Journal of Innovation and Development
ISSN: 2958-4752 | Vol. 1, No. 1, 2022

The Rise of China and the Reconstruction of Global Order: History and Reality

Zhaoyi Chen

The National University of Malaysia, Research Centre for History, Politics & International Affairs (SPHEA), Faculty of Social Sciences & Humanities,43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

Abstract: The first part of This paper explores the historical background of China's rise from the perspective of the changes of the world pattern. The second part discusses the new changes in China's social governance, people's living standards and international status from China's achievements in recent years, and then the third part explores the impact of the epidemic on the world pattern and the impact of China's rise on the post epidemic era.

Keywords: China's rise; COVID-19; Changes in international order.

1. Introduction

Since the beginning of this century, the international situation has been changing. The old-world order and pattern are transitioning from the old Western hegemony to the rise of developing countries represented by China. The non-Western world led by emerging economies such as China has stepped onto the historical stage, bringing about historic changes in the old world political and economic order. (Sutter, 2005) At the same time, with the spread of the COVID-19 in various countries in recent years, countries are facing serious public crisis and social crisis events. In the old world political and economic order, which was already in urgent need of reconstruction and faced with new changes, not only makes economic development face the risk of stagnation and regression, but also speeds up the process of social fragmentation and regime change. China maintains that it has always been committed to actively maintaining and improving the international multilateral system. It is clear that China has the ability to supplement and improve the existing international system and has become a force that cannot be ignored to maintain the order of the international governance pattern. The strength of China has become a key factor in maintaining stability in the Asia Pacific region. (Kang, 2007) For example, China's idea of building a community with a shared future for mankind and the "the Belt and Road" initiative are of great significance for building a multipolar and diversified international order. Since the COVID-19, China will play a more important role in the restructuring of the international order.

2. Background of China's Rise: Dramatic Changes in the World Situation

Entering the 21st century, the international situation has been highly volatile, international relations have been reshaped, and the main structure of the distribution of interests among major countries has undergone major changes. The “third wave of democracy "ebbed, and this wave of democracy began in the 1970s. After entering the new century, the momentum of the democratization wave has changed from the past, and it has begun to show fatigue. In many places, there have been cases of democratic collapse. What is democracy and how to define democracy have also become the focus of discussion. The ‘third wave of democracy” trends have ebbed after only 40 years. The United States centered unipolar system gradually began to decline. Looking back at history, the status of the United States as a superpower and absolute power began in the post-cold war period. During the Gulf War, the United States reached its peak in military, science, and economy. It once dominated the world pattern after the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, in recent years, the unipolar system has begun to waver. Although the United States is still the world's largest comprehensive national power, its status has been challenged. (Brooks & Wohlforth, 2015) Capitalist globalization is in trouble. In the past few decades, capitalist globalization has dominated the world's political and social order. However, with the collapse of the "Washington Consensus" and the impact of the U.S. financial foam, western social and economic growth has gradually slowed down, and the gap between rich and poor has widened. People in many countries and regions have begun to call for dramatic changes in the political and economic system. Therefore, this historical process that has been promoted for decades is facing the risk of transformation. In a word, the world centered on the West has shown a declining trend, and the non-Western countries represented by China have accelerated their rise. After entering the 21st century, the focus of the world power pattern will move to the east of the world, and Asia will become an important role on the stage of human history. (Paul, 2016) With the industrial revolution and the expansion of colonialism in western countries, the leading force of human development began to transfer to capital and technology. The leading force of the world has changed from "violence" in the original period to "capital" in recent centuries, and then to "innovation driven" advocated in this century. In recent years, China has grasped this development trend and begun to grasp the law of the transfer of the leading forces in world history in terms of policy formulation and resource tilt. Especially in recent years, China's determination to catch up with the world trend has been reflected in its efforts to build an innovative country, improve the ability of social independent innovation, and stimulate everyone's innovation potential.

3. The Meaning of China's Rise: The Enhancement of National Strength and the Improvement of People's Living Standards

In modern times, modern China, which pursued a policy of seclusion, left the world stage, and its national strength gradually weakened. Western countries dominated human history for more than 300 years. With the sudden change of the world pattern, three major trends leading the world pattern began to emerge. The religious trend represented by Islamic extremism, the semi-religious trend represented by American democracy promoted by the United States, and the modernization trend led by China reflected the rapid rise of China. China's unique political and economic system is not controlled by western countries. It is this unique model. China can continue to evolve and develop on its own unique model and logical path, and its rising momentum has been unstoppable. Since the founding of New China in 1949, especially since the reform and opening up in 1978, China's rise has been the largest and fastest industrialization process in human history, with unprecedented scale and speed. Over the past 40 years of reform and opening up, China's social productivity has improved significantly, and its social production capacity has entered the forefront of the world in many aspects. At this stage, China has put forward that it has solved the problem of food and clothing for more than one billion people and built a well-off society in an all-round way. Later, on the basis of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, China also proposed that it is necessary to build itself into a highly developed socialist modern country in all fields from 2035 to 2050.

The topic of China's rise has also been discussed by many scholars in the academic circle. Some scholars pointed out that China's development mainly depends on the gradual exploration since the reform and opening up, as well as on "taking the ride of globalization". They believe that China itself lacks clear values and has no clear institutional characteristics. Some scholars believe that China's success is accidental and unsustainable. (Pu & Wang, 2018) Chinese scholars pointed out that the establishment of socialist core values is a response to such misinterpretation and misunderstanding, and China has its own "value confidence". Most Chinese scholars believe that China has always advocated the establishment of a multipolar world pattern in order to establish a democratic, equal, just and reasonable international order. To this end, China has put forward many new diplomatic concepts, including building a community with a shared future for mankind, a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation, an open world relationship, a global partnership network and other global oriented concepts, as well as a new type of major country relations, the new concept of security in Asia and other concepts aimed at specific issues. In recent years, China has put forward new initiatives such as the "the Belt and Road" and the Asia Pacific Free Trade Area. In short, the rise of China is bound to reconstruct the world order and global order. It is worth pondering over how China can reshape the direction, power and path of globalization, whether it can lead the comprehensive rise of the non-Western world, whether it can build a more peaceful, just, inclusive and sustainable global order for mankind in the future, and whether it can replace the old Western centered order.

It is undeniable that in the past few years, China has made all-round achievements: in terms of economic construction, it has unswervingly implemented the new development concept, changed the development mode, and constantly improved the quality of development, and has now become the second largest economy in the world; More than 1500 reform measures were introduced, and breakthroughs were made in important areas and key links; Major strides have been made in building democracy and the rule of law. The concept of the rule of law in the whole society has been significantly enhanced. People's lives have been constantly improved. Major achievements have been made in the fight against poverty, and 60 million poor people have been steadily lifted out of poverty. (Bergsten, Freeman, Lardy, & Mitchell, 2008) The social governance system was improved, the overall social situation remained stable, and national security was comprehensively strengthened. The construction of ecological civilization has achieved remarkable results. The country's consciousness and initiative to implement the concept of green development have increased significantly, and the neglect of ecological environment protection has changed significantly. At the same time, China still recognizes itself as the largest developing country in the world, and socialism is still in the primary stage. The Chinese government pointed out that some outstanding problems of unbalanced and insufficient development have not been solved, and there is still a long way to go in terms of development quality, innovation ability, social services, ecological protection, etc.

4. The Rise of China and the Reconstruction of the World Order in the Post Epidemic Era

At present, in human history, there are only four things that can reconstruct society in a short time: famine, epidemic, war and technological revolution, and two of them are happening now. As we all know, the Black Death broke out in Europe in the 1440s, causing nearly 1/3 of the people in Europe to die. The religious power of the church in the Middle Ages contributed to the Renaissance. The COVID-19 that broke out at the end of 2019 has lasted for nearly three years. The domestic and international performance of major countries in the epidemic, their ability to respond to the epidemic, and the effect of economic recovery after the epidemic will directly determine their new international status, thus driving new changes in regional and world geo-economy, geopolitics, and international security patterns. The trend of the world order and pattern mainly depends on the new changes in the international balance of power after the epidemic.

The COVID-19 is the world's largest epidemic since the Spanish pandemic, leading to the largest economic shutdown since the Great Depression of 1930. In the fight against the epidemic from 2019 to 2020, almost all countries choose to let individuals freely subordinate to the public interest. Apart from lockdown, there is no better means to control the spread of the epidemic, which has caused a fatal blow to the service industry. However, the developed countries rely on the service industry. This has impacted the political liberalism trend of thought, and people have gradually realized that the liberalism trend of thought cannot solve the current predicament facing mankind. Many countries have gradually begun to learn and adopt China's response to the epidemic. (Baru, 2020) Different countries have different behaviors under the epidemic situation, which leads to the inevitability

of the system, the increasingly fierce competition of ideology and international influence, and intensifies the transformation of the world order.

The COVID-19 is intertwined with the changes in the world pattern in recent years, triggering a new round of deep transformation of the world governance system. The global pattern once again presents uncertainty and instability, and the epidemic has exacerbated the changes in the international political pattern. (Kolodko, 2020) Among them, the most striking thing is that the process of transferring the global geopolitical center from Europe on the Atlantic coast to East Asia on the Pacific coast is accelerating. At the same time, the continued global spread of the epidemic has led to an increasingly significant trend of multipolarization of the world order. Crises such as increased populism, rising protectionism, and lack of governance capacity are intensifying. The future international order will become more regional and fragmented. In retrospect, China has become one of the largest economies in Asia during the Asian financial crisis; In the world financial crisis, China has become one of the largest economies in the world. China often seizes opportunities in the crisis. It can be said that the world's largest economies are facing a competition in stimulating economic recovery. China's opportunities depend on the means and ideas that China and other economies in the world use to promote economic recovery. If China successfully responds to the epidemic, it will undoubtedly have a huge impact on the reshaping of the world order. China has the largest population base in the world and a huge market. Thanks to the strong control of the government, China has become the first country in the world to resume normal production and life, the only major economy in the world to maintain positive growth, and China's recovery is faster than expected. China plays a central role in the global economy and can help the world achieve a stronger recovery. At the same time, China's production capacity for epidemic prevention materials is very important for the world, and can meet the production capacity of international demand. In contrast, the economic aggregate of some G20 members has not reached the pre-epidemic level, and China will play a role as a driving force of world economic growth.

References

[1] Bergsten, F. C., Freeman, C., Lardy, N., & Mitchell, D.(2008).China's rise: Challenges and opportunities. Peterson Institute.

[2] Baru,V. R.(2020).Health systems preparedness during COVID-19 pandemic: China and India. Indian Journal of Public Health, 64 (6), 96.

[3] Brooks, G. S., & Wohlforth, C. W .(2015).The rise and fall of the great powers in the twenty-first century: China's rise and the fate of America's global position. International Security ,40 (3), 7-53.

[4] Kołodko, W. G.(2020).After the calamity: Economics and politics in the post-pandemic world. Polish Sociological Review ,210 (2), 137-156.

[5] Kang, C. D.(2007).China rising: Peace, power, and order in East Asia.Columbia University Press.

[6] Pu, X., &Wang, C.(2018).Rethinking China's rise: Chinese scholars debate strategic overstretch. International Affairs, 94 (5), 1019-1035.

[7] Paul, J.(2016).The rise of China: What, when, where, and why?.The International Trade Journal, 30 (3), 207-222.

[8] Sutter, G.R. (2005).China's rise in Asia:Promises and perils,Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.