

The Confucian Spirit and the Chinese Dream

Written by Yang Chaoming
Translated by Gu Wenguo et al



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About the author:

Yang Chaoming, born in 1962, is the researcher, doctoral tutor and dean of Confucius Research Institute. He serves as the vice president of International Confucian Association, the vice chairman and general secretary of Shandong Confucian Association, a member of the academic committee of China Confucius Foundation, the editorial board member of *Confucius Studies*, the vice president of Shandong Association of Zhouyi, the vice president of Shandong Association of Historians, the executive director of Chinese Association of Shijing, etc. In 2009, he won the titles of "Shandong Model of Teacher's Ethics" and "Shandong Excellent Teacher", and now serves as a member of the standing committee of Shandong Provincial People's Political Consultative Conference. He has published over 20 academic works, including *The Analects Revisited*, *The Interpretation of the Confucian School's Analects* and so on, and over 200 academic papers. He has given lectures and taken part in international academic exchange activities for many times by invitation in such countries and regions as South Korea, Japan, Europe, Macao, Hong Kong, Taiwan and so on.



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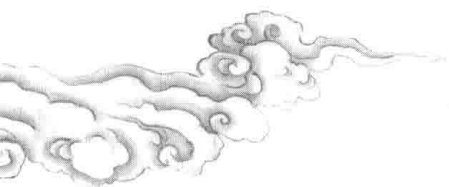
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Introduction :

Confucianism, the Chinese Dream and National Rejuvenation



The common faith of the Chinese nation contains extremely rich historical backgrounds and cultural elements, and constitutes the basis for realizing the Chinese Dream. Chinese excellent traditional culture advocates ceaseless self-improvement and self-discipline for social commitment, upholds "the world for all", and pursues the "Great Harmony" of the world. All these outstanding thoughts that derive from the Confucian spirit provide abundant nutrients for building the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, linking the Chinese Dream and Chinese excellent traditional culture together.

Confucianism is the Confucian ideology, which seems to only belong to the category of Chinese traditional thoughts and culture. Nevertheless, due to its feature, Confucianism not only influenced Chinese people of the past generations and made up the mainstream of traditional Chinese culture, but also still nourishes Chinese people as their value belief in their deep psychology today. The Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation could never be achieved without the remarkable Chinese Confucian culture.

The Chinese Dream is the important guiding ideology and ruling idea put up by General Secretary Xi Jinping after Chinese Communist Party held the 18th National People's Congress. General Secretary Xi Jinping officially put up this concept on November 29th, 2012, and defined it as follows: "Realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation constitutes the greatest dream of modern China." He unwaveringly stated that this dream would "definitely come true".

The core objective of the Chinese Dream can be summarized as "the two centenary goals". By 2021, the 100th anniversary of the founding of Chinese Communist Party, and 2049, the 100th anniversary of establishing the People's Republic of China, we will gradually and smoothly realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, in the forms of the affluence and power of our country, the revitalization of our nation and the happiness of the masses, through the ways of taking the Road of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, adhering to Socialist Theory System with Chinese Characteristics, carrying forward Chinese spirit, gathering all the Chinese strength, by means of the five aspects of construction: politics, economy, culture, society

and ecology.

As is known, the Chinese Dream is rich in connotation, far-reaching in implication, and shows the lofty pursuit of people first and social commitment. Without the prosperity and rejuvenation of our motherland, how can we keep away from being bullied and shoulder our errand as "dragon's descendants"? National power and people's affluence are closely connected, as national power is the fundamental security assurance for people's affluence and in turn, people's affluence is the internal drive for our national power. The masses' affluence and happiness are the intrinsic requirement of our development goal and national rejuvenation.

For the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, instead of simply dwelling on the past glory, we must make China, which is still a developing country and once bullied by the imperialist countries, boom in economy, thrive in politics, flourish in culture and harmonious in social order, and further become a prosperous, democratic, civilized and harmonious socialist modern country by 2050. We must endow the masses of the people with better education, more stable jobs, more satisfied income, more reliable social security, medical and healthcare services of higher level, more comfortable housing conditions, and a better environment. We must ensure that our children have sound growth, have good jobs and lead a more enjoyable life. We must make Chinese people lead a more affluent and dignified life and procure free and all-around development. In this way, China can partake in the international affairs in a more positive attitude together with other nations, cope with global challenges and solve the

problems faced by all human beings.

Obviously, the Chinese Dream, including "prosperity of our country, rejuvenation of our nation and happiness of the people", not only belongs to our country and nation, but also belongs to every Chinese people. As General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out, "in the last analysis, the Chinese Dream is Chinese people's dream", because "the great masses of the Chinese people will benefit greatly from the great rejuvenation of our nation". His important statements elucidate the nature and rich connotations of the Chinese Dream together with the interdependent, dialectical and unified relationship among our country, our nation and our people in fighting for the Chinese Dream. Therefore, the profound driving force of realizing the Chinese Dream originates from the heart-mind and value pursuit of every Chinese people. Because of this, General Secretary Xi Jinping remarked, "When a people have ideals, their country will have strength, and their nation will have a bright future."

The faith of Chinese people is equal to the social value system. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out, "Human beings have thousands of years of history of civilization. In this process, every nation inherited wisdom from their own ancestors while making innovative progress, meanwhile, different civilizations made dialogues and learned from each other." He further remarked, "Civilization, especially ideological culture, constitutes the soul of a country or a nation. Any country or nation that fails to cherish or even discards its own ideological culture can never establish itself in the world." The coming true of the Chinese Dream must be based on Chinese culture

that has lasted for thousands of years so as to seek the spiritual family for Chinese people.

Today's China evolved from historical China, and we should not break the continuity of history. In order to comprehend today's China, we must have a good knowledge of historical China. On August 19th, 2013, General Secretary Xi Jinping stressed at the National Publicizing and Ideological Work Conference that we must have the overall situation in mind, grasp the general trend, focus on the major events, and endeavor to do well in publicity and ideological work. He specially required the CPC to help the public form a more comprehensive and objective view of contemporary China and the outer world. To publicize and elucidate Chinese characteristics, we must make it clear that due to the differences among various countries and nations in historical tradition, cultural accumulation and basic national condition, there must exist diversified development paths of their own features. We must make it clear that as the profoundest spiritual aspiration of the Chinese nation, Chinese culture has advanced the flourish and development of the Chinese nation. We must make it clear that Chinese excellent traditional culture is the most prominent superiority of Chinese nation and the profoundest part of our cultural soft power. We must make it clear that socialism with Chinese characteristics has solid historical origins and broad realistic foundations as it is rooted in Chinese culture, reflects the will of the Chinese people, and conforms to Chinese development pace and the world trend. Chinese people have created Chinese culture with a long-lasting history, and will definitely bring its new glory. The

uniquecultural tradition, historical fate and basic national condition of China make our characteristic development path an inescapable choice.

In his speech, General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out we must adopt a sensible attitude to our traditional culture and the foreign ones and make use of them discriminately, making the past serve the present, adapting foreign things to Chinese needs, discarding the dross and selecting the essential, and eliminating the false and retaining the true. General Secretary Xi made a basic definition to traditional Chinese culture, holding that Chinese culture has become the spiritual gene and the most distinctive spiritual mark of Chinese nation, and constituted "the most prominent cultural advantage" and "profoundest part of our cultural soft power", which speaks out the voices of many scholars.

Confucianism, initiated by Confucius, revered as the Master by the later Confucians, constitutes the mainstream of Chinese excellent traditional culture. *Huainan Tzu - Yao Lüe* narrates the forming of Confucianism: "By practicing the Dao of Emperor Cheng, Emperor Kang of the Zhou Dynasty and inheriting Duke Zhou's thoughts, Confucius taught his seventy disciples and made them dress in Confucian dress and study the classics of the Zhou Dynasty, hence Confucianism arose." *The History of the Han Dynasty - Art and Literature Records* summarizes the characteristics of Confucianism: "Confucians derived from the officials in charge of civil administration, assisting rulers to comply with natural laws and promote social edification, devoted to six Confucian classics and pursuing Ren and Yi.