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Chinese traditional world citizenship thoughts and its impact on the cultivation of Chinese world citizenship awareness

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To better cultivate their world citizenship awareness better in the future, the Chinese citizens today need to inherit the fine Chinese traditional world citizenship thoughts. The Chinese traditional world citizenship thoughts, with ideas such as ‘Datong shijie’ (‘a world of grand unity’), ‘Tianren heyi’ (‘unity of heaven and human’), ‘Rendao zhuyi’ (humanitarianism), and ‘Heping zhuyi’ (pacifism), contained the seeds of a concept of world citizenship. In comparison with the Western counterpart, the citizen consciousness in China’s traditional society was very weak, China’s traditional *minzhong* (people) concepts were based on its state concept of ‘Tian Xia’ (All-under-Heaven), and a sense of citizenship in the late Qing was built by using the cultural resources of both Confucianism and Western philosophy. For the transcendence of Chinese citizenship toward world citizenship, the first thing to do is to foster a civil spirit in China, the second, to promote the growth of China’s civil society, the third, to encourage Chinese citizens to actively take part in global governance and bear international responsibilities, and the fourth, to pay more attention to the role of Chinese universities, which serve as the fundamental basis, support, channel, and venue for fostering world citizenship awareness.

Keywords: Chinese citizen; world citizen; citizen awareness; Chinese universities

In his *Xiaweiyi Youji* (*Hawaii Travel Diary*) in late 1899, Liang Qichao described himself thus:

My clan has lived in an obscure valley for hundreds of years. My uncles, brothers and male cousins live a peaceful, undisturbed life of tilling and reading, with little concern for the world. . . I don’t know when it started exactly, but the great events in the world in the 19th century have influenced me and developed in me the desire to be not merely a Chinese national, but also a cosmopolitan citizen. (Liang 1989, 185)

At a time when he carried the mission to save the Chinese nation and the country, Liang still had the breadth of mind to embrace the whole world and position himself as a ‘world citizen’. For the Chinese national today, Liang was an early exemplary figure in extending citizenship from the national level to the global level.

The Beijing 2008 Olympic Games and World Expo 2010 Shanghai have greatly expanded Chinese citizens’ horizons, which correspondingly let Chinese citizens become familiar with the idea of a world citizen. For the Chinese citizen, the discussion of the world citizen is gaining momentum and is now here to stay. Through increased discussion of world citizenship, the Chinese citizen will be ready to assume conscious responsibilities after due deliberation and be ready to take on the corresponding rights.

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This article discusses how to foster the world citizenship awareness in Chinese citizens and how to become a world citizen in this age of globalization. First, it answers the question of ‘what is a world citizen?’ and ‘why a world citizen is needed?’ Second, it presents a review of the budding concept of ‘world citizenship’ in traditional Chinese thought. Third, it compares the traditional citizenship and world citizenship thoughts between the Chinese and Western concepts. Fourth, it analyzes how Chinese citizens can foster their civil spirit and world citizenship awareness. Finally, it concludes with four arguments on the transcendence from national citizenship toward world citizenship.

1. What is a world citizen and why are they needed?

The notion of *world citizen* can trace its history back to ancient Greece. The origin of *world citizen* in Greek is *kosmopolitēs* which is composed of *kosmos* ‘world’ and *politēs* ‘citizen’ (Heater 2002, 26; Kleingeld and Brown 2002). An early incarnation of the concept of *world citizen* can be found in Diogenes of Sinope (412–323 BCE), the founder of the Cynic movement in ancient Greece. When he was asked where he came from, he reportedly answered: ‘I am a citizen of the world.’ (Laertius 1925). With this answer, Diogenes seems to have meant that he did not recognize any special ties to a particular city or state. Denying local affiliations and obligations (more than affirming obligations to the larger whole of humanity), Diogenes endorses a negative conception of the world citizen. The Stoics developed a positive conception of world citizenship that differed significantly from the Cynic view. For the Stoics, world citizenship involved the affirmation of moral obligations toward humans anywhere in the world because they share in a common rationality, regardless of differing political, religious, and other particular affiliations. The Stoic cosmopolitan or world citizen held the view that all humans live together ‘as it were in one state’ (Antoninus 1944).

Immanuel Kant, one of the greatest philosophers during the Enlightenment, developed cosmopolitan (world citizen) thoughts which stand in the tradition of the Stoics. The Stoics regarded moral world citizenship as compatible with political membership in, and special obligations toward, a particular city or state. Kant too defends a cosmopolitan moral theory, but he takes cosmopolitanism in many other directions as well. In addition to the moral aspects of cosmopolitanism as an attitude in acting, he also develops the political, economic, and cultural dimensions of world citizenship and elaborates the necessary global institutional arrangement for realizing a genuine ‘cosmopolitan condition’ (Kleingeld 2012, 3).

David Held is a political theorist who has been prominent in the development of cosmopolitanism, and of democratic cosmopolitanism in particular. In Held’s view, democratic cosmopolitanism is the basis for articulating and entrenching the equal liberty of all human beings, wherever they were born or brought up. It is the basis of underwriting the liberty of others, not of obliterating it. It is about protecting and nurturing the autonomy of each other and every person, so that they can determine the framework of their own lives (Guibernau 2001, 437). Ulrich Beck, a German sociologist, specifies the distinction between the concept of ‘cosmopolitanism’ and ‘cosmopolitization’: we do not live in an age of ‘cosmopolitanism’ but in an age of ‘cosmopolitization’ – the ‘global other’ is in our midst. Thus, the term ‘cosmopolitan’ has become indispensable for describing the epistemological challenge in which ‘humanity’ and ‘world’ are not merely thinkable but unavoidable social, political and moral categories for the human condition (Beck 2006).

In the authors' opinion, the term *world citizen* refers to a person who transcend 'narrow national citizenship' based on traditional geopolitical divisions and who grapples with and offers solutions to the burning global issues of the day for the benefit of all mankind in our time. So what are the characteristics of world citizen in the twenty-first century? There are eight citizen characteristics that constitute what expert researchers believe are required to address urgent and global issues. The eight characteristics are: (1) the ability to look at and approach problems as a member of a global society, (2) the ability to work with others in a cooperative way and to take responsibility for one's roles/duties within society, (3) the ability to understand, accept, appreciate, and tolerate cultural differences, (4) the capacity to think in a critical and systemic way, (5) the willingness to resolve conflict in a non-violent manner, (6) the willingness to change one's lifestyle and consumption habits to protect the environment, (7) the ability to be sensitive towards and to defend human rights (ex., rights of women, ethnic minorities, etc.), and (8) the willingness and ability to participate in politics at local, national, and international levels (Kubow, Grossman, and Ninomiya 1998, 116).

In an increasingly interdependent world, the Chinese citizen and other citizens of the world need a 'moral compass' to enable them to address the critical global issues. That 'moral compass' must be based on global civics (world citizenship), a system of conscious responsibilities that we are ready to assume after due deliberation and corresponding rights that we are ready to claim (Altinay 2011, 5). Why do Chinese citizens need the idea of a world citizen? And why should Chinese citizens become world citizens? First of all, only when Chinese citizens have the idea of world citizenship can they have the awareness of global responsibility to address global challenges. Today's world faces a wide variety of serious global challenges such as environmental pollution, drug trafficking, arms trafficking, and infectious diseases, the meaningful solutions of which likely cannot be achieved without the participation of China. This state of circumstances calls for the participation of Chinese citizens as responsible world citizens. Second, only when Chinese citizens qualify themselves with the idea of world citizen can they transcend their narrow patriotism. In fact, as early as one century ago, some Chinese figures of lofty vision such as Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, and Sun Yat-sen already had transcended the one-sidedness and extremism of narrow nationalism and narrow patriotism in pursuit of the unity of humankind. Today, there is an even greater need for Chinese citizens to blend patriotism into idealism and internationalism. A third reason: only when Chinese citizens qualify themselves with the idea of world citizenship can they have an open-minded attitude to other cultures and ways of life. The sources of world citizenship include the cosmopolitan tradition of ancient Greece, the African philosophy of Ubuntu, the Hindu conceptualization of Vasudheva Kutumbakam, the Chinese classic aspiration for a world of grand union, and so on. These cultures and civilizations coexist harmoniously in the concept of world citizenship. Chinese citizens, if possessing the aforementioned characteristics of a world citizen, will not only win the respect of people in other parts of the world but also greatly improve China's international image and soft power.

2. The Chinese traditional world citizenship thoughts

It is generally understood that the cosmopolitan tradition of ancient Greece and Immanuel Kant's conceptualization of 'world citizen' constitute the cornerstones of the contemporary concept of 'world citizen'. However, the African concept of Ubuntu, the Hindu concept of Vasudheva Kutumbakam, and the Chinese traditional world citizenship thought about a 'world of grand unity' also shed light on world citizenship. The Chinese

traditional world citizenship thought system, with such ideas as ‘Datong shijie’ (‘a world of grand unity’), ‘Tianren heyi’ (‘unity of heaven and human’), ‘Rendao zhuyi’ (‘humanitarianism’) and ‘Heping zhuyi’ (‘pacifism’), contains the origins of the ‘world citizen’ concept. The Chinese citizens today should inherit these classical Chinese thinking, which will help Chinese citizens to cultivate their world citizenship awareness better in the future.

2.1. A world of grand unity

As early as more than 2000 years ago, Chinese philosophers painted a beautiful world of great unity. *Lun yu, The Analects of Confucius*, contains the famous saying that ‘all within the four seas are brothers.’ (*Lun yu* ‘Yan Yuan’ Book Twelve). *Li ji* (Book of Rites) has a vivid and comprehensive description of an ideal world:

When the Grand course was pursued, a public and common spirit ruled all under the sky; they chose men of talents, virtue, and ability; their words were sincere, and what they cultivated was harmony. Thus men did not love their only their own parents, nor treat as children only their own sons. A competent provision was secured for the aged till their death, employment for the able-bodied, and the means of growing up for the young. They showed kindness and compassion to widows, orphans, childless men, and those who were disabled by disease, so that they were all sufficiently supported. Males had their proper work, and females had their homes. They accumulated articles of value, disliking that they should be thrown away upon the ground, but not wishing to keep them for their own gratification. They labored with their strength, disliking that it should not be exerted, but not exerting it only with a view to their own advantage. In this way selfish schemings were repressed and found no development. Robbers, filchers, and rebellious traitors did not show themselves, and hence the outer doors remained open, and were not shut. This was what we call the Grand Unity. (*Li ji*, ‘Li Yun’)

The territory referred as ‘under the sky’ was not definitely demarcated by Chinese philosophers; it seems to be a space of infinite openness that covers both China and its surroundings. The world of grand unity envisaged by the Book of Rites was a commonwealth based on public ownership. It expressed the longing for and pursuit of a future ideal world. In his book, *Datong shu (Grand Unity)*, Kang Youwei drew the blueprint of what he saw as a world of ‘grand unity’: ‘The course of grand unity is extremely equitable, extremely fair and extremely benevolent; it represents the highest level of governance’ (Kang 2000, 330). Tan Sitong, a well-known Chinese politician and thinker in the late Qing Dynasty, also advocated for ‘the rule of grand unity’. He said, ‘The rule on the earth should remove the difference of states toward of world like the one painted in the *Book of Rites*’ (Tan 2000, 334). In modern times, the great revolutionist Sun Yat-sen lifted the ancient Chinese idea of ‘grand unity’ to a new level by explicitly putting forward the concept of ‘Tianxia weigong’ (‘the whole world as one community’) (Wu 1991).

‘A world of grand unity’ represents the ancient Chinese philosophers’ great longing for a bright future society. This great longing has been encouraging Chinese citizens to construct a better society of equality and freedom at home and abroad. During this process, the world citizenship awareness of Chinese citizens will be awakened and strengthened.

2.2. Unity of heaven and human

The unity of heaven and human is a very important proposition in Chinese traditional thought. It means the communicability, homogeneity and unity of human, the law of heaven, and the law of the human world (Zhang 1991, 801). According to Ji (1993, 15), a well-known Chinese Indologist and linguist, the unity of human and heaven refers to the

'oneness of human and nature.' This idea is reflected in the *Zhou yi (Book of Changes)* ('Qian, Wenyan'), one of the oldest of the Chinese classic texts, which says:

The great human is the one who is in harmony, in his attributes, with heaven and earth; in his brightness, with the sun and moon; in his orderly procedure, with the four seasons; and in his relation to what is fortunate and what is calamitous, in harmony with the spirit-like operations of Providence. He may precede Heaven, and Heaven will not act in opposition to him; he may follow Heaven, but will act only as Heaven at the time would do. (*Zhou yi*, 'Qian, Wenyan')

The unity of heaven and human represents the highest or ideal stage of human life. By the Northern Song Dynasty, Zhang Zai explicitly advanced the proposition of 'unity of heaven and human'. He said:

Heaven is my father and Earth is my mother, and even such a small creature as I finds an intimate place in their midst. Therefore that which fills the universe I regard as my body and that which directs the universe I consider as my nature. All people are my brothers and sisters, and all things are my companions. (Zhang 1978, 62)

He believed that there is inherent harmony, equilibrium, and unity between human and human and between human and all things. This aphorism, however, strikes a sharp contrast to today's world of globalization and industrialization that is being troubled by many environmental problems, including ecological imbalance, acid precipitation, scarcity of fresh water resources, atmospheric pollution, ozone depletion and extinction of species, to name but a few. 'When it comes to handling the relationship between human and nature, the West emphasizes the conquest of nature by human, while the East stresses the inherent unity of human and nature' (Ji 1993, 15).

Therefore, traditional Chinese thought on 'unity of heaven and human' has great significance for rebuilding the relationship of harmony and coexistence between human and nature and may well serve as a guiding principle to be observed by world citizens.

2.3. Humanitarianism

If humanitarianism generally is understood as embracing all ideas that advocate for human and human's value, dignity, freedom, and happiness, then traditional Chinese thought also has the budding of humanitarianism.

First of all, humanitarianism in ancient China was reflected in the thought of 'loving kindness to all'. Confucius advocated benevolence and defined it as 'to love all men' (*Lun yu* 'Xue Er' Book One). The ethic of reciprocity, or the Golden Rule, which he advocated and which was best summarized by the admonition that 'What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others' (*Lun yu*, 'Wei linggong' Book Fifteen; *Lun yu*, 'Yan yuan' Book Twelve), has been accepted by posterity as a universal value. It presumes that all people have sympathy and are capable of standing in the shoes of others (Peng and Huang 2005, 64).

Second, humanitarianism in ancient China was also reflected as humanitarian assistance given to other states stricken by disasters. According to the record of the *Zuo zhuan (Chronicle of Zuo)*, in 647 BCE, the State of Jin suffered a famine and turned to the State of Qin for assistance, but the ministers of Qin differed in opinion on the matter. The Prime Minister Baili Xi showed his support for assistance, arguing that 'every country is subject to various disasters and it is in accordance with the Dao to give relief to disaster-stricken neighboring states. To act according to the Dao is auspicious' (Zuo 1997, 284). Eventually, the State of Qin offered grains to the State of Jin.

Third, humanitarianism in ancient China was also shown as the concern for people's livelihood, a spirit that was impressively reflected in Du Fu, a prominent Chinese poet of

the Tang Dynasty. His poem 'Song of My Thatched Roof Torn by Autumn Winds' ends with:

Where can I find a mansion of a million rooms to shelter every poor scholar, with a smiling face; in wind and rain unmoved, secure as a mountain? Oh when before my eyes there sprang up such a house, though my hut alone were smashed and I froze to death, I should be content. (Jin and Chen 1981, 119)

Therefore, humanitarianism in ancient China does not only refer to an ethic of kindness, benevolence, and sympathy extended universally and impartially to all human beings, but also includes the spirit of putting the well-being of others above one's own self. So, China's ancient humanitarianism represents an even higher form of humanitarianism. For Chinese citizen nowadays, humanitarianism in ancient China has positive influences on cultivating them to be world citizens with humanitarianism feeling.

2.4. *Pacifism*

Pacifism in ancient China emphasized the relationship of harmony and unity among heaven, earth, human, and harmonious coexistence of heaven and human, human and human, and human and animals. The *Shang shu (Book of History)* has the expression of 'uniting and harmonizing the myriad states' (*Shang shu* 'Yao dian'). The *Zhou yi (Book of Changes)* also has the aphorism that 'the sages influence the mind of men, and the result is harmony and peace all under the sky' (*Zhou yi* 'Xian, Tuan'). These can be seen as the earliest expressions of pacifism in China. Confucianism values 'order' and stresses 'harmony,' taking culture and ethics as the foundation of peace of the human world. Moism upholds '*jian ai*' ('universal love'), '*fei gong*' ('condemnation of offensive war'), and *shang tong* ('identification with the superior'). Daoism teaches 'learning from nature,' 'non-contention,' and 'the weak overcoming the strong'. Mencius was particularly resolute in his opposition to hegemony and unjust wars. He described those ministers who were keen to 'form alliances with other states' and 'start wars' as 'robbers of the people,' holding that 'death is not enough for those leading on the land to devour human flesh' (*The Mencius*, 'Lilou,' part 1.).

Ancient Chinese pacifists emphasized benevolence as the moral norm and code of conduct. Mencius advocated kingly rule and opposed 'hegemonic rule,' saying that 'He who, using force, makes a pretence to benevolence is the leader of the princes. When one by force subdues men, they do not submit to him in heart. When one subdues men by virtue, in their hearts' core they are pleased, and sincerely submit' (*The Mencius*, 'Gongsun chou,' Part 1). Modern Chinese philosopher Feng (2000, 90) commented on this, saying:

the regulations promulgated by the ideal King are all on behalf of the people, with the result that the people delight in and obey him; whereas the leader of the princes only gains the allegiance of the people through military force.

Ancient Chinese pacifist opposed 'unjust wars' and emphasized 'subduing men by virtue,' which shows the respect and tolerance of Chinese ancients for each other. This ancient pacifist thought remains instrumental to foster Chinese citizens' world citizenship awareness with pacifism today.

3. Comparisons between Chinese and the Western concepts on traditional world citizenship thoughts

From the aforementioned analysis of the budding of consciousness of world citizenship in traditional Chinese thoughts, we can see that some traditional Chinese world citizenship

thoughts are connected to the Western concepts and the traditional world citizenship thoughts all over the world. For example, the Chinese idea of ‘Datong shijie’ is very similar with the Western idea of ‘cosmopolitanism’; the Chinese idea of ‘Rendao zhuyi’ is very similar with the Western idea of ‘humanitarianism.’

In view of the different histories and philosophies in the West and China, there are also some differences between Chinese and the Western concepts on traditional citizenship and world citizenship thoughts as follow:

Firstly, in comparison with the long history of the citizenship in Western society, the citizen consciousness in China’s traditional society was very weak, but the consciousness of state and compliance was very strong. The concept of citizenship developed in the West; it is probably not applicable historically to other societies. The concept of ‘citizen’ grew out of profound western intellectual history. Tracing back to the time of ancient Greek, citizens were integrated into polis. As a unique organizational form, polis per se was citizen’s autonomous community in ancient Greek. In Aristotle’s opinion, ‘one who is entitled to share in deliberative or judicial office is thereby a citizen of that city, and a city, in its simplest terms, is a body of such people adequate in number for achieving a self-sufficient existence’ (Aristotle 1995, 87).

In terms of a *prehistory* of citizenship in China, it is worth noting that at no time did China possess an equivalent of the polis which formed the starting point for most Western thinking about citizenship. In China’s traditional society before the late Qing dynasty, under the shadow of omnipresent imperial power whose primary concern was to maintain social order rather than safeguarding individual freedom and social autonomy, it was impossible for such values as human rights, equality, rule of law, limited government, separation of powers, social autonomy, separation of public sphere and private sphere, and even a relatively sound market to grow (Yang 2007, 26). Some doctrines in the traditional Chinese thoughts such as ‘san gang wu chang’ (‘three cardinal guides and five constant virtues’) and ‘san cong si de’ (‘three obediences and four virtues’) have the negative effect of suppressing and fettering Chinese people’s citizen consciousness. The ‘three cardinal guides and five constant virtues’ was a set of basic moral principles and norms in feudal China. The three cardinal guides are the ruler guides the subject, the father guides the son, and the husband guides the wife. The five constant virtues are benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and fidelity (Zhang 1991, 883). The ‘three obediences and four virtues’ is a set of moral codes set down by Confucianism for women. The three obediences are obeying father before marriage, obeying husband when married, and obeying sons in widowhood. The four virtues are morality, proper speech, modest manner, and diligent work (Zhang 1991, 883).

Second, different from the western concept of citizen, a concept grew out of nation-state tradition, China’s traditional *minzhong* (people) concepts were based on its state concept of ‘Tian Xia’ (All-under-Heaven). Distinct perception about state leads to distinction in concepts of citizen. In 1648, the Peace Treaty of Westphalia established the sovereignty concept of nation-state. Membership in a nation-state with its legal, social, and moral rights and obligations; participation in public life in one way or another; and sharing in the destiny of the political community – even to the point of self-sacrifice – make up the modern concept of citizenship (Walzer 1989, 211–219). While in China, not until the First Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895 did Chinese people begin to accept the concept of nation-state. Then similar concepts such as *guomin* (national people) and *shimin* (urban or ‘city’ persons) were used in the late Qing. In the ancient time, Chinese people took their political community as ‘Tian Xia’ instead of nation-state. In its most basic sense, ‘Tianxia’ is a geographical term. Literally speaking, *tian* is the heavens, the sky, and what is on top, while *xia* is an indexical term meaning below, lower, and inferior. ‘Tianxia’ thus refers to

everything below the sky, and thus is commonly used in classical texts to refer to ‘the earth’ and ‘the (Chinese) world’ (Callahan 2008, 751). But Zhao Tingyang, a prominent Chinese philosopher, argues that ‘Tianxia’ contains three interwoven meanings. That is to say, in addition to this material and geographical sense, ‘Tianxia’ also contains two other important meanings that are not just descriptive, but normative: (1) Tianxia as ‘all the people,’ and (2) ‘Tianxia’ as the ‘world institution’ (T. Zhao 2005, 41, 123–124). Chinese traditional political thought looks to the levels of ‘Tianxia, state, and family.’ While the Western world prioritizes the individual and works in terms of the nation-state, the ‘Tianxia’ system starts at the largest level, ‘Tianxia,’ and orders political and social life in a top-down manner (T. Zhao 2005, 17). Each of these three meanings of ‘Tianxia’ – geographical, psychological, and institutional – is necessary and interdependent in Chinese traditional concept of ‘Tian Xia.’

Under the influence of ‘Tian Xia,’ ancient Chinese people viewed this world from a Sinocentrism perspective. Matteo Ricci, one of the founding figures of the Jesuit China Mission which existed in the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries, believed that

Because of their ignorance of the size of the earth and the exaggerated opinion they have of themselves, the Chinese are of the opinion that only China among the nations is deserving of admiration. Relative to grandeur of empire, of public administration and of reputation for learning, they look upon all other people not only as barbarous but as unreasoning animals. To them there is no other place on earth that can boast of a king, of a dynasty, or of culture. (Ricci 1953, 167)

If Chinese citizens want to be qualified world citizens, it is necessary to learn to convert their ‘Tian Xia’ concept into modern state concept, which means taking China as an ordinary nation-state member of international structure instead of a central empire in culture sphere.

Third, in comparison with the endogenous concept of citizenship and world citizenship in Western civilization, most Chinese intellectuals in the late Qing tried to build a sense of citizenship by using the cultural resources of both Confucianism and Western philosophy. Chinese elites were concerned with ‘the people’ long before the advent of citizenship. The long *minben* (people as the basis) tradition of Confucian thought, like the moral bases of rule in other civilizations, did imply mutual obligation. The *minben* tradition might be considered the prehistory of the idea of popular sovereignty, but thinking precisely and explicitly in terms of citizenship did not emerge until the late nineteenth century under Western influence. It is clear that all these figures (Liang Qichao, Tan Sitong, Kang Youwei, Zhangbinglin, and Fu Sinian) used the cultural resources of both Confucianism and Western philosophy. In their search for solutions to China’s problems, they began to develop and elaborate on ideas of citizenship (Zarrow 1997, 16).

It is worth noting that most Chinese intellectuals in late Qing treated ‘preserving the nation’ as the highest good of Chinese citizenship. As the Qing state faltered in the early 1900s under foreign and domestic pressures and as the very survival of the Chinese people seemed threatened, Liang Qichao worked to create an active citizenry. Unlike Aristotle, Liang did not treat the play of political activity as the highest good in itself. By this time, Liang clearly felt that the highest good lay in the survival and strengthening of the nation (Zarrow 1997, 17).

Although most Chinese intellectuals in late Qing tried to build a sense of citizenship tied explicitly to the nation, some Chinese intellectuals still believed that perhaps world citizenship would come true someday. For example, although Liu Shipai attempted to create a nonpolitical public space, he was certainly thinking of world citizenship insofar as citizenship could be imagined without state – participatory, egalitarian, and with a high degree of liberty and autonomy for individuals and voluntary groups.

4. Fostering civil spirit and world citizenship in China

After reviewing the budding concept of ‘world citizenship’ in traditional Chinese thought in the part II, the authors conclude that the Chinese traditional world citizenship thoughts, with ideas such as ‘Datong shijie’ (‘a world of grand unity’), ‘Tianren heyi’ (‘unity of heaven and human’), ‘Rendao zhuyi’ (humanitarianism) and ‘Heping zhuyi’ (pacifism), contained the seeds of a concept of world citizenship. These Chinese traditional world citizenship thoughts have brought about their positive impact on the cultivation of Chinese world citizenship awareness. The functions of the aforementioned Chinese traditional world citizenship thoughts are represented as valuable guidance to modern Chinese world citizenship awareness.

When comparing with the Western counterpart, it should be noted, however, that the citizen consciousness and citizen spirit in China’s traditional society was very weak. In the part III of this article, the authors analyze two reasons as follow: first, the concept of ‘citizen’ was introduced in China by Chinese intellectuals until the late Qing dynasty (1890s); however, the concept of ‘citizen’ can be traced back to the time of ancient Greek in the Western counterpart. Second, the ‘citizen’ awareness in China’s traditional society is severely oppressed by the consciousness of state before the late Qing dynasty, which causes Chinese people a highly strong political identification, political support, and political tolerance.

In the light of the aforementioned weak citizen spirit in China’s traditional society, the authors argue that the main task of the cultivation of Chinese world citizenship is as follow: How can Chinese citizens foster their civil spirit and world citizenship awareness?

For the transcendence of Chinese citizenship toward world citizenship, the first thing to do is to foster civil spirit in China, the second, to promote the growth of China’s civil society, the third, to encourage Chinese citizens to actively take part in global governance and bear international responsibilities, and the fourth, to pay more attention to the role of Chinese universities, which serve as the fundamental basis, support, channel, and venue, respectively, of fostering of world citizenship awareness.

4.1. *Civil spirit is the foundation of fostering world citizenship awareness in China*

Citizens are the foundation of civil society which, in turn, is driven by civil spirit. In the view of American scholar Shils (1997, 322), ‘a civil society is a society of civility (civil spirit) in the conduct of members of the society toward each other.’ Seen from this perspective, civil spirit is the fundamental basis as well as the driving force of the development of civil society and expanding world citizenship.

Civil spirit has three layers of meaning. The lowest layer is the rule-of-law spirit. The overwhelming majority of Chinese citizens are supposed to have this layer of civil spirit. If China is to become a well-run rule-of-law country, it must foster a spirit of the rule-of-law in its citizens. Chinese citizens need to consciously overcome the rule-of-man mentality and mindset that have prevailed in the Chinese society for thousands of years and develop constitutional and legal awareness. In addition to heart-felt willingness to abide by the law, Chinese citizens should have the courage to uphold the dignity of the law by, for examples, striving for their lawful rights, struggling against any form of injustice against all odds; speaking the truth when acting as the witness of a crime without fear of revenge; and blowing the whistle on illegal acts regardless of consequences.

The second and deeper layer of civil spirit is the spirit of fairness. Just as Dani Rodrik points out, ‘fairness matters . . . people do accept a negative consequence if they view the process that brought it about as being fair. The legitimacy of global rules is a very

significant part of their strength' (Altinay 2011, 45). In the same vein, fostering the spirit of fairness in Chinese citizens and establishing a fair and equitable legal system is of crucial importance for the rapidly transforming Chinese society.

The third and highest layer of civil spirit is the public spirit. According to Shils (1991), civil society, in addition to being a set of organizations and institutions, is also 'a widespread pattern of refined or civil manners'. Here, the 'refined or civil manners' can be understood as 'virtue, or public spirit, or civility,' which 'is solicitous of the wellbeing of the whole, or the greater interest'. Only when Chinese citizens share the public spirit will a pluralistic and harmonious social life of tolerance, respect, good faith, friendliness, fairness, justice, and order become possible in China. Only when Chinese citizens shoulder social responsibility will the respect of the world can be earned. This kind of respect will not come until the Chinese society is capable of generating individuals like Mother Teresa or Wangari Muta Maathai, the Kenyan woman who was awarded the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize (H. Zhao 2005). To improve Chinese citizens' public awareness, efforts should be made to strengthen public awareness education, encourage them to take part in social affairs, expand the sphere of public governance, foster the growth of civil society, and elevate the level of public reason.

4.2. *The growth of civil society of China promotes world citizenship awareness in China*

In the Chinese history, civil society has disappeared in political state, and the emergence of a relatively independent civil society is a product of modern China (Yu 2005, 3). Although there were self-governing professional organizations in the areas of commerce and transportation, they were not modern civil organizations, but traditional secret societies prior to the twentieth century. Since the reform and opening up in 1978, with the development of the market economy, the popularization of democratic politics, the introduction of rule of law, and release of social space, China's civil society has gradually emerged and taken shape, which is an inevitable result of social development as well as an important manifestation of social progress. At present, registered, lawful NGOs in China fall under three categories: social organizations, foundations, and people-run non-enterprise units. According to the statistics of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of China, by the end of 2014, China had a total of 600,044 NGOs, including 307,000 social organizations, 289,000 people-run non-enterprise units, and 4044 foundations (Ministry of Civil Affairs of China) (Table 1).

China's civil society has enjoyed an unprecedented space of growth, but it remains weak and disorganized nowadays. In comparison with those in Western society, China's civil society has the following features: first, China's civil society is a typical government-led one, and the civil organizations in China are more dependent on and less independent from government departments than Western civil organizations. Second, China's civil organizations are still immature, and their typical features of being self-governing, voluntary, and non-governmental are not very obvious (Yu 2002, 216–222).

Only through actively fostering the growth of civil society and encouraging it to take part in global affairs and bear the corresponding responsibilities can the Chinese people's interest be fully expressed and their rights be duly protected, and can China become an important actor in global governance. Global citizenship requires transcending national citizenship, not abandoning it. To this end, the development of civil society is first necessary for world citizenship.

Chinese academia has reached a preliminary consensus on actively promoting the growth of China's civil society. Shang and Yuan (2009) discussed three paths of growth

Table 1. Number of NGOs in China from 1988 to 2014.

Category	Year														
	1988	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total (Scale: Thousands)	4	211	245	267	289	320	354	387	414	431	445	462	492	547	600
Social organizations (Scale: Thousands)	4	129	133	142	153	171	192	212	230	239	245	255	268	289	307
People-run non-enterprise units (Scale: Thousands)	—	82	111	124	135	148	161	174	182	190	198	204	221	255	289
Foundations (Scale: Units)	—	—	—	954	892	975	1144	1340	1597	1843	2200	2614	2961	3549	4044

Source: Ministry of Civil Affairs of China. *Shehui fawu tongji jibao, shehui fawu fazhan tongji gongbao* [Quarterly Statistics of Social Service and Statistical Communiqué of Social Service Development]. Accessed January 27, 2015. <http://cws.mca.gov.cn/>

of China's civil society. The first is the path of political community, which is both a living scene where citizens study public life and a school/classroom where they develop citizenship knowledge and competence. Civil rights and the mechanism of civil society will constantly grow in this space and life. The second is the path of social capital incubation. The accumulation and expansion of social capital will become an important mechanism that connects and unifies civil society and democracy because civil society grows with social capital. The third is the path of low politics. Low politics refers to politics as it is shown in social and public life. Low politics, which integrates all elements of civil rights at the level of political community, is suitable for the formulation and running of China's civil society. Given China's unique national conditions, promoting the growth of civil society by way of developing low politics is a sound choice. Li (2012), a professor at Peking University, holds the following opinions: (1) the emergence and growth of China's civil society is the inevitable trend of market economy-based social development; (2) humanistic enlightenment and the emancipation of human nature are the spiritual pillars of civil society growth; (3) volunteerism has great importance to civil society; and (4) public charity is the basic link of interpersonal relationship in civil society.

4.3. Actively taking part in global governance and sharing international responsibilities are important channels for China to foster world citizenship awareness

Actively participating in global governance and bearing international responsibilities is an important channel for Chinese citizens to foster world citizenship awareness. The world today faces a great number of global challenges, such as global terrorism, nuclear proliferation, piracy on the high seas, climate warming, prevalence of infectious diseases, drug trafficking, and transnational crime. These problems cannot be effectively solved by any single country alone. Chinese citizens live in a 'global village.' China has to be actively involved in addressing global issues and bearing international responsibilities.

Koch-Weser (2006), Vice Chairman of the Deutsche Bank Group, once put forward seven suggestions on China's participation in global governance: (1) China should play a greater leadership role in the international organizations it has joined, such as the Bretton Woods System, regional development banks, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) '10 + 1/10 + 3,' Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM); (2) China should adhere to the three principles of global governance, i.e., interdependence of the world, multi-lateralization of bilateral economic disputes, and joining the world's strongest economies while maintaining leadership position in emerging markets; (3) China should join the G7 or G8; (4) China should further grow its influence in G20 and strengthen its leadership role in emerging markets; (5) China should be actively involved in the discussion on currency and exchange rate issues with the USA, Japan, and Europe; (6) China should support the international monitoring system of IMF; and (7) China should strengthen its leadership role in Asia-Europe Meeting.

While actively taking part in global governance, China has also taken the initiative to bear a certain amount of international responsibilities. As stated in the White Paper on *China's Peaceful Development* issued by the Chinese government in 2011,

As a responsible member of the international community, China abides by international law and the generally recognized principles governing international relations, and eagerly fulfills its international responsibility. China has actively participated in reforming international systems, formulating international rules and addressing global issues. It supports the

development of other developing countries, and works to safeguard world peace and stability. As countries vary in national conditions and are in different stages of development, they should match responsibility with rights in accordance with their national strength. They should play a constructive role by fulfilling their due international responsibility in accordance with their own capability and on the basis of aligning their own interests with the common interests of mankind. For its part, China will assume more international responsibility as its comprehensive strength increases. (Information Office of the State Council of China September 6, 2011)

As China commits itself to living up to its international responsibility, Chinese citizens have also been performing their responsibility as world citizens. As of the end of 2009, there had been a total of 21,000 Chinese medical personnel and nearly 10,000 Chinese teachers actively engaging themselves in humanistic medical care and educational training in foreign countries around the world (Information Office of the State Council of China September 6, 2011). After the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami in 2004, Chinese NGOs and citizens were active in making donations for people in the affected areas and, as of 1 March 2005, the total amount of donations had reached RMB576 million (Xinhuanet March 29, 2005). After the powerful earthquake and tsunami hit Japan in March 2011, Chinese citizens also showed their support. For example, Sany Heavy Industry, a private Chinese company, donated a Truck-Mounted Concrete Pump that was urgently needed by the quake relief efforts and provided full technical support. The Chinese influential newspapers *Global Times* published a proposal jointly signed by 100 Chinese scholars to give assistance to Japan, which reads: 'We advocate here as ordinary citizens that we take immediate and effective actions in our own ways and through various channels of donation and volunteerism to express our support and concern for the Japanese people affected by the disaster!' (*Global Times* March 16, 2011, 14). The assistance given by the Chinese society for countries affected by the earthquake and tsunami showed an internationalist and humanistic spirit and marked a new height of the world citizenship awareness of Chinese citizens. Just as a Chinese newspaper observed:

The awakening of humanity in the face of natural disasters like the earthquake and tsunami brings us to the realization of humankind as one community . . . Humankind is fragile before natural catastrophes, but has never been defeated. By acting together against natural disasters, peoples around the world have become a civil community of one heart and one mind, boosting the awareness of world citizenship. (Fu 2011, 2)

4.4. *Paying more attention to the role of Chinese universities in fostering 'world citizens'*

Universities are indispensable places for fostering 'world citizens' and college students have a natural internationalist outlook. It merits mentioning that universities were endowed with a world spirit and transnational character at their very inception in medieval Europe: a lingua franca (Latin) and shared region (Christianity). The transnational character of modern universities is based on scientific thought and shared intellectual personality (Jin 2011, 2). The university is an excellent place to cultivate students' spirit of humanities because we need humanities if our universities are to overcome the threats from narrow-minded politicians and business people to reduce education in universities to simple instruction in management without guidance from the cultures of the world as expressed in art and literature, knowledge of languages, history, and philosophy (Kemp 2012).

Modern universities in China came into being in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Since then, they have played an important role in fostering civic spirit and are playing an even greater role in fostering world citizenship awareness, which is

mainly reflected in the two aspects of broadening students' international horizon and popularizing universal values.

One important role played by Chinese universities in fostering world citizens is broadening students' international horizons. Chinese citizens must have a broad international horizon to become world citizens. Therefore, Chinese universities must develop their students' international/global horizon to make them aware that they are not just a Chinese citizen but also a world citizen. The success of fostering students' international horizons is closely related to universities' own levels of internationalization. Since their inception, Chinese universities have been committed to internationalization. Peking University (successor of the Imperial University of Peking) was established with the clear purpose of learning from the West and establishing a modern higher-learning education system. The Articles of Association of the Imperial University of Peking (1902) stipulate that the purpose of establishing the university is to 'introduce Western scholarship to China.' In 1911, the Qing Government established a preparatory school for students to be sent by the government to study in the USA, i.e., Tsinghua School (predecessor of Tsinghua University). The establishment of Tsinghua School started a wave of Chinese students going to the USA for study. Our university, Fudan University, has always emphasized developing students' international horizons since its establishment in 1905. In 1925, there were a total of more than 2500 Chinese students studying in the USA, accounting for one-third of all foreign students in the USA (Li 2008, 10). Over more than 30 years since the reform and opening, Chinese universities have stepped up their pace of internationalization. The policy guide and financial support of China's 211 Program and 985 Program, in particular, have greatly accelerated the internationalization of Chinese universities.

The efforts of Chinese universities toward internationalization have a positive role to play in fostering students' international horizon, communication ability, and cultural sensibility and improving their international competitiveness in this age of globalization.

The other important role played by Chinese universities in fostering world citizens is imparting universal values to them. World citizens embrace universal values that are above and beyond states, races, regions, ideology, and level of economic development. These universal values include democracy, liberty, equality, justice, human rights, and peace. China's university education should not merely impart students with the knowledge of making a living and seeking well-being but also foster in them a commitment to lofty universal values by encouraging them, for example, to actively take part in community governance, state governance, and global governance so as to make their own share of contribution to the solution of regional and global problems; to courageously pursue social justice and rationally struggle against any form of injustice, hegemony, and corruption; and to commit themselves to the sustainable development of the world and the preservation and protection of shared resources and cultural heritage of the whole humankind (Qi 2012, 6). In a word, universities should exert on students a silent transforming influence under which they integrate their own values with the common social values and bravely take on their shoulders the task of promoting social progress. In this sense, one has to uphold universal values to be a real world citizen.

In view of their important role in fostering world citizens, Chinese universities should include world citizen courses in their curriculums. For example, the curriculums need to cover the following contents: 'The World We Live In,' 'Globalization and More,' 'Poverty, Development, and Trade,' 'Global Governance,' 'Values in an Interdependent World,' and 'World Citizen.' The authors hold that the curriculums should additionally incorporate Chinese elements relevant to the subject, such as the budding of 'world

citizenship' in traditional Chinese thought which is mentioned in the second part of this article, the growth of China's civil society, and the relationship between global civil society and state sovereignty. In the near future, the authors will open world citizenship courses at Fudan University and have close cooperation with other universities in the world on the subject to promote the world citizenship education in China.

5. Conclusion

First, for the transcendence of Chinese citizenship towards world citizenship, we Chinese citizens need to carry forward the fine tradition of ancient Chinese thoughts which contain the origins of the 'world citizen' concept. In the part II of this article, the authors conclude that the Chinese traditional world citizenship thoughts, with ideas such as 'Datong shijie' ('a world of grand unity'), 'Tianren heyi' ('unity of heaven and human'), 'Rendao zhuyi' (humanitarianism), and 'Heping zhuyi' (pacifism), can help Chinese citizens to cultivate their world citizenship awareness better in the future. For example, 'A world of grand unity' has been encouraging Chinese citizens to construct a better society of equality and freedom at home and abroad which has awakened the world citizenship awareness of Chinese citizens. 'Unity of heaven and human' has great significance for rebuilding the relationship of harmony and coexistence between human and nature and may well serve as a guiding principle to be observed by world citizens. Humanitarianism in ancient China has positive influences on cultivating them to be world citizens with humanitarianism feeling. Ancient Chinese pacifist opposed 'unjust wars' and emphasized 'subduing men by virtue,' which remains instrumental to foster Chinese citizens' world citizenship awareness with pacifism today. Some Chinese scholars and philosophers such as Zhao Tingyang argue that traditional China has always favored peace, stability, order, and generosity toward other nations as, traditionally, its relations with neighboring countries have been very different from the Western experience, which has been rife with violence, wars, power politics, and hegemony. Zhao suggests that the 'Tianxia' conceptualization could lead to 'a form of selfless global unity' supported by 'a global hierarchy where order is valued over freedom, ethics over law and elite governance over democracy and human rights' (Callahan 2010). In the authors' opinion, the universal thoughts of ancient Chinese thinkers can not only help Chinese people to be a moral citizen, but also contribute original insights for the citizens of the other countries to be world citizens.

Second, in the process of transcending national citizenship to world citizenship, the international relations built on the basis of nation-states will exist for a long time. A survey of the Chinese discourse on global governance among Chinese key scholars indicates that the sovereign state still plays a paramount role in the Chinese thinking (Chan, Lee, and Chan 2008, 5–7). We acknowledge that nation-states and national citizenship still matter because they remain workable vehicles for collective, large-scale problem-solving. But at the same time, technology and economic globalization have made nations weaker and borders less meaningful. Today's most burning global issues – from nuclear proliferation to climate change to entrenched poverty – are complex and interrelated. More than ever, we need to understand the deep interconnectedness of economic, political, and cultural life on the planet. In the age of globalization, the world needs world citizen to grapple with and offer solutions to the earlier mentioned burning global issues of the day for the benefit of all mankind. World citizenship requires not the abandonment but the transcendence of one's national identification, which means that one is aware that one is not merely a citizen of a specific country, but also a citizen of the globalized world. This dual awareness of world citizenship not only means admitting the reality of the long-existing nation-states,

but also means the good intentions for world harmony and common prosperity. In the authors' opinion, the cultivation of world citizen awareness and the formation of global civil society will help to promote the solution of the global issues, herein laying one of the most important meanings of the world citizen.

Third, although nation-states borders will exist for a long time, Chinese citizens and citizens from other countries have already begun the process toward world citizenship. From the perspective of the idea of being a world citizen, the ideas of Chinese citizens are connected with the ideas of the citizens of the other countries. For example, the cosmopolitan tradition of ancient Greece, the African philosophy of Ubuntu, the Hindu conceptualization of Vasudheva Kutumbakam, and the Chinese classic aspiration for 'a world of grand union' together constitute the sources of world citizenship. From the growth path of the ideas of being world citizen, the growth path of Chinese citizens also communicates with the growth path of the citizens from the other countries. For example, the first step in transcending national citizenship toward world citizenship is to foster civil spirit in a domestic setting; the second, to promote the growth of civil societies in various countries; the third, to encourage national citizens to actively take part in global governance and bear international responsibilities; and the fourth, to foster world citizenship awareness and to form the global civil society.

Lastly, we Chinese citizens should remember that our Chinese citizenship will continue to exist even as we talk about being world citizens. In contemporary China, the state still remains dominant in Chinese political thinking so as to make it difficult to generate internationalist or cosmopolitan conceptions of citizenship. Even so, Chinese forerunners in practicing the idea of world citizenship like Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao and Sun Yat-sen will always be our guides toward world citizenship and give us inspiration and strength in the process. For Chinese citizens, world citizenship and Chinese citizenship may well be integrated. We Chinese need to transcend 'narrow nationalism' and at the same time cherish a deep love for our nation and culture. This is the authors' understanding of world citizen as it relates to China.

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