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Chinese Strategic Culture -

Part 2: Virtue and Power

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Centre for East-West Cultural and Economic Studies

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ABSTRACT

When the world's most populous nation, commanding ample resources and a booming economy, begins to strengthen militarily, it cannot help but draw attention to itself. China has indeed done so through naval expansion in recent years and the upgrading of all aspects of its forces. While it has reassured the world of its peaceful intentions, speculation as to its motives is understandable. Intentions may, of course, be inferred from capability; but most strategic analysts recognise that capability alone is not enough. Rather than focusing on capability, this paper subscribes to the view that intentions are better understood if examined within the context of culture and philosophy. Moreover, as the central concern over China's changing military profile is one of the implications of expanding national power, Chinese perceptions of power need to be addressed. The findings can be thought-provoking: If it is a truism that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely, how does this rest with the traditional Chinese conception of power as virtue? Will the world, under the influence of stronger Chinese leadership conditions in the 21st Century, be assimilated into an alternative power system - a 'power politics' of virtue? This question issues from the discussion in Part One (previous paper) of the Daoist perspective of international relations.(1) It concludes with the weight of cultural-philosophical evidence in favour of responsible statecraft on the part of the world's biggest and potentially most influential nation.

Chinese Strategic Culture: Virtue and Power (2)

Few people have difficulty recognising the greatness of Chinese antiquity even if they do find difficulty correlating this to the events of the last 150 years. Many are familiar with China's contemporary dimensions - an enormous country with the world's largest population and military establishment. More recently, attention has focused on the Chinese

economy which is among the world's fastest growing. By conventional indicators, China has the world's tenth largest Gross Domestic Product; but by the methodology based on purchasing power parity it is hailed to be the world's third largest economy (after the United States and Japan), and is expected to become the largest by the year 2010.(3)

It does not take an academic to predict the return of China as a leading world power. This is becoming abundantly clear to the casual observer. It behoves the analyst, however, to cast light upon this condition and to speculate upon the implications of China's 'greatness' to contemporary international society. One way of approaching this daunting task is through the explanatory vehicle of China's strategic culture. After all, if one is to understand strategic action, the means to global greatness, one needs to understand the strategic thought and 'style' that underlie it. It may also be productive to infer action from strategic thought when speculating on possible futures.

1. Daoist and Confucian Traditions

Two traditions prominent in Chinese strategic philosophy are Daoism (Taoism) and Confucianism. The first refers to The Way - "the way of man's cooperation with the course or trend of the natural world" (4) - its most famous teacher being Lao Zi (Tzu) who lived at some time between the sixth and the fourth centuries BC. The second was propagated by Confucius (551-471 BC), who sought harmony in social relations, and who is approvingly referred to by the current Communist government as "a great thinker and statesman".(5) Confucianism is essentially a humanistic tradition, elaborated by Mencius (second half of the fourth century BC). His concern with class conflict and the right to rebel against a ruler who has failed in his responsibility to the people (6) is also apparent in the cause of modern Communism. Indeed Mao Zedong (Tse-tung) probably owed as much to Chinese tradition as to Marx and Lenin. He is known to have been influenced by the classical text of Sun Zi (Tzu), *The Art of War* (7) (circa 350 BC), by historic tales such as the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms,* and - to use his own words - by "the works of Confucius" which Mao admitted to studying for six years.(8) Deng Xiaoping, a great strategist politically and a highly regarded figure by the military, has more in common with the Chinese tradition of rule by man than rule by institution.(9) He holds no position yet he has been acknowledged as paramount leader - a modern emperor whose 'mandate of heaven' (the command or decree from heaven) comes from leading the Chinese people into an unprecedented era of prosperity in modern times. This, too, is strategy: how to secure the security of the nation and its progress. While military matters are commonly linked to the notion of security, strategic philosophy ponders many factors in the equation of security. The strength of Chinese defence policy is therefore dependent upon not only an appropriate level of military deterrence, but also food security, industrial development, and advances in scientific and technological expertise - to name only the more obvious categories of consideration.(10)

Beyond extramilitary considerations of an essentially physical character, it is notable that the key strategic application of both the Daoist and Confucian traditions is the endeavour to excel through strength of character rather than force of arms. Right is might, and not the other way round. Fulfilling one's potential comes not from actively seeking it at the expense of the other (person, society or the environment), like a zero-sum-game ('I win, you lose'). It comes from incorporating the other, working with the other, in line with the complementary principles of polarity, 'yin' and 'yang'.(11) Even if that other is an opponent, one uses the strength of the opponent to achieve one's own safety. This, of course, is a basic principle of

the martial arts. The force of an attacking opponent is not met frontally but allowed to continue under its own momentum until it reaches its opposite condition of self-defeat. That Buddhist monks used this martial method indicates its ethical acceptability, in addition to its Daoist insight into the 'laws of nature', of which 'non-doing' is a central concept. (To this belongs the idea of *wu wei,* or spontaneous action). Indeed, it was a Buddhist strategist, Mingjiao of the 11th century, who wrote: "A lost country wars with weapons; a dictatorship wars with cunning; a kingdom wars with humanitarian justice; an empire wars with virtue; a utopia wars with nondoing."(12)

Mao Zedong used the Daoist philosophy of achieving strength (yang) from a position of weakness, flexibility, internal strength (yin). A 'weak' army does not directly oppose a 'strong' army. Rather, it flees to preserve itself. The 'strong' army, having entered the gates, finds it has not conquered, but is in turn being conquered by the exertion of its task in the face of a strategy of protracted war. For the defence, utilising guerilla warfare, there is no hurry. Time is an ally, it erodes the enemy's commitment, while unconventional warfare tactics prey on its morale. Mao's dictum - "the enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue" (13) derives its lineage from Sun Zi's *The Art of War:* "If [the enemy] is in superior strength, evade him. If he is taking his ease, give him no rest. If his forces are united, separate them. Attack him where he is unprepared, appear where you are not expected."(14)

The emphasis on deception and surprise is not to say that Mao and Sun Zi were unprincipled. This needs to be noted because in the West, where strategic honours have gone to Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) for his skilful use of physical force, there is a tendency to be dismissive of deceptive methods as 'Machiavellian' (even though Machiavelli did write a book on virtue called *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius,* which the West chose to ignore).(15) Was Mao Machiavellian when he converted a military retreat into a propaganda victory, as he did with the Long March? Is it unprincipled to disregard the enemy's terms of engagement and refuse to wear the markings of a combatant? Or to engage in battle-avoidance behaviour in order to confuse the enemy, as guerilla warriors do? Far from being unprincipled, these methods of warfare were in the service of a grander-scale strategy, which was based on a perceived just cause - in Mao's case, opposing an aggressor (Japan in the 1930s) or advancing the cause of the oppressed classes (through the Communist Revolution). Thus guerilla warfare or any kind of psychological warfare is only an enabling component of the strategy and doctrine of People's War. For Sun Zi, the use of armed force was nothing to be proud of - "to fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting".(16) Moreover, "the consummate leader" must not only "adhere to method and discipline" - that which we expect of leadership in any modern army - but also "cultivates the moral law".(17) How many strategic studies academic centres in the West teach this dimension? Not only are students not taught Lao Zi and Confucius, they are not normally required to study Plato and Aristotle, let alone to cultivate themselves. In general, the modern West uses a mechanistic model of the military: a machine which performs a specialist function in society. What a contrast to Zhuge Liang (born around 180 AD), a leading strategist of his day, who wrote: "The practice of a cultivated man is to refine himself by quietude and develop virtue by frugality. Without detachment, there is no way to clarify the will; without serenity, there is no way to get far."(18)

Leaving aside the tradition which elevates the cultivated being, there is still the problem of

political awareness. In Chinese, 'politics' literally means 'rectification', whereby "the purpose of the government is not only to provide food and maintain order but also to educate and mould the people into moral subjects".(19) Politics is therefore about morality. So is power - it equates with 'virtue'. Indeed, the one word, *De (Te),* can mean both.(20) Western armies are not expected to be political. The West divides the political from the military, which China has not done, even under the modernisation and professionalisation program of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). In short, politics is traditionally concerned with justice and moral order; power is based on virtue; armies are for enforcing this order. Hence the just war doctrine (21) suits Communist and classical strategic thought alike. Within the scope of a 'just war' is the self-defensive war which seeks to deny the enemy victory. Mao employed it in the strategy of People's War; similarly, the classical strategist Mo Zi taught victory-denial techniques to weak states which were at the mercy of strong ones.(22)

'Just war', however, is not a centrepiece in Chinese strategic thought. This is because war in itself is regarded as a phenomenon of failure, be it failure of political virtuosity in the realist sense (Machiavelli's *virtu*) or of moral leadership in the Confucian sense. The discarding of war as a tool of statecraft marks an important intersection in China's strategic cultures. At this juncture, Sun Zi's ideal general who "breaks the enemy's resistance without fighting" (quoted above), finds himself in the company of Mo Zi, of whom it was said: "Teaching that social well-being derives from universal love, Mozi described warfare as mass murder and ridiculed the states of his time for punishing individual thefts and murders while rewarding pillage and massacre"; (23) and Mencius who, it will be recalled from Part One (previous paper), instructed that peace could only come through unity. When asked who could unify the world, Mencius replied: "He who does not delight in killing men can unify it."(24) With the exception of the legalists, who *did* accept the instrument of force as a legitimate tool for forging unity and thence peace, Chinese strategic culture converged on an attitude of anti-militarism. Complementing this was the suggestion of inclusive *global* security, as outlined above in the yin-yang conception of 'incorporating the other'. China's own history taught that periods of horrific bloodshed and disorder occurred in contexts of rivalry and disunity; while periods of stability came when there was unity in China and Confucian suzerainty in the region.

Western theorists have long held such views about the international system as a whole. For instance, A. F. K. Organski wrote: "A preponderance of power on the one side . . increases the chances of peace, for the greatly stronger side need not fight at all to get what it wants, while the weaker side would be plainly foolish to attempt to battle for what it wants."(25) This raises an obvious consideration as to China's return to an unassailable position while preserving an anti-hegemonic stance. Before proceeding, however, a clarification of terms is in order.

2. Superpower: A Condition and a Concept

A nation which exhibits a preponderance of power is popularly termed a *superpower.* There are other terms, which sometimes overlap, to describe this condition. Hence *superpower* may not necessarily be an *empire* which has colonised other nations, but it can be. Both *superpower* and *empire,* in turn, need not be a *hegemonic* power; but it is possible to be all three. A *hegemon,* for its part, need not be an *empire* but it does need to exercise leadership by (a) setting the standard of international norms and rules of behaviour, and (b) acting as the guarantor of international stability. In this role of *hegemon,* a *superpower* is more aptly

described as a *metapower.* Here *meta* is used in the original Greek sense of 'after', rather than a theoretical layer of interpretation. *Metapower* refers to pervasive, indirect influence. Its historical approximation may be identified as *suzerainty.* Legally, this refers to the political control of one state over another, but historically, as Adam Watson explains, "it means a shadowy overlordship that amounts to very little in practice".(26) More specifically, it amounts to an international system's tacit acceptance of suzerain authority. "Tacit acceptance is the same as acquiescence, and is necessary for any effective hegemony, whether *de jure* or *de facto.*"(27) *Metapower* shares with *suzerainty* the concept of indirect control but adds to it the post-superpower notion of indirect power.

A *superpower* which is not a *hegemon* but part of the balance-of-power system, including the recent US-Soviet bipolar balance, remains a *superpower.* Under such circumstances it is viewed as either attempting to maintain the balance (parity) or wishing to tip the balance in its own favour to achieve *hegemony.* As will be shown below, China subscribed to the view that both superpowers were engaged in a struggle for *hegemony.* With the collapse of one superpower in 1991, there is no conclusive evidence that the other has achieved *metapower* status through *hegemony.* On the contrary, the United States has shown signs of decline itself, and China is wary of attempts to prop up its pseudo-legitimacy by means of support from the United Nations. Finally, there can be approximate parity of power in a multipolar system but a *hegemon* can still emerge by skilful manoeuvring. Such a *hegemon* need not have a preponderance of power and would therefore not qualify as a *superpower.* This was apparent in struggles for hegemony within the state system of classical Greece and China's Warring States period prior to unification in 221 BC.

Another term which needs to be clarified in relation to *superpower* is *great power.* Because the USA and USSR were decidedly more powerful than the traditional *great powers* of Europe, *superpower* entered popular usage to distinguish these two postwar giants. Some analysts, like Hedley Bull, see no reason to discontinue *great power* as the defining term, saying that the post-1945 "concept of 'super power' . . . adds nothing to the old one of a 'great power'". (28)

Nonetheless, *superpower* has managed to distinguished itself from the ageing *great powers* and disreputable *empires.* While the Concert of Europe and the quest for colonies are no longer fashionable in international relations, *hegemony* retains a following among theorists of *hegemonic stability* and *hegemonic governance.* These pertain to the idea that a strong state is needed as a guarantor of stability in the international system. Such was the role attributed to postwar USA's support of global free trade. That the US also imposed economic sanctions on 'Red China', as the PRC was called in its years of exclusion, led Beijing to take a much more critical view of the global worth of *hegemony.* "To this day," Joshua Goldstein reminds us, "Chinese leaders use the term *hegemony* as an insult, and the theory of hegemonic stability does not impress them."(29)

Yet China's past, present and future point to the working definition of *superpower* in contemporary international relations: that is, a state whose power is markedly superior to others, and which exhibits both the capability and intent to project its power globally in support of its interests or values. China, as the Central Kingdom, did rule 'all under heaven' (the known world) because it was both *capable* (and that capability included a strong bureaucracy selected on the basis of competence in moral philosophy) and *willing* in compliance with the 'mandate of heaven'. This, however, is not the condition or concept of

superpower as we have come to know it in the second half of the 20th Century. In this period, military, economic and political power have determined status - not moral power. Yet for China, traditionally, there is no legitimacy in having power if it is not built on a sound moral foundation.

The modern version of *superpower* is deemed by China to be morally corrupt. This is because it is associated with the way in which the United States and the former Soviet Union conducted their affairs. To China, the two superpowers were "the source of the world's ills" because of their "fierce contention . . . for hegemony".(30) In short, they subsumed the rights of others in the international community to their hegemonic quest for power. "A strong China will never pose a threat to any country", said the Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen. "China will never become a superpower."(31) To Beijing, *superpower* equates with international threat. This is further evidenced by a cautious analysis of the post-Cold War world. According to strategic analyst, Yan Xuetong, "America as the only superpower still wants to dominate the world and is determined to maintain its military presence in East Asia, although it has closed the Subic Base in The Philippines."(32) Other revealing comments have issued from Beijing in recent time. "China does not approve of the stationing of armed forces on foreign territory by any large power."(33) While the end of the Cold War "diminished the ability of the two superpowers to manipulate world affairs",(34) "there has been an upsurge of the tendency of big-power interference in others' internal affairs".(35)

The Chinese problem with the condition of superpower is corruption: power politics in the contemporary period has pursued the path of arms races and national aggrandisement rather than a commitment to moral order. Security became, in essence, a secularised military problem; the concept had been barbarised. While China's humiliation was indeed inflicted militarily and this barbarism had taught China to pay attention to the tactical necessity of acquiring a formidable physical force, the rhetoric of moral order was never relinquished. Such rhetoric accords with the belief in the potentialities for social transformation upheld by both the Communist and Confucian strands of Chinese thought. As Samuel S. Kim has noted with regard to a Chinese preference for normative power: ". . . Confucian thought holds that seeking [material] power is a sign of moral decay. This may well explain China's compulsive assaults on power politics."(36)

It is true that the moral view of power does not always guide practice or appear to do so. Nonetheless, failure to transform oneself does not negate the project. Even Confucius is said not to have achieved his ideals of self-cultivation.(37) Despite China appearing to the West as unscrupulous in selling missiles to the Middle East and in absenting itself from nuclear arms reduction agreements, immoral in its human rights record, and perhaps provocative in its military build-up in the region - points which the Chinese authorities have counter-argued (38) - China's time honoured pronouncements still indicate the quest for moral power. One might argue that the two superpowers did engage in a moral contention via their competing ideologies of 'liberating the world's oppressed classes' versus 'making the world safe for democracy'. China's view, as illustrated by its condemnatory statements, is more sceptical. It did not approve of the way in which the rest of the world was "manipulated" in the contest between the two strongest nations. The profession of ideals on the one hand, and the pursuit of power politics on the other, could be viewed not only as hypocritical but also irresponsible. Why? Because of the high nuclear force levels and the disregard for 'justice', an ideal at the forefront of China's foreign policy rhetoric and posture.

China was the only Third World country strong enough to challenge the post-1945 world order of superpower dominance. It acquired an independent nuclear deterrent and polished its role of international critic, even unto the present time. The new post-Cold War order is not only seen as potentially dangerous because of an interfering West (led by the US), but also because of economic inequalities. This pertains to the Third World which China has been championing for years as part of its anti-hegemony campaign. In 1991, for example, the call for justice continued:

> As is known to all, poverty of third world countries has many causes, of which the old international economic order and the economic relationship based on exchange of unequal values between the North and the South, which long placed the developing countries in an unequal and unfair position, is the main one. It will get nowhere to impose a particular Western model of development on the developing countries instead of reforming the old economic order. Nor is armed control a fundamental remedy for regional turbulence and conflict.(39)

This type of rhetoric has remained strong in the post-Cold War (particularly post-Tiananmen) era when China needs to defend its rights to non-interference in its sovereign affairs. Beijing's commitment to anti-hegemonism conforms to the defensive phase of people's war strategy.(40) The 'weak' side seeks to erode the capability and will of the stronger invader (the would-be hegemon) until such a time as the final phase of strategic counter-offensive may be launched. Upon accomplishing this task, the victorious defender presumably would not claim the mantle of hegemon for itself. Even if it had built up the capability to do so, it could not act in this way without forfeiting the real prize of its anti-hegemonic war: the demonstrated victory of its own value system. China, paradoxically, must pursue its anti-hegemonic interests if it wishes to prevail. In this respect, Taiwanese academic Chih-Yu Shih has written a revealing book on Chinese foreign policy called *China's Just World.* Shih contends that "the Chinese not only promote their interests but also embody a worldview that explains why those interests are worth pursuing".(41)

Unlike a traditional superpower's close identification with material power, such as number of missiles and warheads, per capita GNP, and industrial capacity, a moral superpower deals in the currency of normative (or soft) power as the primary means of its global expression. This means that a nation's moral and cultural resources, the hearts and minds of the people, are ultimately more effective than the power of missiles - and the mentality that goes with it. As a Buddhist philosopher of old expressed the matter: "There are those who move people by enlightened virtue and those who make people obedient by the power of authority. It is like the phoenix in flight, which all the animals admire, or tigers and wolves stalking, which all the animals fear."(42)

While China could rest on the authority that comes with conventional attributes of power - military, economic and political attributes - it is more likely to pursue 'virtue' as its *raison d'etre* for an international role. Because virtue is a quality of civilisation while conventional power attributes are more readily identified with nation-states, it is unlikely that China will act as a supernation. To quote a review of Mark Mancall's book, *China at the Centre: 300 Years of Foreign Policy*(43):

> The nation-state was not the basic unit of traditional Chinese international relations; rather, there was a universal Sino-centric world order representing civilization as opposed to barbarism. Here, Mancall hastens to add that "China's sense of its own civilization did not include an aggressive mission either to civilize the rest of the world or to shoulder its burdens; the Chinese did not feel the need to bring the blessings of their technology, religions, or governmental system to other peoples" (p. 11). Under the

Ming and the Ch'ing the tribute system of conducting foreign relations was inseparable from the other institutions of Confucian society, all of which made up a unified whole.(44)

3. Sino-Global Relations

There are important implications here for Sino-global relations. While not being a *hegemonic superpower* China can become a *metapower* by default. This comes from its transformative powers over the international system with which it is increasingly interacting. While such interaction obviously has a transformative influence on China too, there is still a widely shared perception of the world coming to China rather than the other way around. It is a perception which is based on China's reputation for political self-sufficiency. Being centred in its own world, when China opens its door it is for others to come in, not for itself to step out. In this way, the world is transformed to Chinese specifications though these, as in all matters cultural, can never be rigorously defined. Even when its door was forced open, China's civilisational continuity was not broken. Thus the Mongols and Manchu invaders of imperial China were digested by Chinese culture. The same occurred with ideas adopted from the West. Communism, socialism and capitalism were made more palatable by the addition of 'Chinese characteristics'. If one were to imagine international relations with Chinese characteristics, not an entirely academic exercise in view of China's growing global influence, what would emerge? Glimpses of this world may be found in post-Confucian East Asia, so the Confucian element of 'Chinese characteristics' is worth re-emphasising.

Humanitarian in essence, Confucianism is not a martial philosophy. It does not set out to conquer or clash with other economies or civilisations.(45) To the contrary, if a 'Look East' policy (46) was adopted more widely, it could advance the cause of national vigour and resilience in societies that do not wish to perish through lack of vision (to graft a biblical insight to a Confucian practice).(47) Quite apart from the planned or coincidental meaning of Mahathir's *Vision 2020* for Malaysia in the 21st Century, the vision referred to here is one invoking confidence in the moral universe and hence the overriding importance of harmonious relationships; not conflictual or *merely* contractual ones. Even opposites may be comprehended as part of an inclusive harmony. This yin-yang attribute leads to the Daoist element of 'Chinese characteristics'.

Like traditional Chinese and Japanese art, the *context* is as important as the *subject.* For example, empty space is deliberately left 'empty' or in a condition of 'non-being'; the subject thereby derives its impact or significance from the context. It may also 'lose it' to the context. Again, deliberately so. Not from becoming cluttered but from becoming the 'context' - as in depictions of a natural landscape with an ant-like human being traversing it. The world of 'complex interdependence',(48) which humbles the nation-state to a lower scale of importance, is one way of thinking about the art of context-as-subject in international relations. Another way is to ask why the usual subject of interest (the human being in a painting or the nation-state in global politics) is so apparently insignificant. The explanation to which I allude here is the Dao of life, including international life. The seemingly small scale of the subject is both a factor of the 'big picture' (complex interdependence) and a factor of the painter's own attitude. That the painter is a human being, just like the figure depicted traversing an immense and awe-inspiring landscape, is instructive. The Dao of international relations suggests a transcendence beyond the old power politics of the national ego. Whoever, singularly or collectively, renders international society into these

terms is indeed a creator. This could be the new 'mandate of heaven' in global power.

How does this translate to China's international relations? For one, the anti-hegemony posture becomes essential. This is often difficult for the China threat theorists to accept. Consider again the artistic analogy. Filling up empty space in a painting because it is empty may be transposed to international terms as the filling of power vacuums whenever such a vacuum is created. This is the dominant paradigm in international relations - the political realist paradigm - which regards the balance-of-power as central to the maintenance of the international system. Thus when a 'player' or 'power' (as states are called) shrinks or expires - like Britain and the Soviet Union, respectively, then a 'power vacuum' is created. The 'instinct' is to fill it. Nature abhors a vacuum. Who fills it becomes the high point in the realist drama, for it could be the debut of a great power. Thus it was said that 'Pax Britannica' gave way to 'Pax Americana'. The shift and concentration of economic power to East Asia had led many to suggest that 'Pax Americana' would give way to 'Pax Nipponica'. More recently, 'Pax Sinica' and its various guises captured attention,(49) largely because of its economic potential and improved relative power occasioned by the collapse of the Soviet empire. This, of course, does not mean that China will fill the Soviet 'vacuum', or that the remaining superpower now has the freedom to prevail. So far there does not seem to be a ready replacement of what the Soviet Union was and represented - that is, the strategic enemy of the West (led by America). The 'vacuum' is hardly appropriate for such elusive candidates as Islamic 'fundamentalists' or the Confucian warlordism imagined in Chinese and Japanese episodes of intransigence.

If nature abhors vacuums it is because it revels in movement. The emergence of a so-called 'fluid' strategic environment in Asia should not be viewed as a period of mourning for the 'old certainties' or the gestation of new ones. Far from it, stability is in the process of redefinition into more relevant terms. Context is increasingly defining subject. The sort of powers that the US and the USSR represented are no longer the powers that the world needs. Global interdependence with its "dynamic systemwide relationships"(50) is better suited to Daoist frames of reference than adversarial contests of power; to a Confucian emphasis on harmonious social relations than the management of stability through Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD). Within the requirements of the new context, it would appear that China is likely to emerge as a stabilising presence. Improbable as this may seem to human rights and pro-democracy activists, arms controllers and environmentalists, the notion is defensible. There is an affinity between Chinese foreign policy and the rise of normative power in international affairs, but not with its crusading methods. If China will not be interfered with, presumably it will uphold this principle for others. It succeeded in doing so with regard to American/UN treatment of North Korea recently. China acted without attracting undue attention to itself, thereby demonstrating an application of 'soft power'. Nonetheless, in view of the regular threat of 'hard power' in the New World Order (like the old), the Chinese government remains committed to material self-strengthening. Given the country's historic experiences, any Chinese government would. Obviously, the sleeping dragon may awaken in an assertive and uncompromising mood. This is particularly so if the international environment is viewed as unduly provocative. The important point to make, however, is that Chinese strategic culture - of itself - is unlikely to yield such a creature.

Conclusion

What does Chinese strategic philosophy tell us about China's future actions? That which may be inferred from the just war mentality is a propensity for China to engage in such wars. It has done so in modern military time (Korea in the early 1950s to oppose the 'imperialists'; and to 'teach' various lessons to India in 1962, the Soviet Union in 1969, and Vietnam in 1979.) If it were to reclaim forcibly the disputed Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, it would do so under the justification of rightful ownership. So, too, various tracts of land to its north, in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Pacific Russia. China is unlikely, however, to engage in warfare, if it can win back its suzerainty - should it need to do so - by other methods. Such other means, ironically, would include the anti-hegemony project which transcends mere irredentist claims. If China can be as self-critical as it is critical of the dangers posed by the existing world order, it will have *metapower* potential. If not, it risks attracting all the drawbacks of being a *superpower* - visibility, enmity and transitoriness. Five-thousand years of statecraft capped by 100 years of humiliation have invested contemporary China with both calculation and reflection in its power relationships. As the Chinese President recently said to the American Secretary of State: "The fat man didn't get that way with just one bite." (51)

Endnotes

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1. Rosita Dellios, *Chinese Strategic Culture - Part 1: The Heritage from the Past*, Research Paper No. 1, Centre for East-West Cultural and Economic Studies, April 1994.

2. This is a revised version of an earlier paper entitled 'Virtue and Power: Contemporary Relevance of Chinese Strategic Philosophy', which was presented at the Chinese Studies Association of Australia Third Biennial Conference, Griffith University, Brisbane, 4-8 July 1993.

3. See International Monetary Fund, *World Economic Outlook,* IMF, Washington D.C., May 1993; Anne Marie Gulde and Marianne Schulze-Ghattas, 'Purchasing Power Parity Based Weights for the *World Economic Outlook*', *Staff Studies for the World Economic Outlook,* IMF, Washington D.C., December 1993, pp. 106-120, especially Box 1, pp. 116-119; 'China Survey', *The Economist,* 28 November 1992, p. 4; 'The Next Superpower: China's Return to Greatness', *Asiaweek,* 27 January 1993, p. 24; International Institute for Strategic Studies, 'As China Grows Strong', *Strategic Survey 1992-1993,* Brassey's, London, 1993, p. 132; Michael Lightowler, 'The Australia-China Relationship', *The Sydney Papers,* Vol. 5, No. 4, Spring 1993, p. 132.

4. Alan Watts, *Tao: The Watercourse Way,* Arkana, London, 1992, p. xiv.

5. A description used in 'Qian Qichen on Major International Issues', *Beijing Review,* 11-17 October 1993, p. 11. In spite of Confucianism being banned during the Cultural Revolution and not fitting in with Communist doctrine, it remains a major source of tradition, even when not studied consciously. The interaction of Chinese Communist and traditional philosophical systems is well presented in Donald J. Munro, *The Concept of Man in Contemporary China,* The University of Michigan Press, Michigan, 1979, especially, pp. 15-25; George W. Kent, 'The Restoration of the Idea that was China', *Thought,* Vol. 58, No. 231, December 1983, pp. 375-392; and Zhengyuan Fu, 'Continuities of Chinese Political Tradition', *Studies in Comparative Communism,* Vol. 24, No. 3, September 1991, pp. 259-279. It is of interest that Beijing has returned to supporting Confucianism openly, as evidenced by the PRC's hosting of two Confucian studies conferences - one at Qufu, Confucius' birthplace, in 1987 and the other in Beijing in October 1994. The latter gave rise to the inception of the International Confucian Association (ICA) with its headquarters in Beijing and with Lee Kuan Yew as its honorary

chairperson. The objective of the ICA, according to its vice president Xin Guanjie, is "to further spread Confucuan studies throughout the world". (See Guo Nei, 'Confucian Works Still Inspire', *China Daily,* 6 October 1994, p. 3.)

6. *Mencius,* (trans. D. C. Lau), Penguin, 1988, Book 1, Part B: 8.

7. Sun Zi's influence on Mao has been noted in Samuel B. Griffith's translation of *The Art of War*, Oxford University Press, London, 1963, Ch. 6 of the 'Introduction': 'Sun Tzu and Mao Tse-Tung'; Scott A. Boorman, 'Deception in Chinese Strategy', in William W. Whitson (ed.) *The Military and Political Power in China in the 1970s,* Praeger, New York, 1972; and Ching Ping and Dennis Bloodworth, *The Chinese Machiavelli: Three Thousand Years of Chinese Statecraft,* Secker & Warburg, London, 1976.

8. Mao's quote can be found in Alan Bouc, *Mao Tse-tung: A Guide to His Thought,* St Martin's Press, New York, 1977, p. 44; and Kent, loc. cit. pp. 390-391.

9. This notion of the exemplar is evident in the following passages from the *Analects* of Confucius:

> The Master said, 'The rule of virtue can be compared to the Pole Star which commands the homage of the multitude of stars without leaving its place.' (II, 2)

Also, on the role of the 'gentleman' or cultivated person:

> The Master wanted to settle amongst the Nine Barbarian tribes of the east. Someone said, 'But could you put up with their uncouth ways?' The Master said, 'Once a gentleman settles amongst them, what uncouthness will there be?' (IX, 14)

10. That national defence was placed fourth in the Four Modernisations program - after agriculture, industry and science and technology - reintroduced in 1978 attests to this view. It was repeatedly pointed out that without a strong economy based on these key categories there could be no formidable defence. (See, for example: Teng Hsiao-ping [Deng Xiao-ping], 'Speech at the Opening Ceremony of National Science Conference', *Peking Review,* 24 March 1978, p. 10; Theoretical group of the National Defense Scientific and Technologhical Commission, 'Integration of "Millet Plus Riffles" with Modernization', in Foreign Broadcast Information Service [hereafter, FBIS], *Daily Report: People's Republic of China,* 23 January 1978, p. E4; and Yang Dezhi, 'A Strategic Decision on Strengthening the Building of Our Army in the New Period', *Hongi,* 1 August 1985, pp. 3-7, in FBIS, *Daily Report: People's Republic of China,* 8 August 1985, p. K2.)

Having activated an impressive economic change, the leadership then pointed out that a strong armed force was necessary to match such success and, indeed, to preserve it in a world which continues to pose dangers from hegemonic ambition. (See David Lague, 'Spend More on Defence, Says China Party Chief', *The Australian,* 24 March 1993, p. 14, in which the general-secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, Jiang Zemin, is quoted as saying that a strong defence force was necessary because "power politics and hegemonism" will continue to persist in the post-Cold War era.)

11. These are fundamental to the Taoist concept of change which is occasioned by the ceaseless interaction of yin and yang - often identified with feminine and masculine, respectively.

12. Quoted in Zhuge Liang and Liu Ji, *Mastering the Art of War* (trans. & ed. Thomas Cleary), Shambhala, Boston, 1989, p. 8.

13. *Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-tung,* Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1966, p. 72.

14. Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, (trans. Lionel Giles), Graham Brash, Singapore, 1988, pp. 6-7.

15. Sections reproduced in Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince* (trans. and ed. Robert M. Adams), W. W. Norton & Co., New York, 1977, pp. 93-122.

16. Sun Tzu, loc. cit., p. 17.

17. Ibid., p. 31.

18. Zhuge Liang and Liu Ji, op. cit., p. 37.

19. Tu We-ming, 'The Confucian Tradition in Chinese History', in Paul S. Ropp (ed.), *Heritage of China: Contemporary Perspectives on Chinese Civilization,* University of California Press, Berkeley, 1990, p. 124.

20. See Fung Yu-Lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy,* The Free Press, New York, 1966, p. 100; Ben Willis, *The Tao of Art: The Inner Meaning of Chinese Art and Philosophy,* Century Hutchinson, Melbourne, 1987, pp. 36-45; John K. Fairbank, 'China's Foreign Policy in Historical Perspective', *Foreign Affairs,* Vol 47, No. 3, 1969, pp. 457-8; and Burton Watson, *Ssu-Ma Ch'ien Grand Historian of China,* Columbia University Press, New York, 1958, pp. 6-7, which adds that "the very old concept of *te* or merit" has "more than its later meaning of 'virtue', implying rather a kind of mystical store of power set up by the sage ancestor of the family".

21. The just war doctrine concerns itself with the moral justifications for war as well as how it should be waged in terms of codes of conduct. A noted authority on just war doctrine in the West, where it represents a major tradition, is the early 17th century jurist, Hugo Grotius. He identified three occasions on which a war may be deemed just: for self-defence, to recover property, and to inflict punishment. Telford Taylor ('Just and Unjust Wars', in Malham M. Wakin (ed.), *War, Morality and the Military Profession,* Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1979, pp. 245-58) offers the following conditions: that it be declared by a legitimate authority, for a just cause, with the 'right intention' (this is controversial), and that it be waged through proper means (codes of conduct). For a discussion on this, see Nicholas Fotion and Gerard Elfstorm, *Military Ethics: Guidelines for Peace and War,* Routledge & Kegan Paul, Boston, London and Henley, 1986, Ch. 5. See also Jeffery L. Geller, 'Justifying War: A Philosophical Critique', in Jongsuk Chay (ed.), *Culture and International Relations,* Praeger, New York, 1990, pp. 72-85.

22. See discussion on Mo Zi in my previous paper, *Chinese Strategic Culture - Part 1,* op. cit., pp. 12-13.

23. Zhuge Liang and Liu Ji, op. cit., p. 6.

24. Quoted in *Chinese Strategic Culture - Part 1,* loc cit., p. 33.

25. A. F. K. Organski, *World Politics,* Knopf, New York, 1958, p. 293, quoted in K. Edward Spiezio, 'British Hegemony and Major Power War, 1815-1939: An Empirical Test of Gilpin's Model of Hegemonic Governance', *International Studies Quarterly,* Vol. 34, No. 2, June 1990, p. 170.

26. Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society: A Comparative Analysis,* Routledge, London, 1992, p. 15.

27. Ibid.

28. Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society,* Macmillan, London, 1977, p. 203. Bull points out on the same page that the term superpower was first used in the following work, which includes Britain within this new class of power: W. T. R. Fox, *The Super Powers: The United States, Britain and the Soviet Union - Their Responsibility for Peace,* Harcourt Brace, New York, 1944.

29. Joshua S. Goldstein, *International Relations,* Harper Collins, New York, 1994, p. 80. See also, Robert O. Keohane, 'The Theory of Hegemonic Stability and Change in International Economic Regimes, 1967-1977', in O. R. Holsti, R. M. Siverson, and A. L. George (eds), *Change in the International System,* Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1980; Robert O. Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power: Essays in International Relations Theory,* Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1989; Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981; Spiezio, loc cit.; Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000,* Unwin Hymann, London, 1988; Ian Clark, *The Hierarchy of States: Reform and Resistance in the International Order,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989, pp. 106-8; Adam Watson, loc. cit.; and 'The Forum: Hegemony and Social Change', *Mershon International Studies Review,* Vol. 38, October 1994, pp. 361-376.

30. Quoted in *Far Eastern Economic Review,* 28 August 1986, p. 26.

31. Quoted in Cameron Stewart, 'Heavy Sleeper', *The Australian,* 1 July 1993, p. 9. See also 'Qian Qichen on Major International Issues', *Beijing Review,* 11-17 October 1993, p. 11.

32. Stewart, ibid.

33. 'Qian on World Situation and China's Foreign Policy', loc. cit., p. 12.

34. Li Luye, 'UN Role in Establishing a New World Order', *Beijing Review,* 30 September - 6 October 1991, p. 8.

35. Ibid., p. 9.

36. Samuel S. Kim, 'China and the World in Theory and Practice', in Samuel S. Kim (ed.), *China and the World: Chinese Foreign Relations in the Post-Cold War Era,* 3rd edn, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1994, p. 28.

37. This is elaborated in Tu Weiming, Milan Hejtming and Alan Wachman (eds), *The Confucian World Observed: A Contemporary Discussion of Confucian Humanism in East Asia,* Institute of Culture and Communication, The East-West Centre, Honolulu, 1992, p. 108.

38. There are many examples of Chinese rebuttals, often in the form of long-standing policy statements with regard to China's non-aggressive posture, but sometimes with specific reference to current problems. *Beijing Review* is a dependable source of such statements. See, for example, 'Qian on World Situation and China's Foreign Policy', op. cit., pp. 8-11

39. Li Luye, loc. cit., p. 10.

40. The foreign policy dimension of People's War doctrine and strategy is well represented in Lillian Craig Harris, 'China's Support for People's War in the 1980s', in Lillian Craig Harris and Robert L. Worden (eds), *China and the Third World: Champion or Challenger?,* Auburn House, Dover, Massachusetts, 1986, pp. 120-138.

41. Chih-Yu Shih, *China's Just World: The Morality of Chinese Foreign Policy,* Rienner, London, 1993, p. 13.

42. Quoted in Zhuge Liang and Liu Ji, op. cit., p. 22.

43. The Free Press, London, 1984.

44. Jon W. Huebner, 'Notes on Mark Mancall's China at the Center: 300 Years of Foreign Policy', *Chinese Culture* (Taiwan), Vol. 33, No. 1, March 1992, p. 89.

45. Contra Samuel P. Huntington, 'A Clash of Civilizations?', *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 72, No. 3, Summer 1993, pp. 22-49.

46. A term popularised by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad in his efforts over a decade ago to advance his country economically. Mahathir's current *Vision 2020* strategic plan for modernising Malaysia while retaining a strong moral foundation in society is aided by what might best be described as a 'Look Everywhere' policy. This is not dissimilar to Deng Xioaping's oft-cited 'cat' philosophy: It does not matter if the cat is black or white as long as it catches mice.

47. "Where there is no vision, the people perish." (Proverbs 29:18)

48. This is an analytical perspective which sees international life determined not by nation-states colliding like billiard balls or animals fighting for survival in a political jungle, but by a web of many interacting parts and processes which make for a holistic, systemic, whole. Often it appears in the literature under the title of Transnational Relations and Complex Interdependence. The definitive work on this is: Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, Jr, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition,* Little Brown, Boston, 1977. See also James N. Rosenau, *The Study of Global Interdependence: Essays on the Transnationalisation of World Affairs,* Nichols, New York, 1980.

49. The more obvious examples being, 'Special Report: China - The World's Next Superpower', *Time,* 10 May 1993, pp. 31-61; and 'The Next Superpower: China's Return to Greatness', *Asiaweek,* op. cit.

50. A phrase used to describe the Chinese holistic approach - Ropp, op. cit., p. xvii.

51. Quoted in Lincoln Kaye, 'Don't Tread on Us', *Far Eastern Economic Review,* 24 March 1994, p. 16.

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