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The Community of Thought and Wisdom in Chinese and Islamic Civilizations—A Philosophical Interpretation from the Perspective of a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind

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Abstract

This article explores, within the historical context of two-way exchanges between Chinese and Arab-Islamic civilizations, the profound relationship between the communal ethos embedded in these traditions and the construction of a “community with a shared future for mankind.” By examining and comparing the “Tianxia worldview” and the wisdom of “harmony and integration” in Chinese civilization with the concept of “Ummah” and the peace-oriented ideal of “Salam” in Islamic civilization, this study reveals deep commonalities. Both civilizations share a focus on humanity’s collective well-being, the establishment of a moral order, the assumption of ethical responsibilities, and the management of the relationship between diversity and unity. The research demonstrates that the concept of a “community with a shared future for mankind” is deeply rooted in the philosophical traditions of both civilizations; it represents a modern transformation and integrated innovation of their core spirits. As such, it provides essential intellectual resources and practical pathways for transcending Western-centric governance paradigms, promoting substantive civilizational dialogue, and building a more just and inclusive global order.

Keywords: community of shared future for mankind; tianxia worldview; harmony and coexistence; Ummah; Salam; dialogue among civilizations; global governance

1. Introduction

The evolution of human civilization is currently undergoing a profound and turbulent transformation, with humanity’s survival and development facing multiple challenges from both nature and society. While economic and technological globalization forges ever-closer links among nations, the world remains deeply mired in dilemmas such as governance deficits, a crisis of trust, and civilizational divides. The paradigm of international order, rooted in the modern Western nation-state system, has revealed its inherent limitations of exclusivity and confrontation when confronted with global challenges like climate change, public health crises, and uneven development. Against this backdrop, China’s vision of “building a community with a shared future for mankind” emerges not merely as a major initiative in international relations but as a vision for global order imbued with profound civilizational heritage.¹ It embodies a conscious awareness of civilization and a call for a philosophical consensus—one that transcends the perspective of any single civilization and is grounded in dialogues among diverse forms of wisdom. “All ways converge into one.” The fundamental wisdom of humanity is interconnected. From the perspective of human survival and development, Chinese civilization, Western civilization, Indian civilization, Islamic civilization, African civilization and all other civilizations embody the



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awareness of a human community. Adopting the ideal type methodology from Max Weber's social science theories, this paper conducts a philosophical interpretation of the ideas and wisdom regarding community in Chinese and Islamic civilizations.

From a historical perspective, the exchange between Chinese and Islamic civilizations has never been a one-way process, nor one defined by conflict. Rather, it has been a grand, two-way interaction—both material and spiritual—between two great civilizational systems, conducted on the basis of equal respect and mutual appreciation. This exchange can be described as an epic tale of peaceful mutual learning spanning millennia. Since the 7th century AD, the overland and maritime Silk Roads have closely linked these two civilizations. These routes were not merely trade paths for the exchange of goods; they were also conduits for the two-way dissemination of science and technology, pathways for the fusion and innovation of arts and culture, and, most importantly, avenues for profound dialogue among philosophical and religious ideas.

In this profound exchange and mutual learning, compared to the visible exchange of material goods and technology along the Silk Road, the intellectual dialogue between Chinese and Arab-Islamic civilizations—at the levels of religion and philosophy—represents a far deeper, more intrinsic spiritual encounter. This dialogue did not proceed through large-scale proselytization or the elimination of differences. Rather, it manifested in subtle inspirations at the philosophical levels of both civilizations, in the localized interpretations of Islam and Confucianism, and in creative reinterpretations within classical translations. It thus embodies a deep-level mutual elucidation of concepts, a fusion of ideas, and a reconstruction of entire systems. The shared history of these two civilizations' exchanges has collectively outlined a mechanism of diverse spiritual interaction, characterized by "harmony in diversity" and "mutual learning and mutual inspiration," thereby driving social progress.

By analyzing the core values and philosophies these two civilizations employ in social organization and in guiding human life, we can see that Chinese and Islamic civilizations—two major civilizational systems with long histories and enduring global influence—share numerous common characteristics, both in their underlying philosophical thought and in their practice-oriented approaches. These shared traits provide a solid and profound philosophical foundation for building a community with a shared future for mankind.

Conducting a systematic comparative study of these two great civilizations would be a massive, comprehensive undertaking. This article aims to highlight key insights by focusing on a comparative study of two core concepts in Chinese civilization—the "Tianxia worldview" and the wisdom of "harmony and integration"—and their counterparts in Islamic civilization: the concept of "Ummah" and the idea of peace ("Salam"). By analyzing their intrinsic points of convergence, the article seeks to elucidate why the concept of a "community with a shared future for mankind" possesses such compelling appeal and enduring vitality across civilizational boundaries. By deepening our academic understanding of this concept, we can foster dialogue not only between Chinese and Islamic civilizations but also among a broader range of civilizations, jointly exploring the civilizational wisdom and intellectual resources needed to address global challenges.

2. The "Tianxia Worldview" and the Wisdom of "Harmony and Integration" in Chinese Civilization

The proposal of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind is neither groundless nor without foundation; rather, it is deeply rooted in the longstanding intellectual traditions and philosophical thought of Chinese civilization. It is particularly closely linked to the core concepts of the "Tianxia worldview" and the wisdom of "harmony and integration." Together, these two ideas constitute a worldview, an order frame-

work, and an approach to interaction, providing rich Eastern philosophical nourishment for transcending the narrow focus on nation-states and envisioning a more inclusive and morally grounded global governance model.

2.1. *“The Tianxia Worldview”: A Concept of Universal Order That Is Both Inclusive and Virtuous*

In Confucian thought, the concept of the “Tianxia worldview” took shape very early on. The Book of Songs, an anthology of Chinese poetry, already contains the phrase “under the vast heavens.” (Kong 2009, p. 463). The Confucian classic I Ching states: “Observe human culture and thereby transform and shape the world.” Over a long historical process, the “Tianxia worldview” became the core through which Chinese civilization understands the world, positions itself within it, and envisions its world order. The concept of “Tianxia” transcends the simple notion of “nation,” pointing instead toward a three-dimensional civilizational form—a complex interplay of culture, ethics, and geography—upholding a civilizational moral order characterized by the principle that “The true king encompasses all under heaven” (W. T. Wang 2016, p. 10) and a cosmology of “ceaseless generation and transformation.”

2.1.1. The Connotation of the Concept of “Tianxia”

In the spatial-geographical sense, “Tianxia” refers to “all under heaven”—that is, the entire world inhabited by human beings—a boundless and open category that knows no limits. Unlike the modern concept of sovereign states, which often adopts an “either/or” approach to territorial division, it does not presuppose insurmountable boundaries. In the realm of political ethics, “Tianxia” represents the sole, supreme political-cultural community and source of legitimacy—the idea of “all under heaven as one family.” The ideal political goal of the kingly way (Wangdao) is not conquest or domination, but rather “harmonizing all states,” bringing order and civilization to the entire “Tianxia.” In terms of cultural values, “Tianxia” is both a process and a conceptual framework for civilizational development. The boundaries of “Tianxia” are not defined by military force, but rather by the moral education of “rites and music”—that is, by whether a people accepts and practices the ethical values of Chinese civilization, such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness. The criterion for distinguishing between the “Huaxia” (the civilized Chinese) and the “Yidi” (so-called “barbarians”) is not bloodline or ethnic group, but the level of civilization; moreover, this distinction is dynamic and reversible—hence the saying: “If a feudal lord adopts barbarian rites, he becomes a barbarian; if he advances toward Chinese civilization, he becomes Chinese.” (Q. Ma 2014, p. 19).

2.1.2. The Principle of “No Exterior” and an Inclusive Order

The concept of the “Tianxia worldview” embodies a fundamental ethical and political principle: “The true king encompasses all under heaven.” Philosopher Zhao Tingyang argues that unlike the concept of “empire” in Western discourse, the notion of Tianxia (All-under-Heaven) represents an idea in the Platonic sense—a conceived perfect concept, namely an ideal. In his work *Tianxia System: An Introduction to the Philosophy of World Institutions*, he states: “Though the Tianxia theory may seem overly idealistic and is often regarded as a product merely of the era of ancient sages, what matters is not whether an ideal can be realized, but that ideals serve as indispensable criteria. To abandon ideals is to abandon the yardstick for judgment. While the historical Chinese empires of old diverged considerably from the Tianxia-empire ideal and in many respects functioned as ordinary empires, they consistently strove to act in accordance with the cultural norms embodied in the Tianxia ideal throughout their cultural pursuits. This is evident in the following aspects: (1) Influenced by the ideal of “all under heaven as one family”, the Chinese mindset never embraced a mentality of heresy. Accordingly, China’s relations with

other peoples were inherently non-adversarial, and other ethnic groups and religious communities were never viewed as targets to be conquered. This does not mean ancient China had no conflicts with other ethnic and religious communities. Fundamentally, however, such disputes were merely utilitarian clashes over local interests, rather than absolute confrontations that sought to negate others spiritually and intellectually. As a result, none of these conflicts turned into irreconcilable hostilities. This can undoubtedly be attributed to the core belief that, much like Heaven itself, Tianxia is an indivisible public domain and shared resource for all." (Zhao 2005, p. 69). This spirit of "no-exterior" stems from the philosophical principle that "the great virtue of heaven and earth lies in giving life." (Feng 2011, p. 421). When dealing with differences and conflicts, it tends to adopt a strategy of "cherishing and pacifying distant peoples through virtue" (from the Book of Rites: The Doctrine of the Mean) and "cultivating civil virtue to attract distant peoples" (from the Analects: Ji Shi), relying on benevolence and virtue rather than resorting to outright rejection or permanent hostility. It presupposes an ultimate framework of unity within which differences can be accommodated and transformed, ultimately attaining the state of "harmony in diversity." This provides a profound philosophical foundation for the principles advocated by the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind—principles such as "dialogue rather than confrontation, partnership rather than alliance," and "inclusiveness and shared prosperity."

2.1.3. "Matching Virtue with Heaven" and the Ethics of Responsibility

In Chinese Confucian thought, the legitimacy of governing "the world" derives from "Heaven," and the manifestation of "Heaven's will" lies in the "heart of the people." The key to connecting Heaven and the people is the ruler's "virtue"—as the Shangshu states: "The Supreme Heaven has no favorites; it supports only those who possess virtue" (from the "Decree to Cai Zhong"). To "match one's virtue with Heaven" thus became a widespread ethical principle. Consequently, the "Tianxia worldview" gave rise to a robust politics of virtue and an ethic of responsibility. As Mencius summarized: "Whoever wins the hearts of the people wins the world" (from Mencius, Li Lou Shang), and "holding onto peace" means practicing "benevolent governance." This perspective shifted the core of politics from the control of territory and power to the responsibility for the people's well-being and moral education. The progressive sequence outlined in the Great Learning—"cultivating oneself, regulating one's family, governing the state, and bringing peace to the world"—clearly reveals this logic of expansion: from inner sageliness to outward kingship, from ethics to politics. Extending this perspective to the global level implies that a leading or powerful civilization or nation derives the legitimacy of its power and status not only from its own strength but also—and perhaps even more importantly—from its ability to provide public goods for the broader "world" (i.e., all humanity), enhance universal well-being, and uphold fairness and justice. This is precisely the essence of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind: the global governance vision of "extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits," and the underlying principle that major powers should shoulder greater responsibilities.

2.2. *The Wisdom of "Harmony and Integration": A Dialectic of Coexistence in Diversity and Dynamic Equilibrium*

If the "Tianxia worldview" provides the spatial framework and ethical goals for envisioning a community, then the wisdom of "harmony and integration" offers the approach and philosophical foundation for achieving these goals. "Harmony and integration" is the supreme wisdom through which Chinese civilization has come to understand the world, manage contradictions, and build relationships. The idea expressed in the Zhou Yi—"To preserve harmony and great harmony is to ensure enduring virtue"—and the passage from

the Book of Rites: The Doctrine of the Mean—“All things grow together without harming one another; the Way proceeds in parallel without conflicting”—both elucidate the significance of universal cosmic harmony. Certain profound sayings in Confucian thought, such as “achieving equilibrium and harmony to foster growth” and “harmony in diversity,” deeply reflect an acute grasp of the interconnectedness and processuality of all things.

2.2.1. The Distinction Between “He” and “Tong”: The Value of Difference

The classic expression of the “harmony” concept can be found in the Guoyu—Zheng Yu: “Harmony truly gives rise to life; sameness, however, leads to stagnation. To balance the dissimilar with the dissimilar is called harmony, and thus things flourish and all beings return to it. But if one merely adds like to like, eventually everything will be discarded.” (Zuo 2021, p. 284). It also appears in the Analects: “The superior man seeks harmony without uniformity; the inferior man seeks uniformity without harmony.” (Yang 2020, p. 158).

“Harmony” implies the coordination, cooperation, and balance of elements with different natures and characteristics, just as music requires the harmonious blending of different pitches to become a melody, and cooking demands the balanced combination of diverse flavors to create delicious cuisine. It affirms the value of differences, contradictions, and even opposites, pursuing a higher-level creative unity based on complementary differences. In contrast, “sameness” represents mere identity, repetition, and conformity, which can cause a system to lose its vitality and dynamism. This profound dialectical perspective stands in stark opposition to hegemonic thinking that excludes others and seeks uniformity, as well as to theories of civilizational conflict. Rather, it provides a fundamental philosophical foundation for the coexistence and mutual prosperity of diverse civilizations.

2.2.2. The Generativity and Holism of “He” (Integration)

“He” (integration) emphasizes aggregation, integration, and cooperation, pointing to the process of generating something entirely new. When used together, “hehe” (harmony and integration) signifies that through harmonious interaction, diverse elements merge into a vibrant new whole. This embodies the Chinese way of thinking—the holistic and generative perspective: the world is not a static collection of isolated entities, but rather an organic network in which all things are interconnected and constantly generated and transformed. As the Book of Changes (I Ching) states: “The great virtue of heaven and earth lies in life”; “The constant transformation of life is called ‘yi’.” From the Confucian perspective, “life” is synonymous with “benevolence,” and human existence is fundamentally interconnected. In this network, no single entity can exist independently of others; the harmony of the whole takes precedence over the isolated interests of any one part. Applied to international relations, this approach advocates a “relational” mindset: the nature of relations among nations—whether they are at peace or at war, whether they cooperate or confront each other—these very dynamics constitute the core elements defining the identities and interests of all parties involved. We should therefore strive to build a “relational” existence based on mutual benefit and win-win cooperation. “Harmony gives rise to life”—only through cooperation can we create something new, improve our living environment, and drive social progress forward.

2.2.3. “The Doctrine of the Mean” and “Timely Equilibrium”: The Art of Dynamic Balance

The concrete practical wisdom for achieving “harmony and integration” lies in “the Doctrine of the Mean” and “timely equilibrium.” The “Doctrine of the Mean” is neither eclecticism nor unprincipled compromise; rather, it refers to striking the right “measure” in complex situations to attain an optimal state of balance—“holding both extremes yet employing the mean for the benefit of the people.” (Zhu 2011, p. 22). “Timely equilib-

rium,” on the other hand, emphasizes that this balance is dynamic and must be adapted to changing circumstances and keep pace with the times. This calls for avoiding extreme or absolutist policies when managing relations among civilizations and nations, requiring a high degree of flexibility, pragmatism, and contextual sensitivity. While firmly upholding core principles, it also entails seeking the “greatest common divisor” and feasible pathways that can be accepted by all parties involved.

2.3. From “Harmony Under Heaven” to the “Community of Shared Future for Mankind”: Continuity and Innovation in Civilization

The concept of a “community with a shared future for mankind” represents a creative transformation and innovative development of the “Tianxia worldview” and the wisdom of “harmony and integration” within the context of 21st-century globalization. This transformation is not a mere replication; rather, it has undergone profound philosophical refinement and modern reconstruction.

2.3.1. Continuation of the Core Spirit

The concept carries forward the “universal concern” and “ethics of responsibility” inherent in the traditional “Tianxia worldview,” regarding all humanity as an interconnected whole and advocating shared responsibility and commitment for all people. It inherits the wisdom of “harmony and integration,” embracing the “accommodation of differences” and “cooperative coexistence,” respecting the diversity of civilizations and pursuing the core spirit of win-win cooperation. It transforms the traditionally potentially culturally centric notion of “Tianxia” into a “community with a shared future” in which all civilizations and nations participate on an equal footing. Moreover, it shifts from an ethical order based on moral cultivation to one founded on international rule of law and the common pursuit of a “global governance” order based on shared values.

2.3.2. Modern Transformation and Transcendence

The concept of a community with a shared future for mankind has also achieved a crucial modern transformation. This idea is expressed very clearly in global governance initiatives. First, it is grounded in the modern international legal principle of sovereign equality, completely rejecting any form of hierarchical structures or tributary systems, thereby achieving a structural alignment between the ideal of “all under heaven as one family” and the system of nation-states. Second, its emergence directly addresses the core challenges of modernity—such as climate change, pandemics, and financial crises—highlighting the reality and urgency of humanity’s shared destiny and endowing traditional wisdom with a keen awareness of contemporary issues. Finally, it actively draws on Marx’s vision of a “union of free individuals” as well as valuable insights from contemporary theories of global justice, thus achieving a fusion of traditional intellectual resources with socialist values and the spirit of our times.

2.3.3. Offering a Chinese Solution for the Global Order

Beyond the Western-dominated theory of international relations, which is centered on sovereign-state competition and the balance of power, the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind—grounded in core values of Chinese civilization such as the “Tianxia worldview” and “harmony and integration”—offers a solution to the challenges facing humanity, one that is based on “relational rationality, ethical responsibility, and the pursuit of systemic harmony.” While this approach does not deny the existence of interests and differences, it places greater emphasis on finding common ground through dialogue and consultation. While it does not shy away from competition, it advocates channeling competition into positive and constructive arenas, thereby avoiding zero-sum

games. It acknowledges the reality of power dynamics, but more importantly calls for the integration of power with morality and responsibility. This provides a foundation for reflecting upon and transcending the conflicting and exclusive elements inherent in the current international order, thus paving the way for the construction of a more just and equitable global governance system. Indeed, it contributes unique wisdom rooted in Chinese civilization.

The “Tianxia worldview” and the wisdom of “harmony and integration” inherent in Chinese civilization are like the two wheels of a cart or the wings of a bird—working together to shape a civilizational ethos and worldview that transcends ethnocentrism and strives for universal harmony and order. These principles constitute the profound philosophical foundation of the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind. They not only explain why this concept could take root and flourish in the cultural soil of China, but also highlight its latent philosophical power to address common human challenges and guide the development of the world’s future. Understanding this foundational basis is the logical starting point for initiating deep dialogue between Chinese and Arab-Islamic civilizations—and indeed, between Chinese civilization and other civilizations around the world—so as to jointly explore the path toward a shared future for humanity.

3. The Concept of “Ummah” and the Idea of Peace in Islamic Civilization

Echoing the “Tianxia worldview” and the wisdom of “harmony and integration” inherent in Chinese civilization, Islamic civilization—with its distinctive concept of “Ummah” and its peace-oriented (Salam) philosophy rooted in divine revelation—offers another profound civilizational philosophical perspective for understanding human solidarity, social justice, and global order. These ideas are not relics of the medieval era; rather, they remain vibrant and dynamic intellectual resources imbued with multiple interpretive possibilities. Together, they have shaped Islamic civilization’s vision of community, its pursuit of peace, and its contributions to global ethics, laying an important theoretical foundation for cross-civilizational dialogue around the concept of a “community with a shared future for mankind.”

3.1. *The “Ummah” Concept: A Community of Faith That Transcends Kinship and Geography*

“Ummah” is a socio-political and spiritual concept at the heart of Islamic civilization, and its meaning is far richer and more multifaceted than the usual renderings of “nation” or “community.” (J. Ma 2013, p. 11). It possesses normative force, and its philosophical foundation lies in a communal ontology based on a sacred covenant.

3.1.1. The Sacred Origin and Covenant Nature of “Ummah”

In Islamic doctrine, the term “Ummah” initially refers to the political and religious community established by the Prophet Muhammad in Medina, based on the Constitution of Medina. The foundation of this community is not kinship, ethnicity, or geography, but rather the belief in the One God (Allah)—known as Iman—and submission to His revelations. Thus, the Ummah is, at its core, a covenantal community of believers (Wu 2007, p. 43). Its members—believers—are united by a common creed, the five pillars of Islam, and ethical laws (Sharia), and they define one another as “brothers.” The Qur’an emphasizes: “The believers are all brothers and sisters.” (J. Ma 2013, p. 263). This bond founded on faith has created a new type of social cohesion that transcends the narrow tribalism of classical Arab tribal societies, laying the groundwork for the prototype of a universalist community.

3.1.2. Pluralistic Unity and Bounded Inclusiveness

In classical Islamic theory, the “Ummah” is not absolutely closed. It divided humanity into distinct “Ummahs”: “Mankind was one single community; then they differed in their beliefs.” (J. Ma 2013, p. 16). This theological perspective acknowledges the factual diversity of human beliefs. The Islamic “Ummah” itself is regarded as the “just and upright nation,” (J. Ma 2013, p. 11) entrusted with the collective mission of bearing witness to the truth and practicing justice. As for non-Muslims, Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh) has developed the system of “Dhimmi” — protected people, which, while recognizing religious differences, granted them, within Islamic countries, a certain degree of autonomy and security guarantees, fostering an ordered system characterized by bounded inclusivity. In the Middle Ages when forced conversion was prevalent, the dhimmi system granted the People of the Book a relatively tolerant living environment, which stood as a prominent feature distinguishing Islamic civilization from other civilizations of the same era. Nevertheless, its historical limitations must also be noted. This inclusiveness was conditional and bounded, rather than equal tolerance in the modern sense. Although this approach to handling differences has its historical limitations, it nonetheless reflects an institutional effort — while establishing a core identity — to seek coexistence with “the Other,” thus creating room for dialogue in line with the spirit of “harmony in diversity.” It provides a frame of reference for our present reflections on pluralistic coexistence.

3.1.3. The Tension and Evolution from Ideal Paradigm to Real-World Practice

The community founded by the Prophet Muhammad in Medina represented the earliest practical manifestation of the concept of Ummah, laying the foundation for Islamic society and being regarded as a model by subsequent generations of Muslims (J. Ma 2013, p. 43). Historically, the “Ummah” — as a unified political entity — was embodied only briefly in the early days of the Caliphate empire; yet its symbolic role as a unifying vision and source of legitimacy for Muslims has endured through the ages. More than anything else, the Ummah has persisted as a moral ideal, a cultural identity, and a standard for critiquing contemporary reality. In the face of modern colonial challenges and the global establishment of the modern nation-state system, the concept of Ummah has undergone a complex process of modern transformation. On the one hand, revivalists have drawn upon it to critique the divisive nature of nationalism and call for the restoration of Islamic unity. On one hand, revivalists have drawn upon it to critique the divisive nature of nationalism and call for the restoration of Islamic unity. On the other hand, the concept has been reinterpreted in various ways: some have sought to reconcile it with notions of citizenship and national identity, while others have transformed it into a transnational sense of community that emphasizes mutual cultural support and political solidarity among Muslims worldwide. This dynamic evolution demonstrates that the Ummah is a concept endowed with remarkable adaptability and interpretive flexibility. Its core ideas — concerning transcendent identity and communal responsibility — can be deeply integrated into contemporary discourses on the human community.

3.1.4. The Ethical Responsibility of “Vicegerency on Earth”

In the spiritual tradition of Islam, “vicegerency on Earth” is closely linked to the “Ummah.” The concept of “Ummah” refers to the organizational form of the community, while “vicegerency on Earth” represents its purpose and guiding principle for action. The principles of Tawhid (the Oneness of God) and “the common origin of humanity” define humanity’s status and mission in the universe: namely, as Allah’s “Caliphs” (vicegerents) on Earth. This is not a privilege but rather a solemn divine trust and responsibility. The Qur’an explicitly states: “When your Lord said to the angels, ‘Indeed, I am going to place a

vicegerent on Earth,” (J. Ma 2013, p. 3) and further declares: “He has made you successors upon the Earth.” (J. Ma 2013, p. 73). Thus, humanity is endowed with reason, free will, and knowledge—distinguishing it from other creations—and entrusted with the responsibility of governing the Earth and building the world.

This ethic of vicegerency shapes the internal order of the Ummah, calling for the construction of a community guided by the principles of “justice, compassion, and moderation.” For instance, in Islamic law (Sharia), provisions concerning property rights, inheritance, and business ethics all center on “avoiding greed and safeguarding the public good,” reflecting the vicegerent’s duty to protect “trusteeship” (including societal resources). The Qur’anic teaching, “Help one another in righteousness and piety,” provisions concerning property rights, inheritance, and business ethics all center on “avoiding greed and safeguarding the public good,” reflecting the vicegerent’s duty to protect “trusteeship” (including societal resources). The Qur’anic teaching, “Help one another in righteousness and piety,” (J. Ma 2013, p. 51), defines the internal relationships within the Ummah as a “community of mutual responsibility”—the strong support the weak, the wise enlighten the ignorant, and together they resist oppression and injustice. This ethical framework enables members of the community to learn how to treat their fellow human beings with fairness and justice, thereby extending their internal ethic of responsibility outward to encompass their duties toward nature and all humanity.

The spiritual resource of “vicegerency on Earth” carries universal significance. It transcends ethnic and regional boundaries, pointing toward the shared responsibility of all humanity. It uses sacred duty to restrain power and promote social justice; it defines the relationship between humans and nature through a fiduciary bond, embodying profound ecological wisdom. A community founded on “Ummah” and “vicegerency on Earth” is not an aggregation based on interests or power but rather a community of shared responsibility, united by the belief in the Oneness of God and bound together by the common mission of fulfilling a trust—precisely this mission of “vicegerency on Earth” lies at its very core, containing a deep understanding of humanity’s relationship with the world. These are the same spiritual resources underlying the concept of a community with a shared future.

3.2. *The Concept of Peace (Salam): The Foundation and Goal of Islamic Civilization*

Peace (in Arabic, “Salam”) is a core value of Islamic civilization, embodying its essential teachings, fundamental objectives, and ultimate goal. Its philosophical significance encompasses both a sacred ontological dimension and a positive ethical practice.

3.2.1. Peace as the Sacred Name and Ultimate Destination

“Salam” is one of the ninety-nine beautiful names of Allah, meaning “The Bestower of Peace” and “The Source of Tranquility.” (J. Ma 2013, p. 283). The Muslim daily greeting, “As-salamu alaykum” (“Peace be upon you”), and its response, firmly establish peace as the fundamental ethical principle underlying social interactions among believers. More significantly, Islam regards “peace” as the ultimate destination: “‘Peace!’—this is the salutation uttered by the Most Merciful Lord.” (J. Ma 2013, p. 225). The heavenly abode in the Hereafter is referred to as “the Mansion of Peace.” Thus, peace holds a sacred ontological status—it embodies the original intention of creation and represents ultimate fulfillment. All efforts undertaken in this world, including the establishment of a just order, are but pathways leading toward this ultimate peace.

3.2.2. “Islam” and the Ethical Construction of Peace

The root of the word “Islam”—“S-L-M”—is closely related to “peace” and “submission.” To become a “Muslim” means actively submitting to the will of Allah, thereby achieving a state of harmony with the Creator, with oneself, with others, and with na-

ture. Therefore, peace is not merely the absence of war; rather, it is a positive social and spiritual state that is actively cultivated through the practice of justice, the fulfillment of trust, and generous acts of kindness. The Qur'an teaches: "The servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk humbly upon the earth, and when the ignorant address them with harsh words, they reply: 'Peace be upon you.'" (J. Ma 2013, p. 183). This ethical stance of responding to harm with peace lays the foundation for the extraordinary dimension of Islamic peace thought.

3.2.3. The Normative Framework of the Reconstituted Jurisprudence of War and Peace (Fiqh)

Islamic jurisprudence offers an extremely complex and nuanced normative discourse on the issues of war and peace. At its core, it emphasizes the limitation of violence and the promotion of peace, embodying an institutionalized rationality that translates divine principles into concrete practice.

First is the principle of self-defense and justice. Permitted warfare—the armed dimension of "jihad"—is strictly limited to situations of self-defense against aggression, safeguarding one's faith, and protecting life and property ("You shall fight against those who attack you in the cause of God") (J. Ma 2013, p. 14), and excessive use is strictly prohibited.

Second, strict procedural and moral constraints must be observed. The initiation of war requires legitimate authority and prior warning, and non-combatants—such as women, children, and monks—as well as the environment, must be strictly protected. The Prophet's Sunnah emphasizes: in warfare, do not break your word, do not engage in excessive killing, and do not kill infants (Muslim ibn al-Hajjāj 2016, p. 976).

Third, the option of peace takes precedence. Islamic law has always regarded peace agreements as the preferred choice. The Quran explicitly states: "If they incline toward peace, you too should incline toward peace." (J. Ma 2013, p. 90). Historically, the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah is regarded as a quintessential example of using political wisdom to secure space for peace.

Fourth, the multifaceted understanding of "Jihad": Equating "Jihad" simply with "holy war" is a serious misinterpretation. In Islamic tradition, the "Greater Jihad" refers to spiritual discipline aimed at struggling against selfish desires. It is regarded as the supreme form of jihad because it targets believers' inner moral self-cultivation and constitutes a lifelong spiritual endeavor. By contrast, the right to armed self-defense becomes necessary only under specific external circumstances, while the "Lesser Jihad" involves armed self-defense. Many scholars emphasize that in contemporary times, building a just society, spreading knowledge, and engaging in charitable work are even more important forms of "Jihad.". Meanwhile, it must be acknowledged that some historical scholars such as Ibn Taymiyyah emphasized the obligation of armed jihad under specific circumstances. The Quran also states: "If you do not go forth to fight, Allah will inflict a severe punishment upon you" (J. Ma 2013, p. 94); "Do not obey the disbelievers, and strive against them earnestly with this Quran" (J. Ma 2013, p. 183). This likewise demonstrates that the concept of jihad has been interpreted in diverse ways within the Islamic tradition.

This intricate system of norms was originally designed to provide Muslims with an ethical and legal framework for survival and justice in a pre-modern, anarchic international environment. Its inherent spirit—seeking to curb violence, promoting peace, and respecting agreements—resonates deeply with the principles of contemporary international humanitarian law and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

3.3. *The Symbiotic Relationship Between “Ummah” and “Salam”: Implications for the Community of Shared Future for Mankind*

The intertwining of the “Ummah” concept with peace-oriented thought provides Islamic civilization with philosophical and ethical resources for participating in the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

3.3.1. It Offers a Community Paradigm Based on Faith and Morality

The “Ummah” demonstrates how broad groups of people can be united and a strong sense of collective identity and mutual responsibility can be forged by drawing on transcendent values—such as faith and justice—that transcend narrow material interests and geopolitics. This suggests that the building of a community with a shared future for mankind cannot rely solely on bonds of interest; rather, it also requires the nourishment of shared values and ethical goals. The Islamic “Ummah’s” emphasis on fraternal solidarity and collective responsibility can enrich the emotional and moral dimensions of community-building efforts.

3.3.2. Expounds on the Positive and Just Connotations of Peace

The Islamic concept of peace clarifies that true peace must be closely linked to justice. Peace without justice is considered fragile and unsustainable. The Qur’an commands: “Maintain justice and bear witness for the sake of Allah, even if it be against yourselves, your parents, and your closest relatives.” (J. Ma 2013, p. 46). Therefore, the pursuit of global peace must simultaneously focus on eliminating structural injustice, poverty, and oppression. This underscores the urgency and moral depth inherent in the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind, which places great emphasis on the pursuit of “fairness and justice.”

3.3.3. Contributed Normative Wisdom for Handling Differences and Conflicts

The rich discourse within the Islamic legal tradition on coexistence with “the Other” (such as the “Dhimmi” system), prioritizing peace agreements, and strictly regulating wartime conduct represents a valuable ethical legacy for international relations. It embodies a practical wisdom that, while upholding one’s own principles, rationally manages conflicts and seeks paths toward coexistence. This offers significant lessons for today’s world in addressing inter-civilizational relations and hot-spot conflicts.

3.3.4. Dialogue and Complementarity with the Concept of a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind

The universalist ideal of “Ummah” resonates with the global concern for a community with a shared future for mankind; however, while the former is bounded by faith, the latter is united by a shared destiny and common interests, making it more secularly inclusive. The dialogue between these two perspectives can explore how to integrate specific cultural and religious identities with a broader, more universal sense of human identity. Islam’s positive vision of peace—combined with justice—can strengthen the community with a shared future’s commitment to development issues and global justice; meanwhile, its normative tradition of conflict management can provide non-Western intellectual resources for building a rule-based global order.

The concept of “Ummah” in Islamic civilization, together with its philosophy of peace, forms a comprehensive discourse on human solidarity, social order, and the ideal world. Rooted in divine revelation and enriched by over a millennium of interpretation and practice, these ideas continue to profoundly shape the worldview and behavior of more than a billion Muslims worldwide. Placing them in dialogue with the Chinese civilization’s wisdom of “Tianxia harmony and integration,” we find that both traditions share a grand

vision of transcending individual nations and building a universal community; both emphasize the central role of morality and justice in constructing social order; and both strive for a positive, richly nuanced state of peace. Although their approaches and expressions differ, this deep resonance provides a solid intellectual foundation and ethical impetus for the collaboration between Islamic and Chinese civilizations in jointly shaping a community with a shared future for mankind. Understanding and activating these profound civilizational philosophical resources is of irreplaceable value in addressing the yearnings of our divided world and in building a global future that is more peaceful, just, and inclusive.

4. The Convergence of Two Civilizational Perspectives

The “Tianxia worldview” and the wisdom of “harmony and integration” inherent in Chinese civilization, along with the concept of “Ummah” and the spirit of peace found in Islamic civilization—though nurtured in vastly different geographical environments, historical trajectories, and distinct philosophical and theological systems—nonetheless reveal a striking resonance and alignment at the deep structural level of civilizational ethos. This alignment is not merely a superficial resemblance of outward features; rather, it represents a profound convergence on fundamental questions such as how to understand human existence and development, how to construct social order, and how to manage differences. A thorough analysis of these points of convergence will not only provide a solid foundation for contemporary dialogue between these two great civilizations but also, by laying a firm philosophical foundation, better reveal how the concept of a “community with a shared future for mankind” can gain broad cross-civilizational understanding and potential acceptance.

4.1. *A Shared Concern for the Wholeness of Humanity: A Global Vision That Transcends Narrow Self-Interests*

Both perspectives demonstrate a grand vision that transcends narrow ethnic or regional biases and regards humanity as a holistic, interconnected community of shared destiny. This holistic understanding of the world does not stem merely from empirical induction; rather, it arises from the cosmological and worldview frameworks inherent in their respective philosophical or theological systems.

In Chinese civilization, the concept of “harmony between heaven and humanity” and its cosmological worldview, together with the “Tianxia worldview” vision of earthly order, form the framework of this holistic mode of thinking. “Tianxia” is a category that is infinitely vast and encompasses everything without any external boundary—there is no permanent “other” beyond it; as the saying goes, “The true king encompasses all under heaven.” The ideal underlying this notion is that “all within the four seas are brothers” (from the *Analects*), ultimately reaching the state of “Great Harmony (Datong) under heaven.” This perspective extends the boundaries of political and ethical concern to encompass the entire human community, demanding that rulers’ benevolence and sense of responsibility be fully aligned with the well-being of “Tianxia”—that is, “regard all under heaven as one family and China as one person.” Moreover, Zhang Zai, a scholar of the Song dynasty, elevated this holistic and compassionate outlook to a cosmological level with his famous statement: “All people are my siblings; all things are my companions.” (Lin 2012, p. 887). By regarding all people as siblings and all things as partners, this way of thinking places the interests of individuals, families, and nations within the larger, morally prioritized whole of “Tianxia.”

Not surprisingly, Islamic civilization also expressed a different form of holistic concern through the concept of “Ummah” and the doctrine of “the common origin of humanity.” First, at the ideal level, the “Ummah” is a global Muslim community founded on

shared faith that transcends ethnic, racial, and national boundaries, emphasizing that “all believers are brothers and sisters.” (J. Ma 2013, p. 263). This “brotherhood” fosters a powerful transnational identity and mutual responsibility. Even more fundamentally, Islamic teachings repeatedly underscore the common origin of all humanity: “O mankind! Indeed, We have created you from a single male and a single female, and We have made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another.” (J. Ma 2013, p. 264). The shared human origin—traceable to Adam—lays the foundation for fundamental equality before Allah and provides a theological basis for cross-ethnic and cross-cultural interactions. In this view, the unity of humanity is embedded in Allah’s overarching vision of creation; any division or discrimination runs counter to the original intent of creation itself. The “all under heaven as one family” of Chinese civilization and the “common human origins” of Islamic civilization both point toward a unified concept of the global human family. Although the former places greater emphasis on the “cultivation” of culture and ethics, while the latter focuses more on the “shared roots” of faith and origin, both call for examining and addressing human affairs from a higher, universal perspective. This provides ancient humanistic wisdom and a philosophical foundation for the spirit of global cooperation—essential for today’s response to global challenges such as climate change, pandemics, and economic crises.

4.2. *A Shared Pursuit of Moral Order: A Social Ideal Rooted in Virtuous Justice*

Neither of these two great civilizations believes that a well-ordered society can be sustained merely by checks and balances of power or by calculations of self-interest. Rather, they firmly hold that political and social order must be deeply rooted in morality and justice. This view of moral order forms the very soul of their political philosophy and legal thought.

Chinese civilization places morality at the heart of order. The effectiveness of the “Tianxia worldview” is directly linked to “Virtue”—it serves as the connecting link; “Heaven has no favorites—only virtue provides support.” (Wei et al. 2011, p. 82). The realization of a kingly way of governance that wins the hearts of all under heaven depends on “governing with virtue.” (Yang 2020, p. 55). The Confucian ideas of “benevolent governance” and “rule by rites” aim to establish an ethically harmonious society—where “fathers and sons are filial, rulers and ministers uphold righteousness, husbands and wives maintain proper distinctions, elders and juniors observe proper order, and friends remain trustworthy”—through the moral example set by rulers and the educational influence of rites and music (Yang 2020, p. 242). The harmony of social order itself is one of the highest moral values, and the path to achieving such harmony lies in the moral cultivation of both individuals and the collective. Law (punishment) is regarded as a supplementary means to moral education—that is, “virtue takes the lead, punishment plays a supporting role.” This deep-rooted belief in moral order imbues the political philosophy of Chinese civilization with a rich ethical hue.

Similarly, morality and justice form the very foundation of social order in Islamic civilization. The “Ummah” is not merely a community of faith; it is also a moral community that strives for and puts into practice “justice.” A primary attribute of Allah is “justice”; therefore, establishing a just society is the very essence of complying with Allah’s will. The Qur’an repeatedly emphasizes fairness and justice: “Indeed, We have sent Our messengers with many clear signs and have revealed the Scripture and the Balance, so that people may uphold justice.” (J. Ma 2013, p. 278). At its core, Islamic law (Sharia) is far from being a rigid set of penal statutes—it is rather a sacred ethical and legal guide designed to achieve social justice, provide relief to the vulnerable, and strike a balance between rights and obligations. Whether it be ensuring fairness in commercial transactions or upholding justice

in judicial proceedings; whether it be caring for widows and orphans or curbing greed—establishing a just order imbued with moral concern is one of the fundamental purposes of the Ummah’s existence. Peace (Salam) is also understood as the ideal state that arises when justice is fully realized.

The core values of both Chinese and Islamic civilizations hold that a virtuous society cannot be built solely on pure power or utilitarianism; rather, it must appeal to higher moral principles—namely, “benevolence” and “righteousness” in Chinese civilization, and “justice” and “goodness” in Islamic civilization. Both emphasize that rulers or authorities bear a significant responsibility to embody and promote these moral values. At the same time, both view social order as a process of moral cultivation: Confucianism seeks to “become benevolent” through education, while Islam aims to “draw closer to God” by putting divine laws into practice. This shared pursuit of moral order imbues the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind with a solid value foundation—that the transformation of global governance not only requires institutional innovation but also relies on and is guided by universal ethical values such as justice, benevolence, and trust.

4.3. *A Shared Human Mission: Assuming Ethical Responsibility Toward Nature and Society*

Although Chinese and Islamic civilizations are rooted in different cultural contexts, they nonetheless exhibit a profound spiritual resonance in their shared understanding of humanity’s common mission. The Confucian concept of “matching virtue with Heaven” and the Islamic notion of “vicegerency on Earth,” though expressed differently, both point to a crucial proposition: Human beings are not the absolute masters of the world; rather, they are entrusted with responsibilities by a higher Being—the “Mandate of Heaven” or Allah. As stewards entrusted with a sacred mission, human beings must respond to this divine trust with virtue and action, fulfilling their comprehensive duties toward nature, society, and themselves.

The Confucian concept of “matching virtue with Heaven” stems from the cosmological view of “harmony between Heaven and humanity,” which holds that the greatest virtue of Heaven and Earth lies in their ability to give rise to all things. This very act of generating and nurturing myriad beings is precisely “ren” (benevolence)—“to give life” is to practice “ren.” As an integral part of nature, humans are endowed with this “ren nature”; therefore, they should take Heaven as their model, revere the natural order of Heaven, and extend this “ren nature” to the individual, the family, and society at large, thereby realizing human prosperity and development. The Book of Changes states: “A great person harmonizes his virtue with that of Heaven and Earth”—this is precisely the idea of “matching virtue with Heaven. The Doctrine of the Mean asserts: “What Heaven ordains is called ‘nature’”; thus, “Heaven” is regarded as the ultimate source of cosmic order and the originator of moral laws. The legitimacy of earthly rulers (“Son of Heaven”) rests entirely on their ability to echo “Heaven’s virtue” through their own “virtue.” The saying goes: “Heaven has no favorites; it supports only those who embody virtue” (from the Shangshu). Only virtuous governance can “follow Heaven and win the hearts of the people”; otherwise, it will lose its legitimacy. At the heart of the concept of “the unity of Heaven and humanity in virtue” lies the principle of subjecting human actions to a higher moral scrutiny, emphasizing humanity’s ethical responsibilities and mission toward both nature and society.

In Islam, the concept of “vicegerency on earth” is predicated upon the belief in the Oneness of God. As stated in the Qur’an: “I will surely establish a vicegerent on earth,” it clearly affirms that humanity is entrusted by Allah to be His steward on earth. Allah alone possesses absolute sovereignty; humans are merely holders of this “trust”—neither conquerors of nature nor owners of all creation. Rather, they are called upon to maintain

ecological balance and social harmony through justice, mercy, and moderation. At its core, this “trust-based” relationship likewise positions humanity as the “subject of responsibility,” whose actions must conform to the guidance of Allah.

The Confucian principle of “matching virtue with Heaven” is not merely an abstract concept; rather, it is concretely embodied in specific practical responsibilities. Confucius emphasized “cultivating oneself to bring peace to others” (from the *Analects*), while Mencius advocated “respecting one’s own elders and extending that respect to the elders of others, cherishing one’s own young and extending that care to the young of others” (from Mencius). These teachings externalize “virtue” as concern for others and society. Moreover, the Daoist wisdom of “following the Way of Nature” and the Confucian practice of “using axes and hatchets only at the proper time when entering mountains and forests” (from Mencius) extend “virtue” further to include respect for nature and oppose overexploitation of natural resources. In short, the principle of “matching virtue with Heaven” calls upon individuals to govern all their actions with a “benevolent heart.” Through the progressive stages of “cultivating oneself, regulating one’s family, governing the state, and bringing peace to the world,” it seeks to achieve holistic harmony among the individual, society, and nature.

In Islam, the concept of “vicegerency on earth” is grounded in a framework of “comprehensive responsibility.” This system of responsibility encompasses four dimensions: faithfully adhering to the true faith toward the Creator; cultivating one’s own intellect and morality; practicing justice and mutual assistance toward fellow human beings; and promoting sustainable use and conservation of the natural environment. The Qur’an warns that “corruption has appeared on land and in the sea because of what the hands of people have earned.” (J. Ma 2013, p. 206). Moreover, the Sunnah explicitly prohibits causing unnecessary harm to animals and indiscriminately cutting down trees, thereby incorporating ecological conservation into the sacred duty of “vicegerency.” This sense of responsibility toward the environment resonates with the Confucian principle of “all people are my siblings and all things are my companions” (Zhang Zai’s “Western Inscription”). While the former is bound by the concept of “trust,” the latter is rooted in “benevolence”; ultimately, both point toward the harmonious coexistence of humans and nature.

The alignment between “matching virtue with Heaven” and “vicegerency on Earth” fundamentally represents two civilizations’ shared answer to the question of “what it means to be human”: Humans attain dignity precisely because they are “entrusted,” and they realize their value precisely by “taking responsibility.” In today’s world, where ecological crises and social divisions are intensifying, this “ethics of responsibility” transcends cultural differences and offers crucial insights for building a community with a shared future for humanity. It neither indulges in the arrogance of anthropocentrism nor succumbs to the nihilism of passive withdrawal from the world; rather, guided by “virtue” and “trust,” it leads humanity forward with reverence and enables us to create a better world through our collective responsibility.

4.4. A Dialectical Understanding of Pluralistic Unity: The Wisdom of Harmony in Diversity and Bounded Inclusiveness

Faced with the diversity of the real world, both civilizations have developed a dialectical wisdom that avoids both forced assimilation and laissez-faire fragmentation, striving to embrace differences within unity and seek harmony amidst diversity. This wisdom stems from profound philosophical reflections on the relationship between “the one” and “the many.”

As previously mentioned, ancient Chinese thinkers offered profound and insightful elaborations on the wisdom of “harmony and integration”: “Harmony gives rise to life; sameness, however, leads to stagnation,” clearly pointing out that only the harmonious

integration of diverse elements can give rise to all things, whereas uniform repetition will inevitably lead to decline. Confucius's proposition of "harmony in diversity" elevated the dialectical attitude toward differences to the standard for a noble character. "Harmony" is precisely the unification of diversity, the coordination of different voices and differing opinions under the guidance of higher principles; in contrast, "sameness" is mere uncritical agreement devoid of any principle. Thus, the ideal "Great Unity" is not a rigid uniformity of culture or thought, but rather a vibrant state of harmony characterized by "all things growing together without harming one another; the Way proceeding in parallel without conflicting." (W. J. Wang 2016, p. 822). This wisdom recognizes the positive value of diversity and strives to employ the wisdom of the "Doctrine of the Mean" to find dynamic equilibrium points that enable differences to coexist harmoniously.

In its theological and historical practice, Islamic civilization has developed its distinctive "bounded inclusiveness" model. On one hand, through the affirmation of the oneness of God, it has established a strong and clear core of faith that forms the foundation of the Ummah's unity. On the other hand, it recognizes and accommodates diversity within certain limits. The Qur'an explicitly states: "If your Lord had willed, He could have made all people one single community. Yet they will continue to differ—except those whom your Lord has shown mercy." (J. Ma 2013, p. 114). This is regarded as the established way ordained by Allah. Meanwhile, it should be acknowledged that certain verses in the Quran appear exclusive on the surface: "Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it shall never be accepted from him, and he will be among the losers in the Hereafter." (J. Ma 2013, p. 29). Mainstream Muslim scholars generally adopt two interpretive approaches to such passages. The first is contextual interpretation, which holds that this verse refers specifically to those who stubbornly reject Islam after clearly recognizing its truth, rather than applying to all non-Muslims in general. The second is holistic reconciliation. By cross-referencing these verses with the more fundamental principle in the Quran that "My mercy encompasses all things", scholars argue that Allah's compassion prevails over punishment, and the final judgment over faith rests solely with Allah. Such internal tensions precisely reflect the complexity and vitality of the Islamic tradition in addressing pluralism.

In practice, the Constitution of Medina recognized the autonomous status of different religious tribes, while the mature Islamic empire developed the "Dhimmi" system, which legally granted non-Muslims (primarily the People of the Book) the right to maintain their own faith and certain legal practices, provided they submitted to the authority of the state and paid the jizya tax. This model sets "boundaries" by accepting Islamic political authority and certain fundamental rules, while allowing for the coexistence of religious and cultural differences within these boundaries. Although it falls short of modern notions of equality, in the pre-modern world, it offered an institutionalized framework for governing diverse societies.

In the modes of thinking of both civilizations, two extremes in dealing with heterogeneity have been rejected: "absolute homogenization," which forcibly eliminates differences, and "absolute fragmentation," which allows conflicts to run rampant. Chinese civilization, through its philosophy of "harmony," emphasizes the complementary and creative nature of differences, striving for an organic unity in which "the one contains the many" and "the many coalesce into the one." Islamic civilization, meanwhile, through the institutional practice of "bounded inclusiveness," seeks to accommodate diversity—"the many"—under the core identity of "the one." Both approaches aim to establish a dialectical balance between "the one" and "the many," recognizing that managing diversity requires sophisticated political wisdom and ethical principles. This offers invaluable classical intellectual resources and philosophical insights for today's globalized era, showing how we

can fully respect the diversity of civilizations, institutions, and development paths while safeguarding shared human values and interests.

4.5. Conclusions

The above comparative analysis reveals that, despite emerging from distinct geographical settings and historical contexts, Chinese civilization and Islamic civilization share profound consensus on the fundamental philosophical ideas concerning humanity's survival and development.

First, both emphasize the integrity of humanity. Transcending narrow nation-state perspectives, they regard humankind as a community with a shared future, laying an ideological foundation for communal identity.

Second, both pursue a moral order. They maintain that sound social and political governance must be rooted in morality and justice, and reject politics driven solely by power and interest-seeking.

Third, both advocate undertaking a shared mission for humanity. Humans are not absolute rulers of the world, but bearers of duties entrusted by a supreme transcendental power—the Mandate of Heaven and Allah, respectively. They are bound by ethical responsibilities toward nature and society.

Fourth, both hold a dialectical understanding of the unity amid diversity of the world. They offer a mindset for handling civilizational differences that rejects forced assimilation and unchecked conflicts alike, establishing a methodological basis for pluralistic coexistence in the era of globalization.

These profound convergences between the two civilizations are not coincidental similarities, but stem from their fundamental reflections on leading a meaningful life and building a virtuous society. The millennia-long dialogue between them, along with the ideas and wisdom of community embodied therein, provides a solid and profound philosophical underpinning for building a community with a shared future for mankind.

They jointly demonstrate that a vision of global order—one that aims at the overall well-being of humanity, is grounded in universal moral justice, and relies on respecting differences while fostering harmony—is deeply embedded in the spiritual DNA of humanity's major civilizational traditions. A deeper understanding of the communal ethos and wisdom crystallized within Chinese and Islamic civilizations enables us to transcend the narrow framework of the so-called “clash of civilizations” and instead embrace the perspective of civilizational integration. It allows us to fully recognize that the concept of building a “community with a shared future for mankind” represents, under new historical conditions, a creative inheritance and contemporary synthesis of these ancient and profound civilizational insights—a path that provides fundamental guidance and direction for constructing lasting peace and universal prosperity in a world characterized by profound uncertainty.

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- ¹ On 11 March 2018, the First Session of the 13th National People's Congress of China adopted a constitutional amendment, which wrote the initiative to promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind into the Constitution. The United Nations Security Council and the United Nations Human Rights Council respectively incorporated the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind into their resolutions at meetings held on 17 March and 23 March 2017.

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