

**Answering the Questions of Our Time: The
Global Significance and Practical Value of
China's Public Intellectual Goods**

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Preface

Since the dawn of modern times, from the rational light of the Enlightenment to the blueprint for peace embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, and the green vision set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, global public intellectual goods—condensed from the shared wisdom of humanity and transcending national and cultural boundaries—have played an essential role in shaping the international order, advancing global governance, and promoting the modernization process of various countries. At present, the world is undergoing unseen changes at an unprecedented pace in a century. It is a period of turbulence and transformation, marked by frequent geopolitical conflicts, growing economic imbalances, widening digital divides, and deepening crises of values and faith. Behind the global deficits in peace, development, security, and governance lies a profound deficit in ideas. Human society urgently needs new global public intellectual goods to provide answers to the world's pressing questions and those of our time.

At this critical juncture, the collective rise of countries in the Global South presents a historic opportunity for transforming global public intellectual goods. Drawing on its reflections on the future of the world and lessons from its own practice, China, as a significant member of the Global South, has established a comprehensive and rich system for providing such goods. At the international level, President Xi Jinping has advanced a coherent framework guided by the concept of a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity, which has yielded tangible achievements in practice and garnered broad recognition from the international community. At the level of national development, Chinese modernization has dispelled the myth that "modernization equals Westernization," offering an essential reference for the modernization process of other countries, especially those in the Global South. At the level of values, President Xi has articulated the shared values of humanity: "peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy, and freedom," addressing humanity's ultimate concerns about its collective future and destiny. These three dimensions complement and reinforce one another, together forming the complete system of China's contribution to global public intellectual goods.

On September 1, 2025, President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Governance Initiative (GGI) at the "Shanghai Cooperation Organization Plus" Meeting in Tianjin, which enriched China's global public intellectual goods with richer contemporary relevance and more profound global significance.

China's global public intellectual goods are rooted in the summary of practical experience and the distillation of universal laws, embodying the absorption and elevation of the finest achievements of human civilization. They constitute a theoretical system that is dynamic, evolving, and continuously innovative, characterized by scientific rigor, openness, and progressiveness. As practice deepens, China will maintain an open attitude toward exchanges and mutual learning, work hand in hand with countries around the world, and continue to infuse its intellectual contributions with vitality in step with the

times. It will continue to enrich and expand the connotations of this system, injecting stronger wisdom and strength into the advancement of a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity.

Chapter 1

The Contemporary Need for Global Public Intellectual Goods

Since modern times, global public intellectual goods, distilled from the shared wisdom of humanity and transcending national and cultural boundaries, have played a crucial role in shaping the international order, advancing global governance, and promoting modernization across nations. Today, as changes unseen in a century accelerate, humanity faces unprecedented challenges and urgently requires new global public intellectual goods to provide answers to the world's pressing questions and those of our time. At this critical juncture, the collective rise of countries in the Global South is offering the international community an increasing supply of thought goods rich in contemporaneity and practical value, which will bring historic opportunities for reshaping global public intellectual goods.

1.1. The Concept and Historical Evolution of Global Public Intellectual Goods

Global public intellectual goods encompass ideas, rules, and values that are universal, normative, and instructive in global governance and international relations, providing intellectual support and guiding principles for addressing global issues and shaping the international order. They constitute an essential component of global public goods and are characterized by the following core features:

First, universality. Global public intellectual goods transcend the limitations of particular nations or cultures, carry the potential for broad acceptance, and respond to challenges faced by humanity in common, such as peace and security, economic development, and the relationship between human beings and nature or society.

Second, publicness. As a form of "public goods," the goal of global public intellectual goods is to provide shared norms, values, or solutions for the world at large, rather than serving only the interests of a particular country, bloc, or organization.

Third, normativity. Through concepts and initiatives, global public intellectual goods shape codes of conduct, patterns of interaction, or governance frameworks for various actors worldwide, thereby promoting progress in global governance, national governance, or social development.

Fourth, practicality. Global public intellectual goods are not confined to the theoretical level; they must be implemented through concrete policies or mechanisms for cooperation, resulting in a tangible impact in the real world.

The origins, development, and formation of global public Intellectual goods constitute a complex process closely intertwined with changes in international politics, econo-

my, and culture. This process is not only a reflection of the evolution of knowledge production and dissemination modes but also an embodiment of the transformations in the international landscape, the global political and economic order, and prevailing currents of international thought and culture.

Since modern times, civilizations have increasingly overcome geographical barriers, deepening and expanding their interconnections, and human history has gradually advanced toward a "global history," enabling intellectual goods with influence across the broader international arena to emerge. In the 18th century, thinkers such as Voltaire and Leibniz, drawing on Europe's own experience and inspired by Eastern philosophers including Confucius, helped spark the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment emphasized reason, science, and public discourse, while exploring issues such as freedom, equality, and good governance. These ideas were not confined to a single nation but sought to offer concepts of universal relevance to all humanity. The Enlightenment not only generated a body of intellectual achievements but also exerted practical influence on the course of history in Europe and beyond, laying the groundwork for the emergence of global public intellectual goods.

In the 19th century, with the advancement of the Industrial Revolution and the rise of nation-states, the production of global public intellectual goods began to move toward institutionalization. The growing complexity of international relations and international trade made countries increasingly aware of the need for more systematic bodies of knowledge to address transnational issues. Such knowledge systems not only had to interpret and guide reality but also required recognition and application by a broad range of states. In diplomacy, the 1815 Congress of Vienna adopted the Final Act (*Acte final du Congrès de Vienne*), which not only shaped the European balance of power for nearly a century thereafter but also further established diplomatic rules and the mechanism of international conferences. By regulating state behavior through legal frameworks, it sought to reduce conflicts and promote cooperation, laying the foundation for modern international law. In global trade, with the rapid expansion of maritime commerce, seafaring powers such as Britain took the lead in promoting a set of rules—through treaties, organizations, and other mechanisms—covering ship registration, maritime safety, and the resolution of trade disputes. These rules were not merely technical norms but also embodied the idea of free trade, thus driving the formation and shaping of the global trade system. At the societal level, the spread of humanitarian principles spurred the growth of the Red Cross movement, leading to the establishment of the International Committee of the Red Cross in the 1860s and the emergence of the Geneva Conventions (*Convention de Genève*) and other fundamental rules of international humanitarian law.

As the world entered the 20th century, the production of global public intellectual goods was catalyzed by the world wars and economic crises. The First World War exposed the fragility of the existing international order. Toward the end of the war, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson put forward his Fourteen Points in 1918. Parts of this pro-

posals served as guiding principles for the Paris Peace Conference, leading to the establishment of the League of Nations. Although the League's practice proved unsuccessful, it nonetheless provided necessary experience and lessons for the creation of future global international organizations. Following the onset of the Great Depression in 1929, major economies such as the United States and the Soviet Union introduced their distinctive economic development programs in response to the crisis. Among them, Keynesian economic theory and the experience of the Five-Year Plans exerted long-lasting influence on the economic development strategies of many countries.

After the Second World War, the production and dissemination of global public intellectual goods ushered in a period of unprecedented vitality, playing a key role in shaping the postwar order, addressing global challenges, and advancing the decolonization movement. In the realm of international relations, the Charter of the United Nations (1945) established the purposes of the UN and its institutional framework. It was not only a formal legal document but also an intellectual product promoting the ideals of global peace, development, and cooperation. In the field of world economy, with the establishment of the Bretton Woods system, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT, later developed into the World Trade Organization) were successively founded, becoming essential platforms for providing international economic public goods. In the field of human rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (*Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme*, 1948) established a fundamental consensus on the respect and protection of human rights, spurring countries to incorporate human rights safeguards into their legal systems and marking a milestone in the history of human civilization. In the anti-colonial movement, from the Final Communiqué of the Asian-African Conference (Final Communiqué of the Bandung Conference, 1955) to the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (*Déclaration sur l'octroi de l'indépendance aux pays et aux peuples coloniaux*, UN General Assembly, 1960), these landmark documents provided ideological guidance and pathways for the national liberation struggles of countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, powerfully advancing the progress of their independence movements.

1.2. The Serious Deficit of Public Intellectual Goods in Today's World

Since its founding, the United Nations has traversed a journey of more than 80 years. Humanity has emerged from the shadow of the Cold War and moved beyond bipolar confrontation; yet, it has not yet achieved comprehensive peace and shared prosperity. At present, as changes unseen in a century accelerate, transformations of the world, of our times and history are unfolding in unprecedented ways, bringing challenges of a kind never before encountered. The world has entered a new period of turbulence and transformation, and the existing system of global public intellectual goods is

increasingly unable to address today's global issues effectively. Behind the worldwide deficits in peace, development, security, and governance lies a profound deficit of ideas.

I.2.1 The dual dilemmas of politics at home and abroad. Domestically, the extreme tendencies of representative democracy are exposing their drawbacks: populism is rampant, and political polarization and ethnic conflict are giving rise to severe instability. Some countries once proclaimed their political systems and values to be "models" for the world, yet their credibility is now widely questioned. Internationally, certain countries have sought to "export democracy" globally. Far from bringing stability and prosperity, such efforts have triggered persistent conflict and turmoil, created grave humanitarian crises, and fostered the breeding and spread of extremism.

I.2.2. Global economic imbalances and sluggish recovery. Since the 1980s, the wave of neoliberal economics has provided a temporary impetus to globalization and global economic growth. However, its inherent contradictions have led to severe social inequality and global economic disequilibrium. It has failed to generate long-term, stable growth momentum for the world economy and has fueled anti-globalization sentiments worldwide. To advance inclusive and beneficial economic globalization, it is essential to pursue fair and equitable strategic arrangements and institutional rules, enhance the sharing of globalization's benefits, and resolve both international and domestic developmental imbalances, so that globalization truly delivers for all of humanity.

I.2.3. The urgent need to reshape concepts and practices of global governance. In the face of a series of global challenges—geopolitical conflicts, climate change, food crises, public health threats, and digital security threats—the current system of global public intellectual goods has proven to be visibly inadequate. Climate change offers a telling example: certain major powers have withdrawn from international agreements, and some developed countries have repeatedly shifted positions on burden-sharing, financial support, and technology transfer, severely undermining the effectiveness of collective action. Confronted with such complex challenges, there is an urgent need for new public intellectual goods with greater foresight, inclusiveness, and innovation to renew the guiding principles and practices of global governance.

I.2.4. Cultural conflicts and crises of belief. Some countries employ cultural hegemony as a tool, seeking to impose their own values on others while disregarding the uniqueness and worth of other cultures. Such practices have triggered cultural conflicts, identity crises, and widespread resentment and resistance. Meanwhile, amid rapid economic and social changes, certain groups face deepening crises of faith and identity in the modernization process. False information and cultural prejudice spread widely through digital platforms, intensifying social fragmentation and atomization, and creating space for the dissemination of extremist ideas. To respond to this situation, new cultural public intellectual goods must address the profound questions of humanity's relationship with society and with nature, promote dialogue and mutual learning among civilizations, and foster coexistence, thereby laying a solid foundation for shared values for all humankind.

Against this backdrop, unilateralism and protectionism have continued to gain ground in recent years. Certain countries cling to the notion of "my country first," worship power and status, and embrace the law of the jungle, delivering even greater shocks to the entire system of global public goods, including intellectual goods. "What has happened to the world? What should we do?" "Where is humanity headed?" In the face of these global questions of our time, humanity needs new worldwide public intellectual goods to respond to the fundamental challenges confronting us all.

1.3. The Rise of the Global South and the Reshaping of Public Intellectual Goods

In retrospect, modern history demonstrates that to exert a far-reaching influence, global public intellectual goods must meet the needs of the times, lead the trends of the times, and be supported by practical experience, thereby responding to the pressing concerns of the vast majority of countries and peoples. In this regard, the collective rise of the Global South is one of the profound changes in the international landscape of the 21st century, providing a historic opportunity for the innovation of global public intellectual goods.

Worldwide, as the Global South rises, multiple centers of development are gradually emerging across various regions, and the balance of power in the international order is undergoing a marked shift. As the vanguard of the Global South, the BRICS countries—after their most recent expansion—represent more than 50 percent of the world's population, account for around 30 percent of global GDP at market exchange rates, contribute over 50 percent of global economic growth, and supply more than 25 percent of global energy exports. The Global South has already become the driving force behind global growth. Rapid economic growth inevitably brings with it rapid development and growing influence in the political and cultural spheres. While reshaping the international balance of power, this has also injected new momentum into addressing common challenges of humanity.

Politically, the countries of the Global South are advancing the democratization of international relations by advocating for sovereign equality and inclusive consultation, and calling for greater fairness and justice on international platforms and within global mechanisms. Economically, they have placed development at the core of global economic governance and promoted a rebalancing of the global economic power structure through openness and cooperation. In global governance, they emphasize the inclusion of more developing countries in the process, respecting the interests and demands of all, and breaking the monopoly of the major powers. Culturally, they advocate an ethos of coexistence that transcends cultural hegemony, fostering exchanges and mutual learning to overcome barriers between civilizations, and rejecting the notion of a "clash of civilizations."

More importantly, as the Global South continues to accumulate practical achieve-

ments, its values and policies are gaining growing international influence, providing the world with an increasing supply of thought goods imbued with contemporaneity and practical value.

From Southern Africa comes the philosophy of Ubuntu, which stresses "I am because we are," advocating community mutual aid, empathy, and a spirit of collectivism. Emphasizing interdependence among people, it addresses the relationship between the individual and society. Applied in practice across numerous countries, this philosophy has not only helped overcome ethnic divisions within states but also enhanced their capacity for grassroots governance.

In the Andes region, the Pachamama ("Mother Earth") philosophy, rooted in the ancient culture of local peoples, emphasizes the rights of nature as a subject in its own right, the harmony between humanity and nature, and the importance of ecological protection and sustainable development. This philosophy aligns closely with modern principles of environmental protection, has been recognized and embraced by international organizations such as the United Nations, and has been enshrined in the laws of Bolivia and Ecuador. In recent discussions on climate change, the concept of Pachamama has provided a crucial values-based foundation.

In South Asia, drawing on its own painful experiences of colonial rule, India advanced the concept of *Swadeshi* ("self-reliance"), which emphasized economic independence and resistance to colonial exploitation. It provided the philosophical basis for India's economic development since the independence movement and has also been applied in parts of South Asia and East Africa. At a time when countries in the Global South face pressing tasks of achieving economic independence and sustainable development, this philosophy is likely to play an even more crucial inspirational role.

The rise of the Global South has created a vital opportunity to reshape global public intellectual goods. In building a multipolar world of equality and order, and advancing economic globalization that is inclusive and beneficial for all, the diverse practices, rich cultures, and varied development models of the Global South will undoubtedly contribute ever more valuable intellectual resources to the world.

Chapter 2

The Systemic Connotations of China's Global Public Intellectual Goods

As a major member of the Global South, China—drawing on reflections about the future of the world and a summary of its unique practices—has developed a system of public intellectual goods oriented toward the globe. At the international system level, China has advanced a body of thought centered on the concept of a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity, which has garnered broad recognition from the international community and yielded notable results in practice. At the level of national development, Chinese modernization has broken the myth that "modernization equals Westernization," offering a vital reference for the modernization of countries worldwide, particularly those in the Global South. At the level of values, China has proposed the shared values of humanity: "peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy, and freedom," addressing the ultimate questions concerning the future and destiny of humankind. These three dimensions complement and reinforce one another, together forming a complete system of China's global public intellectual goods, enriched by multiple levels and areas of integration.

2.1. Community: Reflections and Practice on the Future of the International System

Building a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity is a groundbreaking concept proposed by President Xi Jinping. It is China's answer to the era's question: "What kind of world should we build, and how should we build it?" The concept means that the future and destiny of every nation and every country are closely linked, and that all should stand together through thick and thin, share weal and woe, coexist in harmony, and pursue win-win cooperation. It arises from a rational design of state-to-state relations, from the common consensus and expectations of the international community, and from China's sense of responsibility as a major country. It explicitly advocates the spirit of "working together for the common good of all nations," the mindset of openness and inclusiveness, and the vision of win-win cooperation, thus promoting the transformation of state-to-state relations from peaceful coexistence to shared destiny, and injecting strong impetus into the cause of world peace and development.

Since its introduction in 2013, the vision of a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity has evolved into a comprehensive and well-structured system of public intellectual goods, providing the international community with practical pathways for cooperation.

2.1.1. Pursuing the "five goals for the world" as the overarching objective. The core

goals of this vision are to build a world of lasting peace, universal security, common prosperity, openness and inclusiveness, and a clean and beautiful environment. Lasting peace means resolving differences through dialogue and consultation, rejecting Cold War mentality and power politics, and emphasizing respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, core interests, and major concerns, as well as for the right of peoples to choose their own development paths and social systems. Universal security means abandoning the notion of "absolute security" and embracing security for all, rejecting the pursuit of one country's security at the expense of others, and instead promoting cooperative and common security as the proper path to problem-solving. Common prosperity aims to narrow the global development gap and, through inclusive economic globalization, ensure that development achievements benefit people in all countries more broadly and fairly. Openness and inclusiveness entail appreciating the beauty of all civilizations, rejecting notions of "civilizational superiority," and encouraging all nations and peoples to respect differences and strive for harmony without uniformity. A clean and beautiful environment highlights ecological protection, promoting green, low-carbon, and sustainable development, as well as active leadership in global climate governance, to address climate change and environmental crises jointly. These five goals are interconnected and together form the core vision of a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity.

2.1.2. Practicing consultation, cooperation, and shared benefits in global governance as the pathway to realization. Global governance is at a historical turning point. China has been an active participant, promoter, and leader in this process of transformation, advancing the vision of extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits as a guiding principle for reforming and building the global governance system. Extensive consultation means that all countries should participate in decision-making on an equal basis in global affairs, reject unilateralism and hegemonism, and resolve global issues through multilateral platforms, such as those represented by the United Nations. A joint contribution emphasizes that all countries should participate in building the global governance system, leveraging their strengths and contributing resources and wisdom to tackle challenges collectively. Shared benefits aim to ensure that the benefits of global governance are distributed fairly among all countries, particularly those in the Global South, thereby promoting a more equitable distribution of global resources. This vision not only reflects China's respect for global governance rules but also demonstrates its firm commitment to advancing international cooperation and promoting common development.

2.1.3. Building a new type of international relations as a fundamental underpinning. The new type of international relations is based on mutual respect, fairness, justice, and win-win cooperation. Its foundation lies in expanding equal, open, and cooperative global partnerships. China adheres to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence in developing friendly relations and cooperation with other countries, follows a policy of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit, and inclusiveness in its neighborhood diplomacy, and up-

holds the principles of sincerity, real results, affinity, and good faith in strengthening solidarity and cooperation with other developing countries, safeguarding their common interests. China advocates that major countries should prioritize the future of humanity, assume greater responsibilities for world peace and development, and refrain from using their power to monopolize regional and global affairs. By advancing the vision of a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity, emerging and established powers can avoid falling into the "Thucydides trap" and instead find the right path of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and win-win cooperation, thereby promoting a major-country relationship characterized by peaceful coexistence, overall stability, and balanced development.

2.I.4. Taking the major global initiatives as the strategic guiding framework. President Xi Jinping has put forward the Global Development Initiative (GDI), the Global Security Initiative (GSI), the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI), and the Global Governance Initiative (GGI). These initiatives will each be a source of positive energy for a changing and turbulent world and impetus for humanity's development and progress. The GDI aims to accelerate the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its core requirement being a people-centered approach, its central idea advocating a global development partnership that is united, equal, balanced, and inclusive, and its key measure focusing on action-oriented cooperation to achieve stronger, greener, and healthier global development, thus building a global community of development. The GSI seeks to work with the international community to carry forward the spirit of the UN Charter, promote unity in response to profound shifts in the international landscape, and embrace win-win thinking in addressing traditional and non-traditional security challenges, thereby pursuing a new security path featuring dialogue over confrontation, partnership over alliance, and win-win results over zero-sum outcomes. The GCI emphasizes respect for the diversity of world civilizations, jointly advocates valuing the inheritance and innovation of civilizations, encourages stronger international exchanges and cooperation in the cultural sphere, and promotes progress of human civilization through inclusiveness and mutual learning, thereby injecting spiritual strength into the endeavor of building a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity. The GGI highlights adhering to sovereign equality, abiding by international rule of law, practicing multilateralism, advocating the people-centered approach, and focusing on taking real actions to provide direction for the international community on the reform of the global governance system.

2.I.5. Taking high-quality Belt and Road cooperation as the practical platform. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a vivid example of putting the vision of a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity into practice. Since President Xi proposed the BRI in 2013, it has upheld the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits; embraced the concepts of openness, greenness, and integrity; and pursued high standards, sustainability, and benefits to people's livelihoods. Covering five key areas—policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial

integration, and closer people-to-people ties—it promotes both "hard connectivity," "soft connectivity," and "heart connectivity" The BRI has become a widely welcomed international public product and platform for international cooperation provided by China, opening up new pathways for the common development of all countries.

In response to emerging global issues, such as those related to science and technology, China has also advanced several proposals that represent the common interests of the international community. The Global AI Governance Initiative advocates a people-centered, inclusive, and equitable approach to the development of artificial intelligence, emphasizing the formulation of fair and transparent rules through international cooperation to address the ethical, security, and social challenges posed by AI. The Global Data Security Initiative advocates for establishing a rules-based system for data security through international cooperation, thereby safeguarding the security and stability of the global digital economy and providing countries with cooperative and mutually beneficial options for digital development.

The vision of a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity links the fundamental interests of the Chinese people with those of the peoples of all countries, closely binding China's future and destiny with that of the world. It transcends differences in social systems and ideologies as well as divergences in history, culture, and stage of development. This vision offers not only a new perspective on global governance but also Chinese wisdom and solutions for addressing the complex challenges facing the world today. Looking to the future, the vision and its systematic framework will continue to build a broad consensus and pool strong forces for joint action, contributing China's wisdom to the creation of a better future for humankind.

2.2. Modernization: Exploring the Path to National Development and Prosperity

Achieving modernization is the right and inevitable choice for the people of all countries, and the key lies in finding development paths that suit their specific national conditions and the laws governing human social progress. The choice of a path to modernization is determined by many factors, including a country's historical traditions, social system, development conditions, and external environment. Different national circumstances will naturally result in diverse paths to modernization.

Chinese modernization, rooted in China's national conditions and drawing on the outstanding achievements of human civilization, offers the world a new model of modernization. It has rewritten the paradigm of global modernization and created a new form of human advancement. Chinese modernization represents a significant leap beyond the theories and practices of Western-style modernization, shattering the myth that "modernization equals Westernization," and offering valuable lessons for other countries, especially those in the Global South, as they strive to address development challenges and achieve prosperity and progress.

The theoretical connotations and practical achievements of Chinese modernization are extensive and substantial, and are marked by distinctive Chinese features. President Xi Jinping has summarized them as modernization with a huge population, modernization for the common prosperity of all people, modernization that integrates material and cultural-ethical progress, modernization of harmony between humanity and nature, and modernization that follows the path of peaceful development. For Global South countries, these features provide multiple models aligned with universal development needs and patterns, offering insights for their own paths.

2.2.1. Enabling late-developing countries to achieve internally-driven development.

Since modern times, Western countries have been the first to embark on modernization, leveraging their early advantages to dominate and shape the global system. Within this system, late-developing countries have faced many obstacles. Chinese modernization emphasizes development paths rooted in each country's own national conditions, culture, and historical traditions, rather than simply copying external models, particularly those from the West. The concept of internally-driven development encourages countries to explore modernization paths tailored to their unique realities by leveraging their resource endowments, cultural traditions, and social structures, while innovating institutions and devising effective policies. China's practice demonstrates that developing countries need not rely on a single external template; instead, by combining their internal momentum with the peaceful use of external resources, they can find their own paths forward. This approach offers a crucial example of a development path for countries in the Global South whose economies remain relatively underdeveloped.

2.2.2. Upholding an independent and self-reliant path of development. Due to historical and current reasons, some countries in the Global South, although politically sovereign after breaking free from colonial rule, still find their economies and technological advancements constrained by external forces, hindering their comprehensive and independent development. Chinese modernization is firmly grounded in independence, emphasizing high-level self-reliance and strength in the economic and scientific fields. Through independent innovation, industrial upgrading, and institutional improvement, it reduces excessive dependence on external resources and secures strategic initiative in national development. China's experience shows that developing countries need not follow a path of dependence to achieve economic growth and can instead secure a proactive role in the global economy. This independent development path provides theoretical guidance for countries in the Global South seeking to break free from external economic constraints.

2.2.3. Adhering to a people-centered approach. In the modernization process of some countries, the neglect of people's well-being during economic growth has led to unbalanced development and social instability, undermining sustainable progress and even threatening national stability. Some developing countries, though once close to the threshold of advanced economies, have fallen into the "middle-income trap," stagnating or even regressing. Chinese modernization is firmly people-centered: development is for

the people, relies on the people, and delivers benefits to the people. This people-centered approach reflects China's deep understanding of the essence of modernization, which is not merely a tool for economic growth but a path to people's happiness and social fairness. While pursuing high-quality development and growing the "pie," China attaches equal importance to distributing the "pie" fairly, working to address employment, income distribution, education, healthcare, housing, elderly care, and childcare, and advancing the equalization of basic public services between urban and rural areas. This path has reduced regional and social disparities, enhanced people's sense of fulfillment in economic, cultural, and educational life, and upheld long-term social stability and harmony through fair institutional design—thus strengthening endogenous momentum for national development and social cohesion.

2.2.4. Modernization rooted in a nation's fine traditional culture. Chinese modernization is deeply rooted in the fine traditional culture of Chinese civilization, forming a path with distinctive characteristics. Over thousands of years, Chinese civilization has accumulated profound wisdom, including the pursuit of harmony, inclusiveness, and people-oriented governance. These cultural genes have nourished and guided China's modernization. Unlike some countries that have abandoned their traditions during modernization, Chinese modernization insists on innovation through inheritance and inheritance through innovation, integrating ideas such as benevolence, people-centeredness, and harmony into modern governance, thereby forging a distinctive model of coordinated material and cultural-ethical progress. This culture-based path has not only strengthened national confidence and identity but also provided a new paradigm for modernization for the Global South. With their diverse cultural traditions, Global South countries can draw upon and promote their own fine cultures, enriching modernization with unique values, avoiding cultural rupture and identity loss, and thereby maintaining cultural vitality and civilizational subjectivity during their modernization processes.

2.3. Common Values: Principles Guiding the Progress of Human Civilization

Today's world faces unprecedentedly complex challenges. While economic development and technological progress advance rapidly, conflicts of values, ethical dilemmas, and even crises of belief are intensifying, becoming pressing issues for many countries. Against the backdrop of plural civilizations, a key question of our era is how to identify values that can build consensus, guide the progress of human civilization, and respond to the ultimate questions concerning humanity's future.

In September 2015, at the general debate of the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, President Xi Jinping stated: "Peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy, and freedom are the shared human values and the lofty goals of the United Nations." This profound summary was based on an accurate assessment of the

global situation and trends of our times, as well as a scientific conclusion drawn from humanity's civilizational achievements over millennia. It transcends differences in ideology, social systems, and stages of development, condensing the largest possible common denominator of values recognized by people worldwide.

2.3.1. Common values of humanity are grounded in keen insight into the laws of human development. This concept integrates traditional wisdom of Chinese civilization, such as "pursuit of common good for all" and "harmony in diversity." It takes peace as the foundation, advocating dialogue and cooperation to eliminate conflict and build harmonious coexistence; development as the driver, emphasizing joint efforts to achieve social prosperity; fairness and justice as imperatives, striving to eliminate inequality and realize the ideal of "great harmony"; and democracy and freedom as principles, safeguarding people's participation in society and their right to pursue all-around development. Interwoven and mutually reinforcing, these values form a people-centered framework for balanced development.

2.3.2. The important feature of the shared values of humanity is universality. They are not centered on any single culture or ideology, but instead address the shared challenges of human survival and development, seeking the broadest common ground across diverse social contexts. In earlier public intellectual goods, Western values, promoted under the banner of 'universal values' and grounded in individualism, have already proven unable to keep pace with the times, and in their extreme manifestations have even exposed their own falsity. The common values of humanity break through the constraints of individualist systems and reject the imposition of a single ideology's values on all. They advocate values that respond to the basic needs of all peoples, while taking complete account of their histories, contexts, and circumstances. This universality has particular significance for the Global South.

2.3.3. Achieving unity of values among the state, society, and the individual. During the modernization process of some countries, individuals often face conflicts between their values and those of society and the state, such as tensions between personal pursuits and collective interests, or imbalances between social progress and individual well-being. The common values of humanity reconcile these contradictions. They articulate peace and development as values at the national level, fairness and justice as values at the societal level, and democracy and freedom as values at the individual level, with all three levels organically interconnected. For example, China's whole-process people's democracy provides political guarantees for people-centered development. At the same time, the practical achievements of Chinese modernization have advanced human development and safeguarded the most fundamental freedom: the freedom to pursue all-around personal growth.

2.3.4. Establishing a shared value foundation of "harmony without uniformity". The common values of humanity lay a foundation for the common development of countries and peoples across regions, systems, beliefs and cultures, establishing a basic value framework for universal interaction. This vision calls for promoting the understanding

and integration across different cultures through equal dialogue and mutual learning on the basis of respect for cultural diversity. Countries can retain their cultural uniqueness while drawing on the strengths of others, enriching both individual and societal spiritual life. Through cross-cultural engagement, individuals can cultivate a broader vision and greater inclusiveness, participating in social development with a more open mind. In this way, the common values of humanity underpin harmony and coexistence across nations, cultures, and ethnicities.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Characteristics and Future Vision of China's Global Public Intellectual Goods

China's global public intellectual goods are rooted in the summary of practical experience and the distillation of universal laws, enriched by the absorption and elevation of the finest achievements of human thought. They constitute a dynamic system of continuous development and innovation. Defined by three key theoretical attributes—scientific, open, and progressive—they are destined to usher in a broader and more magnificent future for human development.

3.1. Scientific: Summarizing Universal Laws Based on Practice

China's global public intellectual goods are guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, demonstrating theoretical characteristics deeply rooted in practical experience. Their scientific nature does not rest solely on abstract speculation. It also represents a systematic summary of the laws of human social development, embodying the organic unity of theoretical, historical, and practical logic.

3.1.1. A deep-rooted and rigorous theoretical foundation. China's global public intellectual goods are grounded in the country's fine traditional thought and modern social science theories; they derive from a systematic summary of objective laws rather than a patchwork of isolated experiences; and they uphold a universal scientific orientation that transcends ideological predispositions, avoiding the "single standard" and over-ideologization that characterize certain earlier intellectual goods. For example, the vision of a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity combines the basic principles of Marxism with the concept of China's fine traditional culture, while also drawing on the valuable insights of contemporary international relations theory. It reflects concern for present-day global issues while outlining a blueprint for the future world; it integrates top-level conceptual design with practical planning. In doing so, it constitutes a scientific and rigorous theoretical system.

3.1.2. A profound and penetrating historical insight that integrates the past with the present. As a country with more than 5,000 years of civilization and a major power shaped by a turbulent modern history, China has developed global public intellectual goods that are embedded in the historical process and the evolution of the world order rather than formed in isolation. They represent both a synthesis and refinement of China's historical experience and a profound response to global historical trends. Take the BRI as an example: it embodies China's inheritance of historical experience while also

responding to the demand for connectivity in the era of economic globalization. Drawing on the legacy of the ancient Silk Road, which spanned thousands of miles and endured for centuries, the BRI embodies the spirit of "peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning, and mutual benefit." In the context of profound changes in the global economic landscape, it has effectively responded to the urgent development and modernization needs of all countries, especially those in the Global South. By fostering a more inclusive and balanced global development framework, it has provided the international community with a new paradigm of common development that transcends zero-sum thinking and promotes mutual benefit and win-win outcomes. In this way, China's intellectual goods manifest insight and creativity that are deeply embedded in global evolution and aligned with the tides of history.

3.1.3. Practice-oriented: addressing present realities and guiding the future. The vitality of theory lies in its power to explain reality and guide the future. China's global public intellectual goods have consistently adhered to the principle of "coming from practice and returning to practice," focusing on resolving the primary and urgent issues facing the world today, and putting forward feasible approaches that highlight a clear orientation toward practice. For example, the Global Development Initiative (GDI) addresses the worldwide challenges of development and calls on the international community to refocus on development as the central issue. It sets out "Six Commitments": a commitment to development as a priority, a commitment to a people-centered approach, a commitment to inclusiveness and benefits for all, a commitment to innovation-driven progress, a commitment to harmony between humanity and nature, and a commitment to an action-oriented approach. It also identifies key areas of cooperation, including poverty reduction, food security, development financing, climate change and green development, industrialization, the digital economy, and connectivity. The GDI is not abstract rhetoric, but a concrete strategy grounded in careful observation of global realities and empirical evidence. It serves the common interests of people worldwide, advances sustainable development, and carries both significant practical value and forward-looking significance.

3.2. Openness: Drawing on the Finest Achievements of Human Wisdom

China's global public intellectual goods are marked by openness. They draw widely on the finest achievements of human thought from across the world, forming ideas with a truly international perspective, advancing dialogue and mutual learning, and welcoming the participation of all nations in jointly developing and improving this system. It is precisely this openness that enables China's global public intellectual goods to transcend the "confrontational" and "exclusive" tendencies of certain older intellectual goods, thereby becoming a vital force for international cooperation. As they continue to evolve, they will increasingly absorb the wisdom of all nations, pool global intelligence,

and contribute intellectual goods that are more international, inclusive, and practically relevant.

3.2.1. We must fully draw on the fruits of human thought. China's global public intellectual goods do not treat its own experience as the sole benchmark, but actively study and draw upon the finest achievements of existing intellectual goods worldwide, and build upon them further. For example, the Global Development Initiative (GDI) makes it a priority goal to implement the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and continuously aligns its efforts with this agenda; the Global Security Initiative (GSI) takes the "purposes and principles of the UN Charter" as its core guiding principle and actively participates in the UN's work on formulating a "New Agenda for Peace." In many areas—including poverty reduction, digital governance, non-traditional security, climate change, and ecological protection—China has drawn on international experience, adapted it to its national conditions, and gradually explored pathways of practice that both meet domestic realities and possess universal significance.

3.2.2. Promoting dialogue and mutual learning among civilizations. The meeting and collision of different ideas can spark new wisdom. China's global public intellectual goods stress the importance of promoting dialogue and mutual learning among nations and civilizations. The GCI is a prime embodiment of this vision. The initiative calls for respect for the diversity of world civilizations and advocates for letting cultural exchanges transcend estrangement, mutual learning transcend clashes, and coexistence transcend feelings of superiority. Building on this initiative, China has actively promoted cultural and people-to-people exchanges, creating platforms such as the Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations, the World Conference on Sinology, and the Global Civilizations Dialogue Ministerial Meeting. It has also announced plans to establish a global civilization research institute and a fund for exchanges and mutual learning, inviting all parties to share insights and explore global issues together. Such exchanges and mutual learning are of great significance in addressing differences in values. Only through in-depth dialogue among civilizations can misunderstandings and prejudice be dispelled, mutual understanding and respect be fostered, and recognition and inclusiveness at the level of values be achieved—so that each civilization "treasures its distinct heritages, appreciates other cultures, and promotes shared prosperity."

3.2.3. Joint development and improvement with all countries. The development, refinement, and enrichment of global public intellectual goods cannot be achieved without the participation of all nations. Only by incorporating a diversity of perspectives and responding to the needs of more countries can such intellectual goods attain genuine universality and vitality. With an open posture, China welcomes all countries to participate in this process. China does not regard itself as the sole provider of ideas, but instead adheres to the principle of extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits, encouraging all nations to contribute their wisdom and expertise. For instance, following the launch of the GDI, China established the "Group of Friends of the Global Development Initiative," which now comprises over 80 member countries. The group

has convened multiple high-level meetings, actively advancing policy coordination, sharing experiences, and fostering practical cooperation, while jointly enriching the initiative's content and refining its implementation framework. Members have also delivered joint statements on numerous important occasions at the United Nations, demonstrating their shared responsibility and solidarity in advancing global development and strengthening the international community's understanding and recognition of the initiative's cooperative spirit.

3.3. Progressive: Advancing with the Times and Sustaining Long-Term Vision

China's global public intellectual goods have been forged in practice and will continue to evolve as practice develops. By responding keenly to global dynamics, maintaining sustained attention to humanity's long-term future, and deepening and refining its own theoretical framework, this body of thought preserves its vitality through constant innovation and adaptation. In so doing, it provides enduring intellectual support for meeting the challenges of the future.

3.3.1. A keen response to global changes. China's global public intellectual goods are marked by a keen awareness of shifts in the international landscape, demonstrating both strong adaptability and foresight. For example, when the BRI was first proposed, it prioritized infrastructure connectivity. As global issues evolved and the needs of partner countries grew, new concepts such as the Green Silk Road and the Digital Silk Road emerged as fresh keywords of the BRI. Likewise, in response to new challenges in recent years, including geopolitical conflicts, trade bullying, digital security, and the ethics of science and technology, China has advanced timely theoretical innovations to provide new solutions. Looking ahead, China will continue, with a sense of responsibility for the world, to remain attentive to pressing global issues, ensuring that its intellectual goods always resonate in step with the times.

3.3.2. Sustained attention to the long-term future of humanity. China's global public intellectual goods focus not only on addressing immediate problems but also on safeguarding the shared long-term future of human society. In the field of climate change, for example, China has upheld its responsibility as a major country. Even when certain other powers have withdrawn from international commitments, China has remained steadfast in pursuing its own phased goals of peaking carbon emissions and achieving carbon neutrality. Fulfilling these commitments entails arduous efforts to secure the world's steepest reduction in carbon emission intensity. In areas such as artificial intelligence(AI), biosecurity, and space—fields that may exert a profound influence on the course of human development—China continues to advance forward-looking frameworks, ensuring AI serves the greater good, safeguarding the bottom line of biosecurity, and promoting the peaceful exploration and use of space. Guided by the long-term needs of humanity, China's intellectual contributions remain at the forefront of human

civilization's progress.

3.3.3. Refining and elevating the system of intellectual goods. Thought guides practice, and practice, in turn, deepens thought. China's global public intellectual goods evolve through the dynamic interplay between theory and practice, continually undergoing refinement, iteration, and elevation. For instance, over the past four decades, China's poverty alleviation efforts have lifted 800 million people out of absolute poverty, generating a valuable body of intellectual goods on poverty reduction. Building on this foundation, China has launched the rural revitalization initiative, which, through its implementation, will provide the international community with meaningful insights into the transition from initial poverty eradication to sustained development. Likewise, China has set the goal of raising its per capita GDP to the level of a moderately developed country by 2035. China has set a national goal of raising its per capita GDP to the level of a moderately developed country by 2035. If realized, this would mark the first time in human history that a nation of 1.4 billion people has collectively transitioned from a developing to a developed status. At that point, the practice of Chinese modernization will further enrich the global reservoir of experience, and the theoretical framework will reach a new level of maturity, carrying even greater relevance for countries worldwide, particularly those in the Global South.

Conclusion

In a world undergoing profound changes and fraught with uncertainty, China, drawing on its deep civilizational heritage, broad global vision, and strong practice-oriented approach, actively responds to the call of the times. It has steadily increased the supply of global public intellectual goods, gradually building a system that encompasses dimensions such as international order, national development, and shared human values.

In retrospect, global public intellectual goods, which bear on the future of the world and the well-being of humanity, have often arisen at critical junctures in history, inspiring hearts and reshaping the global landscape. Today, humanity once again stands at a crossroads. At this pivotal moment, China is not a bystander; instead, it is a steadfast contributor and actor. Building a Community with a Shared Future for Humanity, advancing Chinese modernization, and promoting the shared values of humankind are not only China's independent choices but also its profound reflections and sense of responsibility toward world development.

In prospect, the vitality of China's global public intellectual goods lies in their scientific and rational foundation, inclusive and open vision, and capacity for keeping pace with the times. They carry the potential to help resolve the pressing global challenges of today and to guide humanity toward a path that transcends confrontation and leads to shared success.

The changes of the world call for new ideas; the questions of the times await thoughtful answers. For the sake of all humanity, China will continue to move forward in partnership with other nations, unleashing the power of thought to inspire the power of practice, and together building a better world for all.

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