for the Chinese nation. Why could all this happen? As the Chinese then speculated that China was the entire world, then Chinese were thought to be the only human beings and the ideal of ‘ruling the world by the principle of human-heartedness’ is much the same as the contemporary idea of establishing a world government. All territories where human culture is cultivated should be brought under control of one government and observe a universal principle. The ‘nation’ is to state what the human being is to the world. This ideal had been translated into reality by Chinese people during the Qin Dynasty and ‘*The Doctrine of the Mean*’ has detailed its exposition. As noted by Qian Mu: “Now all the world under heaven has been brought under control by the principle of all carts have wheels of the same size, all writing with the same character system, all behavior with the same virtue, and all peoples with filial duty in all places where human beings may reach by means of communication and where nature may donate all its merits.”<sup>13</sup> ‘Ruling the world by the principle of human-heartedness’ is to realize the universal ethics envisaged in the Chinese cosmopolitan space and carry through this ethical ideal in unifying the whole world under heaven. And this universal ethics also helped to nurse the cosmopolitanism of Chinese cultural style and promoted a Chinese nation consolidating its own forms of unity and sovereignty. Therefore we conclude that the concept of a Chinese cosmopolitan space may also enrich the Chinese in their maintaining pacifism towards the rest of the world in the current age of globalization.

In the historic traditions of China, the despotism of the emperor stood opposite to the liberalism that evolved from the Chinese patriarchal system, seriously impeding the progress of the Chinese nation. This has been harshly criticized by independent thinkers from generation to generation. Nevertheless, over thousands of years, these traditions could be creatively transformed into what the majority of people in the world observe as universal ethics. One key example of this is the concept of Chinese cosmopolitan space. As the famous logician Jin Yuelin observed, “we may come to the view of Chinese cosmopolitanism if we sometimes expound a Chinese cosmopolitan space in its natural geographic sense, and sometimes in its universal ethical sense: our emphasis may be shifted from this to that, from then and to now.”<sup>14</sup>

So, from the contents of the universal ethics of this Chinese cosmopolitan space we may extract liberalism of the Chinese type, that is, being ‘free for’, rather than ‘free

<sup>13</sup> In Qian Mu, “*The Introduction to Chinese Culture*”, The Commercial Press, 1994, p37, in Chinese version.

<sup>14</sup> Feng Youlan *A Brief History of Chinese Philosophy*, Beijing, Beijing University Press, 1985, p.226, in Chinese version. Author’s name is also transliterated as Fung Yu-Lan.

from', in contrast with the traditional western style. The liberalism contained in the concept of Chinese cosmopolitan space is tinged with the positive idea of the freedom to accomplish a specific universal value, that is, to make a harmonious world 'under heaven'. Liberalism of this kind is reiterated in one of classics of the Confucian school as 'the Chinese sage aims at creating all under heaven as a family and the whole of China as a single entity.'<sup>15</sup> This harmonious world craved for by Confucian scholars is one 'with perfect equal rights, perfect justice, perfect human-heartedness, and perfect governance. We could not find a better paradise in this human world than this world of universal ethics.'<sup>16</sup> The very idea of Chinese cosmopolitan space with universal ethics paved the way for modern Chinese to introduce western communism. These trends promoted the idea of absolute liberty for everyone and helped modern Chinese intellectuals to appreciate the rights advocated in western democratic societies. In a confined sense, the ideal of Chinese cosmopolitan space with its lofty goal of emancipating 'all under heaven', or shouldering the burden of the entire world, is the basic motive for any educated person. And so the liberalism indicated in the Chinese cosmopolitan space is emphasized more from an individual moral conscientiousness than the legal rights guaranteed by society, as is the case of the western world. This emphasis of Chinese liberalism could be reinforced by western legitimacy, as well as rendering insights into the complexity of legal processes for safeguarding individual liberty in the West.

The concept of Chinese cosmopolitan space originated from ancient China and bears clear vestiges of the geographic experiences of patriarchal societies. However, its ethical content has been constantly enriched with the expansion of the Chinese territorial and culture sphere, and the introduction of alien cultures. The consequence of these contacts and evolution is seen in the transformation from territorial polities to universal ethical virtues, including a shift from China to a global environment, as well as from ethical liberalism to legal liberalism. This transformation consolidated the national identity for all Chinese peoples in their history and helped the Chinese maintain a policy of pacifism in their foreign relations. The notions of a Chinese cosmopolitan space are expressed in proverbs such as 'all peoples within the four seas (the world) are brothers', 'he who commands people's consent commands all under heaven', 'regarding China as one person and all under heaven as one family', 'building a common world under heaven', and 'seeking justice for all under heaven'. These views are proper resources from which the Chinese people can respond to current world trends of peace and development. And we are also optimistic that the universal virtues revealed in the concept of a Chinese cosmopolitan space may positively be accepted as one set of global values, alongside concepts such as liberalism and human rights.

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<sup>15</sup> See the *Book of Rites*, in the chapter 'The Order of the Rites'.

<sup>16</sup> See Kang Youwei's *The World with Universal Ethics (da tong shu)*.