“China’s New Foreign Policy under President Xi Jinping”: The Concept of the Great Rejuvenation of Chinese Nation.

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Abstract
This article firstly proposes a briefly explanation about the concept the “Great Rejuvenation” of Chinese nation according to President Xi Jinping’s “thought”, and secondly contributes to the debates on the influence of memory in International Relations (IR), by showing how constructed memories of history can significantly impact both national identity and foreign policy. The emergence of China as a great power has been accompanied by the official rhetoric of the China’s Dream of “Great Rejuvenation” (weida fuxing 大复兴) as its new foreign policy strategy under the leadership of Chinese President Xi Jinping in this context of modern and contemporary world politics. Xi Jinping’s current rhetoric of a Chinese “Dream of Great Rejuvenation” during this last decade, uses a reinvented history as an asset for the future, linking China’s natural progress as a global power with a selective re-reading of its millennial history. Although there are conflicting views among academics and political elites about the exact content of the concept of “Great Rejuvenation”, one of its features is the nostalgia for China’s past and its five-thousand-year-old civilization. Considering like the second largest provider of funding among all member countries of the United Nations (UN) and the largest contributor of peacekeepers among the five permanent members of the (UN) Security Council, China is playing an irreplaceable role for the solutions of a series of international hotspot issues, and has become a pillar of strength in safeguarding multilateralism and advancing reform of the international system. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in 2012, the CPC Central Committee with Xi Jinping at its core has shown clearly their ambition at the torch of history and led the whole Party and the Chinese people in forging ahead with determination and an innovative and pioneering “spirit dream” which focus on the realization of “national renewal as a goal”. According to Xi’s thought, all Chinese people of all ethnic groups must join effort to this original aspiration philosophy of the “Great Rejuvenation of Chinese Nation” as historic mission in order to achieve a really national independence and making China prosperous and strong, and this will profoundly change the future of the Chinese nation and the developmental landscape and trends for promoting human progress.

Key words: China’s New Foreign Policy, Xi jinping, Rejuvenation of Chinese Nation

I- Introduction
In November 2012, President Xi introduced the “China Dream” concept, which envisions the “great renewal of the Chinese nation” and the advancement of an international system in which China’s successful rise provides an attractive alternate political model to Western ones, Xi Jinping (China Dream 2013)\(^1\). The “great rejuvenation of Chinese nation” as “Chinese new dream” is a phrase that has been repeated as Beijing priority since the transition to the Xi Jinping administration. This phrase should not be dismissed as simply to the administration’s slogan, but should be seen as “satisfying” an important functions, such as giving the political system performance legitimacy to protect and restore the “prominence of Communist Party of China (CPC)”, rallying the public together by reducing level of “poverty”, fighting against “hungry” and doubling “Chinese Growth Direct Products (GDP)” as a new national strategy goal in terms of foreign policy as well\(^2\). The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), increased foreign investment and a stronger maritime

\(^1\) “Xi Jinping and the Chinese Dream,” The Economist May 4, 2013, p 11 (editorial)

\(^2\) (Ibid 1)
policy are just some of the ways in which President Xi Jinping is pursuing a more active role in international affairs. The past five years have witnessed significant transformations in Chinese foreign policy. For decades, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) pursued Deng Xiaoping’s strategy of keeping a “low profile” in international affairs.

Since taking over as the new leader of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 2013, Xi Jinping has created a heated discussion in China and abroad over his use of the phrase, “Chinese Dream.” In his various public speeches, he has repeatedly emphasized that achieving the Chinese Dream of a “great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation” was his government’s main objective. While this has been applauded enthusiastically at home, people outside of China have struggled to ascertain the precise meaning of Xi’s statement, Zhang Wang (2013)³.

However, there have been significant changes in Chinese foreign policy since Xi came to the power. It has been widely observed that under the new leadership headed by President Xi Jinping, Beijing has become more assertive in international affairs. It argues that recent international behavior of China is the manifestation of a new phase of Chinese foreign policy that could be defined as “peaceful rise or harmonious coexistence”. In this analysis, while Beijing still adheres to its declaring “peaceful development” policy aiming to maintain a stable external environment conducive to its ascendance, the manner in which it seeks to do so are considerably different from past decades.

What are the main characteristics of China’s foreign policy according to XI’s “great rejuvenation” vision as Chinese dream? What does China’s President Xi Jinping want for China? What do” Harmonious world and peaceful rise” imply for China’s energy diplomacy in the international system? How could we analyze China’s new role in the world affairs? Will Xi succeed in growing China sufficiently to displace the U.S. as the world’s top economy and most powerful actor in the Western Pacific? Can he make China great again? How will Xi’s governance applies these new concepts in the management of its territorial disputes and conflicts with its neighbors, Japan, India, and countries in the South-China Sea, and its sovereignty claims over Taiwan?

However, our researches will move around those hypothesis.

1-1- The Main Characteristics of China’s Foreign Policy: The Pillars of Chinese Foreign Policy

The” Five Principles of Peaceful coexistence “(Five Principles) are the pillars of China’s foreign policies when China is forming foreign policy with all the other States. They are as follows: 1) Mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; 2) Mutual non-aggression; 3) Mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs; 4) Equality and mutual benefit; 5) peaceful coexistence. In December 1953, Premier Zhou Enlai (1898-1976) received the delegation of the Indian government and made the first ever proposal of the Five Principles and made the same suggestion at the First Asian-African conference in Bandung (Indonesia), in April 1955⁴. Although China would become a power, it would not pretend to be a leader because of “hiding intention and taking some advantages” (Tao guan, yanghui you and Suo zuowei in China Panorama, 2012) policy was still the most important most of Chinese foreign policy⁵. The Soft Power concept and a Rising China are determined by many factors. After three decades of phenomenal economic growth, China has become a global economic power. It became the world largest exporter in 2009.

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https://thediplomat.com/2013/02/chinese-dream-draft/ retrieved on 22 April 2022


⁵ ( Ibid 1)
nominal gross domestic product (GDP) surpassed Japan to become the second largest in the world in 2010. All that was become a reality thanks to China’s independence foreign policy of peace, (World Bank, 2012).

The fundamental goals of this policy are “to preserve China’s independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, create a favorable international environment for China’s reform and opening-up and modernization construction, maintain world peace and propel common development”.

In this fact, we notice that China’s policies are based on the following main elements. From this, China remains ready, together with the international community, to enhance cooperation to address the global problems facing mankind including worsening environment, resources scarcity, unemployment population explosion, AIDS and rampant transnational crimes.

However, we notice today that, the Five Principles have become a general principle for dealing with international relations actors as Beijing philosophy.

1-2- The Understanding of the Concept of the Great Rejuvenation as “Xi’s Dream or Thought”

According to President Xi’s word, the concept of the “Great Rejuvenation” of Chinese Nation refers to “a peaceful and prosperous country as well as a happy and stable society is not just part of the Chinese dream, but a common aspiration of the world. In a way the Chinese dream is not just about China, but represents the common value and ideals of all human beings”.

Four years before Donald Trump became president, Xi became the leader of China and announced an epic vision for China as his new dream, which is to “make China great again “calling for “the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.”

Xi is so convinced he will succeed in this quest to renew his country for political survival: Never state a target objective and a specific date in the same sentence. Within a month of becoming China’s leader in 2012, Xi specified deadlines for meeting each of his “Two Centennial Goals.” First, China will build a “moderately prosperous society” by doubling its 2010 per capita GDP to $10,000 by 2021, when it celebrates the 100th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party. Second, it will become a “fully developed, rich, and powerful” nation by the 100th anniversary of the People's Republic in 2049. If China reaches the first goal which it is on course to do the International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates that its economy will be 40% larger than that of the U.S. (measured in terms of purchasing power parity). If China meets the second target by 2049, its economy will be triple America's.

Xi Jinping declared his overarching ambition for China in a single phrase: “The greatest Chinese dream is the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.” His “China Dream” combines prosperity and power equal parts Theodore Roosevelt’s muscular vision of an American century and Franklin Roosevelt’s dynamic New Deal. It captures the intense yearning of a billion Chinese: to be rich, to be powerful, and to be respected. Xi exudes confidence that in his lifetime China can realize all three by sustaining its economic miracle, fostering a patriotic citizenry, and bowing to no other power in world affairs.

Xi Jinping’s thought on diplomacy is the compass guiding China at a critical stage in history in which it is moving to the center stage of the world and striving to achieve national rejuvenation. It is the theoretical basis for China’s endeavors to build a new type of international relations and a community with a shared

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6 Wang Lei, “Xi Jinping’s Thought on Diplomacy and China’s Position in the New Era” 2018-06-27 07:07:00, Source : China Today.
future for mankind, and to implement major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, Wang Lei (2018).\(^7\)

Wang Lei continues and argues that, during his report to “the 19th National Congress of the CPC”, Xi defined the new era we are now in as “an era that sees China moving closer to center stage and making greater contributions to mankind.” It should be noted that the country is “moving closer” instead of standing at the center stage, an insightful observation of the reality that evolution of the international situation has accelerated and China’s international status is rising swiftly. This is the precondition for our diplomatic work today.\(^8\)

Xi Jinping’s thought on diplomacy is the most important guideline for China to maintain strong growth momentum, and consolidate and increase its international influence, ability to inspire, and power to shape up in a well-planned, phased, and step-by-step manner. Under this thinking, China set the years 2035, by which socialist modernization is expected to be basically achieved, and 2050, by which a prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious, and beautiful phased process of building itself into a great, modern socialist country. This reflects China’s strategic and historical vision and its commitment to world peace and development.

1-3- **China’s National Strategy: Xi’s “Dream for the New China”**

Xi leaders have outlined a vision of national development and revitalization, known as the “Chinese Dream.” This dream seeks to ensure economic prosperity, social stability, and an overall higher quality of life for Chinese citizens. It also seeks to restore national prestige and assure China’s rise as a prosperous and powerful nation. Beijing’s domestic policy agenda reflects this focus, encompassing economic goals to raise per capita income, political goals to ensure continuity of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) rule, social welfare goals to encourage internal stability, cultural goals to promote the CCP’s morals and values, and environmental goals to improve environmental conditions, Timothy R. Heath, Kristen Gunness, Cortez A. Cooper (2016).\(^9\)

After studying the man, listening to his words, and speaking to those who understand him best, we believe for Xi this means:

- Returning China to the predominance it enjoyed in Asia before the West intruded;
- Reestablishing control over the territories the Communist Party considers to be “greater China,” including not just Xinjiang and Tibet on the mainland, but Hong Kong and Taiwan;
- Recovering its historic sphere of influence along its borders and in the adjacent seas so that others give it the deference great nations have always demanded;
- Commanding the respect of other great powers in the councils of the world.

\(^7\) (Ibid)  
\(^8\) (Ibid)  
At the core of these national goals is a civilizational creed that sees China as the center of the universe. In the Chinese language, the word for China, zhong guo (中国), means “Middle Kingdom.” “Middle” refers not to the space between other, rival kingdoms, but to all that lies between heaven and earth. Xi Jinping has promised his fellow citizens: no more.

According to Xi’s political mentor Lee, a nation’s leader must “paint his vision of their future to his people, translate that vision into policies which he must convince the people are worth supporting, and finally galvanize them to help him in their implementation.” Having painted a bold vision of the China Dream, Xi is aggressively mobilizing supporters to execute a hugely ambitious agenda of action advancing on four related fronts.

As the primary driver of the entire venture, Xi’s first imperative in realizing the China Dream is to re-legitimize a strong Chinese Communist Party to serve as the vanguard and guardian of the Chinese state. Shortly after taking office, Xi told his Politburo colleagues that “winning or losing public support is an issue that concerns the CCP’s survival or extinction.” And he bluntly warned them: “Corruption could kill the party.” Quoting Confucius, he vowed to “govern with virtue and keep order through punishments.” Xi launched an anticorruption campaign of unprecedented scale led by his closest associate, Wang Qishan. The effort was dubbed the “tigers and flies” campaign since it promised to ensnare corrupt officials whether they were mere low-level “flies” or high-ranking “tigers.”

And in contrast to Gorbachev’s glasnost openness to ideas, Xi has demanded ideological conformity, tightening control over political discourse. At the same time, Xi has moved to cement the party’s centrality in China’s governance. Shortly after Xi took power, we realize that his ambition to change People’s thought: “The key to running things well in China and realizing the China Dream lies in the party.”

Second, Xi must continue to make China wealthy again. He knows the Chinese people’s support for CCP rule still depends largely on its ability to deliver levels of economic growth no other nation has achieved. But continuing China’s extraordinary economic performance will require perpetuating a unique high-wire act. Xi is acutely wary of the middle-income trap that has ensnared many developing countries as rising wages erase their competitive edge in manufacturing, and his unambiguous promise of 6.5% growth per year through 2021 demands what some have described as “sustaining the unsustainable.”

However, there is general agreement about what China must do to continue growing at that pace for many years to come. The key elements are stated in China’s most recent five-year economic plan, including: accelerating the transition to domestic consumption-driven demand; restructuring or closing inefficient state-owned enterprises; strengthening the base of science and technology to advance innovation; promoting Chinese entrepreneurship; and avoiding unsustainable levels of debt.

Given the scope and ambition of Xi’s plan, most Western economists and many investors are bearish that he can deliver.

10 (Ibid)
11 “Xi Jinping and the Chinese Dream,” The Economist May 4, 2013, p 11 (editorial)
12 (Ibid)
13 (Ibid)
Third, Xi is making China proud again. Economic growth alone is not enough: Even as Deng’s market reforms broadened rapid economic growth after 1989, the party struggled to articulate its rising phases when its titular communism was in name only. Why should the Chinese people allow it to govern them? The party’s answer is a renewed sense of national identity that can be widely embraced with pride among a billion Chinese.

Finally, Xi has pledged to make China strong again. He believes that a military that is “able to fight and win wars” is essential to realizing every other component of the China Dream. “To achieve the great revival of the Chinese nation,” he has argued, “we must ensure there is unison between a prosperous country and strong military.” While all great powers build strong militaries, this “Strong Army Dream” is especially important to China as it seeks to overcome its humiliation at the hands of foreign powers (Alum Maria Adele Carrai, 2020).

II- The Harmonious Development Under Xi’s Foreign Policy

2-1- The Peaceful Transformation of Chinese Society

Xi’s foreign policy to date has been conducted free from the reality of a prolonged lower-growth trajectory. An analysis of that foreign policy, which bears his imprimatur, is necessary before speculating about its future direction in the wake of China’s unfolding economic retrenchment. Xi’s transformation of China’s domestic politics has ushered in a new era in the country’s external behavior, but the break from previous foreign policy, though significant, is not as dramatic as some might assume. Xi has taken pains to highlight his departure from what he regards as the weak policies of China few years ago. In many cases, however, Xi’s policies and strategic objectives exhibit continuity with those of the last few years of his predecessor’s tenure, which saw increased assertiveness on territorial matters in the East China Sea, South China Sea, and Indian border, as well as the use of coercive geo-economic tools against others and strident objections to U.S. power projection into the region.

What sets Xi’s foreign policy apart the most is his willingness to use every instrument of statecraft, from military assets to geo-economic intimidation, as well as explicit economic rewards, to pursue his various geopolitical objectives. Although China has used geo-economic instruments for more than fifteen years, the current leadership under Xi Jinping controls more wealth than any other government in Chinese history and exhibits a greater willingness to use it in an assertive, nuanced, and diversified way to simultaneously induce cooperation and penalize recalcitrance.

In general, Xi’s policy has been characterized by bullying over territorial issues and selective beneficence on economic matters, with the looming application of economic coercion ever present. His ability to implement such a policy has been facilitated by his centralization of policymaking.

This approach has been clearest in China’s relations with Southeast Asian states, many of which are embroiled in a simmering territorial dispute with Beijing over the South China Sea. China has so far refrained from seizing additional islands; nevertheless, it has been much more assertive with the other claimants to the South China Sea.

Beijing’s hardening position on these territorial disputes has been accompanied by generous investment and trade packages to Southeast Asian states, and these too appear to be coordinated centrally to geo-political ends. In 2014, China pledged more than $20 billion in aid to Southeast Asian states. Asian

14 Alum Maria Adele Carrai “Chinese Political Nostalgia and Xi Jinping's Dream of Great Rejuvenation” Published online by Cambridge University Press: 29 July 2020
Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and Beijing’s One Belt, One Road initiative, which would provide tens of billions of dollars more in infrastructure financing to that region, have been the focus of a working group personally led by Xi, who himself announced the initiatives during a visit to Southeast Asia. A mixture of hard and soft policies has likewise characterized China’s relations with India.

Beijing’s will positions on the border have been accompanied by offers of lavish aid for Indian infrastructure and increased investment in Indian companies. When Xi visited in 2014, he pledged to help India modernize its railway system, establish high-speed rail in India, build industrial parks in Gujarat and Maharashtra, and expand market access for select Indian goods. He also pledged $20 billion in aid over five years (AIIB). China has also increased its diplomacy in the rest of South Asia, offering Pakistan $46 billion in new aid, dispatching nuclear submarines to Sri Lanka, selling arms to Indian neighbors such as Bangladesh, and even providing eight new submarines to Pakistan to help it offset India’s naval advantage all of which puts pressure on Indian security and strengthens China’s in the region.

Xi’s foreign policy is not only balanced across hard and soft tools of statecraft but also diversified across its bilateral targets. Xi has pursued an omnidirectional foreign policy that also emphasizes ties with European Union (EU) members, Brazil, South Africa, and especially Russia. But it also based on this words hold in 18th congress of CPC which consist “to promote the establishment of a new type of major-country relationship between China and the US; and to achieve sound interactions and mutually beneficial cooperation between China and other major countries. This thinking represents a strategic choice that is based on a comprehensive review of past lessons, an accurate grasp of current trends, and our efforts to integrate China’s interests with those of other countries. At the same time, it is also an important precondition for the fulfillment of our “two centennial goals,” and an inherent requirement of our overall strategy of peaceful development” (The Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC, President Xi Jinping’s Speeches).

2-2 – The Peaceful Foreign Policy Under Xi Jinping for Promoting Human Progress

In response to intense international interest over the policy direction of the CPC Central Committee with Xi Jinping as General Secretary after the Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC, General Secretary Xi Jinping chose to make his diplomatic debut by meeting with representatives of foreign experts working in China. Following this, the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee convened for a collective study session on China’s commitment to the path of peaceful development. On both occasions, General Secretary Xi Jinping delivered important speeches in which he spoke in detail about China’s strategy of opening up as well as its foreign policy. Through these remarks, Xi Jinping sent out a clear message to the international community that China’s new central leadership is committed to reform and opening up, to the path of peaceful development, and to a mutually beneficial strategy of

15 Yang Jiechi “Study and Implement General Secretary Xi Jinping's Thought on Diplomacy in a Deep-going Way and Keep Writing New Chapters of Major-Country Diplomacy with Distinctive Chinese Features”, 2017/07/17

16 The Eighteenth Chinese Party of Communism(CPC) National Congress at the Great Hall of People in Beijing, Capital of China, , President Xi Jinping’s Speeches)

17 (Ibid)
President Xi Jinping has made it clear that “the Chinese Dream is not only a dream for people of all ethnic groups in China, but also a dream for each and every individual in the country. In order to fulfill the Chinese Dream, we will need a peaceful and stable international and neighboring environment”, (The Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC, President Xi Jinping’s Speeches)

The relationship between foreign policy and national defense strategy is intimate. Each aims to defuse internal and external threats but in different ways. Diplomacy, in this context, is the political means to prevent and failing that, to resolve crisis situations. From that, we should return that China’s diplomacy of peaceful rise reflects a level of nervousness in dealing with a situation where the world’s average economic growth has been far below that of China. “Peaceful rise” is thus diplomacy to convince those in doubt about China’s benevolent intentions and behavior when it becomes more powerful. Chinese government under different generations of leadership has characterized its Foreign Policy in terms of principles and slogans. However, the basic principles and ideas of “Harmonious world and peaceful” concepts are not novel but linked to a number of past Chinese foreign policy principles and concepts One of these is Mao ZEDONG and Zhou ENLAI’s Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (Five PPCs).

The Five PPCs were introduced in 1954 and included mutual respect for sovereignty and territory integrity, mutual nonaggression, noninterference in each other’s affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. In this fact, we understand that the idea of harmonious world has gained traction among China’s policy makers and scholars because China’s economic growth, diplomatic successes, and rising military capacities, among other factors, have given Chinese political and intellectual elites the feeling that they can and should do more in world affairs, (Sujian GUO and Jean-Marc F.BLANCHARD, 2010).

From this, we could say that the harmonious world and peaceful concepts reflect a new level of Chinese foreign policy activism. The new concept acknowledged that China was rising, but stressed that China’s rise would be peaceful because the country was focused on its daunting internal problems and it was the fundamental interest of China to maintain a peaceful international environment. Furthermore, China’s rise would increase economic opportunities for others and promote peace while China would continue to improve its diplomacy relations with all countries. And would build a harmonious society through political reform.

On the other hand, China’s peaceful foreign policy is the concept of Chinese leadership to reassure the international community, particularly the United States and the existing major powers, that China’s rise would not be threatening to the existing world order and would not be a zero-sum game, but in other to

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19 The Eighteenth Chinese Party of Communism (CPC) National Congress at the Great Hall of People in Beijing, Capital of China, , President Xi Jinping’s Speeches)

20 Harmonious World and China’s New Foreign Policy, Edited by Sujian GUO and Jean-Marc F.BLANCHARD, Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto, 2010

21 (Ibid)
maintain stable and peaceful relationships with major powers and its neighbors. Although China insists that its ascendancy will be peaceful and conducive to a future harmonious world, other are still worried about living in the “dragon’s shadow” and China’s strategy interactions with other states in the Asia-Pacific\(^{22}\).

However, questions remain about the exact meanings of these principles and slogans and their policy implications for Chinese foreign policy behavior. For example, how will China apply these new concepts in the management of its territorial disputes and conflicts with its neighbors, Japan, India, and countries in the South-China Sea, and its sovereignty claims over Taiwan? What do” Harmonious world and peaceful rise coexistence” imply for China’s energy diplomacy in the international system?

III- China’s New International Role according to Xi’s words at the 19\(^{th}\) National Party Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC): The reinvigorate to achieve the dream of the great rejuvenation of China

3-1- The Main idea of the 19\(^{th}\) National Party Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC)

During his report to the 19\(^{th}\) National Party Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), President Xi outlined China’s new international role, stating that: “the Chinese nation ... has stood up, grown rich, and become strong – and it now embraces the brilliant prospects of rejuvenation ... It will be an era that sees China moving closer to center stage and making greater contributions to mankind.” He further described the PRC a, “mighty force” in international affairs and emphasized that the Chinese military: “must regard combat capability as the criterion to meet in all its work, and focus on how to win when it is called on.” Wang Jinye, Meng Na and Xu Lingui (2021)\(^{23}\). In an analysis of Party Congress speeches over the last 20 years. Xi also stressed that China neither intends to become an imperial power nor does it seek international dominance. Conversely, the PRC will behave as a “responsible great power”. All this leaves international observers puzzled: Some believe that China will remain a “responsible” status quo power while other see China’s nationalism as another sign of its revisionist ambitions in the 21\(^{st}\) century.

President Xi made the point that the PRC will never seek to “dominate” the world, indicating that the CPC leadership is well aware of the widespread perception of a “‘China threat” and understands that the country has to carefully consider the interests of its international partners\(^{24}\). Therefore, China is attempting to tread carefully to not just follow its own interests but seek out win-win scenarios. During his speech, Xi said that China will not pursue a “China first” policy, emphasizing that: “no country alone can address the many challenges facing mankind. No country can afford to retreat into isolation”. According to the CCP leadership under Xi, Beijing intends to stick to its international commitments such as the Paris Climate Change Accord or the Iranian nuclear deal\(^{25}\).

\(^{22}\) (Ibid)

Wang Jinye, Meng Na and Xu Lingui, “Guided by Xi Jinping’s thought on diplomacy, China’s major-country diplomacy in the new era” Source: Xinhua writers, 2021 -2-7

\(^{24}\) (Ibid)

\(^{25}\) (Ibid)
On the whole, China’s relations with its neighbors have moved forward in a more positive direction. While attending the Boa’o Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2013, and the state functions held on its sidelines, President Xi Jinping made continued efforts to introduce new ideas in China’s domestic and foreign policies, with a view to furthering mutual strategic trust between China and the countries in question and elevating our relations with neighboring countries, Yang Jiechi (2014)\textsuperscript{26}.

Nowadays, the world are witnessed to realize that China has engaged deeply in and facilitated the process of multilateral diplomacy. During meetings with the leaders of international organizations in New York in 2018, President Xi Jinping emphasized that “China, as an active advocator and practitioner of multilateralism, attaches great significance to the important role of the United Nations and other international organizations. China will fulfill its due international obligations by working closely with the relevant international organizations to maintain world peace and security, promote human development and progress, and address global issues and challenges. China has made new progress in developing its ties with major international organizations”.

3-2- The Face of Chinese Power: China on the road of Great Power

Traditionally, China has viewed itself as a center of world civilization. Now, Xi Jinping aims to be the leader who completes China’s road to “national rejuvenation” and make it a great power again Zheng Wang (2013)\textsuperscript{27}.

Coupled with the reform to the structure of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA), many Western journalists and observers fear a nationalist and self-interested China willing to do anything to push its own interests in world affairs. Although China’s rise and Xi’s self-confidence will no doubt lead to changes in global affairs and will permit to China to be active in the International Arena than last five years. More crucially, such fears overlook three significant points made in Xi Jinping’s speech at the Party Congress.

China’s increasing investments around the world are literally “buying” the country international influence. However, these investments also increase China’s interest in peace and stability, and thus make China a more predictable international actor. In order to ensure the sustainability of its international investments and influence, Beijing needs to provide public goods globally which will in turn promote international stability. The Belt and Road Initiative (formerly “One Belt, One Road”) is a perfect example of this policy drive. As a global infrastructure development scheme, the Belt and Road was in part introduced to export economic surpluses (like cement and steel) through heavy investment in politically unstable countries such as Pakistan. In doing so, the PRC’s interest in a stable, prosperous and reliable Pakistan has substantially increased\textsuperscript{28}.

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\textsuperscript{27} Not Rising, But Rejuvenating: The "Chinese Dream" By Zheng Wang February 05, 2013 https://thediplomat.com/2013/02/chinese-dream-draft/ retrieved on 22, April 2022

\textsuperscript{28} The Eighteenth Chinese Party of Communism(CPC) National Congress at the Great Hall of People in Beijing, Capital of China, , President Xi Jinping’s Speeches
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Beijing has repeatedly emphasized its respect for the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states. Additionally, China has to reassure its international partners of its reliability. China can only do so if it proves a minimum degree of commitment to international rules and institutions.

Therefore, China is not advocating abandonment of a “rules based” international order altogether, but rather seeks to reform the system.

**3-3- The Future of Chinese Foreign Policy with Xi’s vision of Rejuvenation**

So much for what was new about the past five years. What about Chinese foreign policy during the next five years or the coming decade? Xi’s report to the 19th Party Congress offers some hints. This important document not only reviews the accomplishments of the past but also lays out in broad terms the priorities for the future.

The “great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation” received twenty seven mentions in the document, while a “global community of common destiny” and the “Belt and Road Initiative” received six and five, respectively. More importantly, these three terms are now enshrined in the Chinese Communist Party’s constitution through amendments adopted at the national congress. Meanwhile, the term “major country” was mentioned seven times, but there were no references to a “new type of major country relations.” Nevertheless, a “new type of international relations” received two mentions.

Taken together, these signs suggest that the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation will be Beijing’s top priority until 2049 the hundredth anniversary of the founding of Communist China. By then, as promised in Xi’s report, China will have become a “socialist, modern, and powerful country.” As Xi put it, “Socialism with Chinese characteristics in a new era means that the Chinese nation has stood up and become wealthy and that it is undergoing a great leap toward a powerful country.”

But the Chinese dream of national rejuvenation apparently goes beyond making China great again. Instead, Beijing appears to have committed itself to remaking the whole world via the Belt and Road Initiative and a new type of international relations, in particular into a global community of common destiny. Between vision and reality there can be a significant and sometimes insurmountable gap.

First and foremost, though a new type of major country relations (especially with the United States) vanished from Xi’s report, that doesn’t mean Washington is no longer relevant. On the contrary, as the preeminent power in the current international order, the United States is arguably the only other country in the world that can fundamentally shape the future of China.

Second, China’s relations with many of its neighbors such as Japan and Myanmar are fraught with problems. The Korean Peninsula in particular illustrates the challenges ahead for Chinese leaders. While North Korea appears to have changed from a fake friend to a real enemy, South Korea seems to have shifted.

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29 The Nineteenth Chinese Party of Communism(CPC) National Congress at the Great Hall of People in Beijing, Capital of China, , President Xi Jinping’s Speeches

30 (Ibid)
from a potential friend to a potential enemy. Beijing can choose its friends and enemies, but it cannot choose its neighbors. When surrounded by unfriendly neighbors, China or any country for that matter can hardly afford to entertain global ambitions.

Third, Chinese foreign policy makers appear to have been operating under the assumption that close economic ties will naturally lead to close political ties. But Beijing’s relations with Washington, Tokyo, and Brussels, to name some notables, have proved this assumption terribly wrong. To borrow from the late Samuel P. Huntington’s critique of U.S. foreign policy in the 1960s, economic cooperation and political trust “are two independent goals and progress toward the one has no necessary connection with progress toward the other.” Imports, investments, loans, and aid from China can make recipient countries more economically dependent on the Middle Kingdom, but such dependency often produces political resentment instead of strategic trust. If Beijing cannot break the curse of hot economics, cold politics that is, close economic ties but difficult political relations it may end up being a lonely great power: isolated, suspected, and resented. Perhaps President Xi is willing and able to effectively address these challenges and many others in the next five years. If so, world politics will truly be entering a new era.

IV- Conclusion

Overall, President Xi’s announcement that China’s international engagement will enter a new era brings with it both challenges and opportunities. The PRC aims to rewrite the rules of world affairs and make them more in line with its own interests by achieving its dream of the “great rejuvenation of Chinese nation” and intends to soften but not dissolve international institutions. Much the same can be said of international law, as China emphasizes that it complies with international law but tries to redefine core terms and concepts. It prefers vague legal norms that do not comprehensively limit sovereign state control.

However, Beijing is paying particular attention to China’s international reputation and is well aware that it needs to closely cooperate with other countries. China’s international relations of the new era will not be solely determined by the PRC but to a significant extent by the country’s international partners including the European Union (EU), United States (US) and others countries all over the world as a need for its policy of peaceful coexistence for China’s development.

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