

# The Connotation and Contemporary Value of the Traditional Thought of Harmony

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**Abstract:** "Harmony", as its name implies, describes the conflict and integration of many elements in society, as well as the process in which the high-quality components of each element combine into the sum of new structures, new things and new life. Such a mode of thinking is called "harmony" thought, "harmony" spirit and "harmony" culture. Its main purpose is to create a new life, promote innovation, pluralism and harmony, and help each other achieve win-win results. In the 21st century, with the deepening of globalization process, the conflicts between different countries and national civilizations have become more and more intense. At this time, integrating the idea of harmony into the criteria of conflict evaluation will greatly help to build a community with a shared future for mankind. Today, the Chinese spirit of harmony still has strong vitality: to highlight the vitality of traditional culture requires harmony; Economic globalization and world multipolarity call for harmony; Harmony is needed to build a community with a shared future for mankind. We need to keep the thought of peace and harmony with the times, so that the spirit of peace and harmony can continue to carry forward in the great journey of realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and in the practice of maintaining world peace and promoting common development.

**Keywords:** Harmony Thought, Community of Shared Future of Mankind, Contemporary Value

## 1. Introduction

A culture, especially a culture with a historical origin, will inevitably form some unique characteristics during its long-term continuity. These characteristics reflect the basic spirit of this culture and can also be distinguished from other cultures. "Harmony" is the characteristic of Chinese culture, which embodies both the spirit of patriotism and the spirit of reform and innovation. The Chinese nation is a nation that advocates "peace is precious" and contains rich ideological resources of harmony. The idea of valuing "harmony" and the spirit of harmony have not been obliterated by history. Instead, they are constantly emitting their unique brilliance in the test of history, passed down from generation to generation, from beginning to end. This cultural tradition of harmony with profound historical deposits reflects cultural cooperation and exchanges aimed at learning from all the advanced achievements of human civilization and based on the true color of Chinese culture, reflects the basic value of Chinese culture, and is the embodiment of the humanistic nature of Chinese culture. Harmony between people, between people and heaven and earth, between nations and nations. Harmony between China and the world makes the Chinese nation a nation full of harmony spirit and constantly pursuing a new realm of destiny and common.

The big family relationship of interdependence and mutual help among China's 56 ethnic groups, and the grace and bearing of the Chinese culture, which embraces all rivers, are all vivid expressions of the Chinese nation's spirit of harmony. The spirit of harmony has enabled the Chinese nation to learn from others to strengthen itself, live in harmony with the world in order to achieve common progress, adhere to win-win cooperation instead of beggar thy neighbor, and use its unique culture to enrich the world while using the world's diverse cultures to enhance its own development.

## 2. The connotation of the idea of harmony

The Chinese culture of harmony has a long history and is broad and profound. According to historical research, "harmony" has appeared independently as early as in oracle bone inscriptions and bronze inscriptions. "Together" originally refers to the corresponding sound, promoting peace and harmony; "Close" originally refers to the closing of upper and lower lips, pushing performance combination, coincidence, intersection, etc. Both of them point to the interrelation of things. During the Spring and

Autumn Period, the words "together" and "close" were used together, and the concept of "harmony" appeared, forming the category of "harmony". "Guoyu · Zheng Yu" records that "the contract can be combined with the five religions to protect the people". It means that the official contract in the Yin and Shang Dynasty can integrate five different ethics (father's righteousness, mother's kindness, brother's friends, brother's relatives, and son's filial piety) and implement them in the society, so that the common people can settle down. [1] It can be seen that "harmony" here shows the unity of different components and characteristics under the diversified background. The combination of harmony and cooperation, the harmonious coexistence of different characteristics of the whole, also shows the importance of maintaining coordination and system in the contradiction. We can conclude that the essence of the thought of harmony and harmony is as follows: the so-called "harmony" refers to harmony and peace, and "harmony" refers to combination, integration and cooperation. "Harmony" refers to the coordination and mutual promotion between two or more different elements. It refers to unifying the different things into an interdependent whole on the premise of recognizing the contradictions and differences of things, and learning from each other's strong points to make up for their weak points and extracting essence in such a collision and integration process, so as to jointly achieve an optimal harmonious body, in order to promote the development and progress of things, accelerate the demise of the old things, and promote the production of new things. The combination of "harmony" and "combination" emphasizes the coordination, unity, accommodation and cohesion between different factors and things, and implies the meaning of harmonious coexistence of things as a whole and systems. [2] Its essence is the process of conflict - fusion - producing a new harmony, re conflict - re fusion - renewing the negation of the harmony. It is a process of both affirmation and negation involving sublation. The harmony body based on the theory of fusion and conflict not only overcomes the shortcomings of both sides of fusion and conflict, but also retains the strengths of both sides, so it is the most vigorous harmony body

"Harmony" is a unique cultural concept in China, which we call "harmony thought", "harmony spirit" or "harmony culture". From the perspective of contradiction analysis, the spirit of harmony is consistent with the unity of opposites of materialistic dialectics. It emphasizes the internal, coordinated and undeniable connection between opposites, which reflects the trend of mutual attraction, mutual promotion and harmony of opposites. Although Chinese culture contains numerous and complicated contents and elements, its core can be summarized as the concept of "harmony", which makes the two extreme poles, even if contradictory, merge and communicate with each other. "Harmony" is a unique theoretical achievement of the Chinese nation. It has profoundly and persistently influenced the Chinese way of thinking, helped build the Chinese nation's deep psychological consciousness, and has advanced with the times, blazed new trails, embraced hundreds of rivers and actively integrated the world's civilization, which has demonstrated its vigorous vitality. In the modern sense, the "harmony" is just like what Professor Zhang Liwen, the founder of the harmony study, said: "'Harmony' refers to the mutual conflict and integration of many elements and elements in nature, society, interpersonal relationship, mind and civilization, and the combination of high-quality elements of various elements and elements in the process of conflict and integration into the sum of new structures, new things and new lives. We call this mode of thinking 'harmony' spirit, 'harmony' thought and 'harmony' culture. Its main purpose is to create a new life, make new progress, make multiple harmony, and help each other and achieve win-win results." [3] Generally speaking, "harmony" refers to the harmonious coexistence and mutual benefit of the factors of reserving differences. "Harmony" refers to the cross connection, integration and promotion of the factors of seeking common ground while reserving differences. The "harmony" of the two combined implies the differences and connections between different things and their components, as well as the close combination among them. Therefore, harmony culture emphasizes the harmony and unity between different things, attaches importance to the harmony and unity of things and things, people and people, people and nature, people and society, nations and nations, and countries and countries, and emphasizes the coordinated development of the whole system, which is similar to the unity of opposites explained by Marxist materialist dialectics.

### 3. The necessity of carrying forward the thought of harmony

Since the 20th century, the industrial revolution in the West has caused social ills such as environmental damage and tension between workers and capitalists. In the contemporary era, especially in the 21st century, human beings are faced with conflicts between man and nature, man and society, man and man, and different civilizations. The Chinese spirit of harmony and humanism can be used as a cultural solution to this problem. The construction of a community with a shared future for mankind, as repeatedly emphasized by the General Secretary, is the best interpretation of the culture of harmony. Globalization is a process of the development of human society, but it is also a process in which

contradictions between different countries and nations are reflected and strengthened in cooperation due to differences in various aspects. Seeking a new value standard and cultural scheme to reconcile and resolve this contradiction is a problem that needs to be solved urgently in the process of globalization, and the harmonious culture, as the essence of the Chinese humanistic spirit, can provide a possibility for this.[4]With its concept of "harmonious coexistence", the Chinese spirit of harmony makes harmony, peace, and love have unique modern values in dealing with contradictions and problems between man and nature, man and society, man and man, and between countries. [5]

#### **4. The contemporary value of the thought of harmony**

In Chinese culture, there is no school of harmony that comes down in one continuous line like Confucius and Mencius, but this cannot deny the important position of harmony culture. "Harmony" itself also needs to be harmonious, which is highlighted in the contemporary value due to its ability to integrate new ideas and keep pace with the times. Today's economic globalization and world multipolarity call for peace and cooperation. Building a community with a shared future for mankind requires peace and cooperation, and demonstrates the modern vitality of traditional culture. This shows that the thought of peace and cooperation can make its own contribution to solving current international disputes and promoting world peace and development.

##### ***4.1. Demonstrating the modern vitality of traditional culture and the need for harmony***

To endow a culture with modern vitality is not to crack, separate and reassemble it, but to transform and promote it as a whole on the basis of maintaining its vitality. Harmony is the crystallization of the collective wisdom of the Chinese nation, an important part of the national character and spirit, and a spiritual bond and pillar to maintain the Chinese nation's enduring vitality through the trials of history. Harmony is not blindly following, not discriminating between right and wrong, not agreeing without principles and judgment standards, but "harmony with different". Therefore, the transformation of traditional culture into modern culture can only be a fusion and integration. Harmony is the universal law of things and the law that must be followed in the modern transformation of traditional culture. Therefore, we must treat traditional culture scientifically. In the process of modern transformation of traditional culture, we must take its essence and remove the dross. We will organically integrate traditional culture with advanced culture with contemporary Chinese characteristics, so as to establish an advanced culture with Chinese characteristics that is suitable for contemporary Chinese practice and has Chinese national characteristics and draws on the cultural advantages of all nations in the world.

##### ***4.2. Economic globalization and world multiploidization need harmony***

The modern value of a traditional culture depends on the extent to which it can integrate with the world and adapt to the level of world political, economic, cultural and social development. The political systems, economic systems, cultural customs, development paths and patterns, life rhythm and patterns of various countries in the world are undeniably diversified. All countries and nations in the world have their own unique path and mode of civilization development, with distinct heterogeneity. This is an undeniable and objective fact. Different civilizations cannot avoid this situation in the process of exchanges. Instead, they should propose appropriate solutions, such as learning from each other, being open and inclusive, and building a community with a shared future for mankind. The holistic and systematic perspective of dialectical thinking provided by the Chinese culture of harmony is of positive significance to communication and understanding in international relations, as well as peace and development.[6]The further development of globalization will inevitably lead to the further deepening of political, economic, cultural and other exchanges between various countries and nations, and the distance between time and space will also become smaller and smaller. The common progress of the world increasingly expects and needs equal exchanges and dialogue between different civilizations, rather than rigid cultural copying or grafting. It is our goal to oppose hegemonism and power politics and achieve a new culture that transcends national egoism and expansionism. Therefore, the core content of the Chinese spirit of harmony has the strength, prospect and hope to eventually play the role of a mediator in global cultural exchanges, play an active role in China's globalization process, and promote the common prosperity, progress and development of human society.

#### **4.3. Harmony is needed to build a community with a shared future for mankind**

As a new development goal proposed by China, the "community with a shared future for mankind" aims to "take into account the legitimate concerns of other countries while pursuing their own interests, and promote the common development of all countries while pursuing their own development". It is based on the concept of win-win, cooperation and inclusiveness. It is the unity of the concept of international power dependence, the concept of common international justice and interests, and the concept of joint governance. It is a world development program that highlights Chinese characteristics, Chinese style, and Chinese responsibility in the new era.

The concept of a community with a shared future for mankind exactly draws on the traditional national spirit of the Chinese nation, especially the "harmony" culture. The traditional concept of "harmony is precious" provides the inner essence of this concept. "The Chinese culture upholds harmony, and the Chinese 'harmony' culture has a long history, which contains the cosmology of the unity of heaven and man, the international outlook of harmony and all nations, the social outlook of harmony without uniformity, and the moral outlook of harmony and kindness." [7]Based on this, the community of shared future for mankind further develops the spirit of harmony, and advocates that all countries and nations in the world live together peacefully in the process of exchanges, and build a harmonious international environment of peace and love to promote social peace and stable development and achieve real "harmony without uniformity", coexistence and common destiny. [8]

The idea of harmony is the unique proposition of Chinese culture. In a sense, the Chinese ideology and culture itself is constantly progressing in the process of "harmony", which is always full of vitality and shows the great mind of inclusiveness. The cultural tradition inertia formed by the value and function of the thought of harmony has deeply penetrated into the Chinese tradition and contemporary ideology and culture, and has had a profound impact on China's contemporary and the world. Therefore, in the new era, we need to further understand harmony thought, which emphasizes the essence of the new harmony formed by the conflict and fusion of the high-quality components of different things, and its characteristics of harmony but difference and the pursuit of harmony. We need to create conditions and ways for the modern "reincarnation" of harmony thought, so that the spirit of harmony, which advocates the five principles of living in harmony, living in harmony, standing in harmony, reaching peace and love, can be used in the great journey of realizing the Chinese dream and safeguarding world peace and development. We will continue to promote the development of a community with a shared future for mankind.

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