

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**What the Chinese Learned from *Sun-tzu***

by

Colleen K. Holmes  
Department of Army Civilian

COL(R) Donald W. Boose, Jr.  
Project Advisor

The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or any of its agencies.

U.S. Army War College  
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013



## ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Colleen K. Holmes

TITLE: What the Chinese Learned from *Sun-tzu*

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 10 April 2000 PAGES: 36 CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

The *Sun-tzu ping-fa* (Sun-tzu: The Art of Warfare) dates back to the Warring States period (c. 403-221 B.C.) making it the oldest and most widely studied military classic. The Warring States period was a formative phase of Chinese civilization. In addition to Confucian, Mohist, and Legalist philosophers, there were specialists schooled in military tactics and strategies for waging effective warfare. *Sun-tzu* is the best known of the military specialists and is probably best described as a pragmatic realist. This is evident in the use and application of *shih* as it relates to strategic advantage and strategic positioning. For *Sun-tzu*, the virtuous leader is able to achieve victory without war if he understands and is able to skillfully apply strategic advantage and strategic positioning.

War and its avoidance and the fundamentals of *shih* have developed into a distinctively Chinese pragmatic and calculative security policy. An analysis of China's policy regarding its strategic periphery is a window of opportunity to see these influences at work. From this analysis we may gain a better understanding of how China views regional and global balance of power. As patterns of behavior, traits, or tendencies become clearer, they may provide insights for more collaborative relations with China and be useful in constructing the basic conceptual framework for the United States to develop its grand strategy for a more cooperative China.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>ABSTRACT</b> .....   | <b>iii</b> |
| <b>PREFACE</b> .....  | <b>vii</b> |
| <b>CLASSIC CHINESE WORLDVIEW</b> .....                                  | <b>1</b>   |
| <b>STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE AND WEAK STATE-STRONG STATE ASSESSMENT</b> ..... | <b>1</b>   |
| <b>WAR AND ITS AVOIDANCE</b> .....                                      | <b>2</b>   |
| <b>SECURITY FOR VITAL INTERSECTIONS</b> .....                           | <b>4</b>   |
| <b>WEAK STATE-STRONG STATE CALCULATIONS IN PERIPHERY CONTROL</b> .....  | <b>6</b>   |
| <b>FINESSING PRAGMATISM – THE CALCULATIVE SECURITY STRATEGY</b> .....   | <b>7</b>   |
| <b>CALCULATIVE STRATEGY AND TERRITORIAL CLAIMS</b> .....                | <b>9</b>   |
| <b>CALCULATIVE STRATEGY BENEFITS AND RISKS</b> .....                    | <b>10</b>  |
| <b>FUTURE SECURITY ISSUES</b> .....                                     | <b>11</b>  |
| <b>ASSERTIVE CHINA OR COOPERATIVE CHINA</b> .....                       | <b>14</b>  |
| <b>A SECURITY STRATEGY FOR ASIA</b> .....                               | <b>15</b>  |
| <b>CORE AMERICAN INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES</b> .....                     | <b>15</b>  |
| <b>A COOPERATIVE CHINA STRATEGY OBJECTIVES</b> .....                    | <b>16</b>  |
| <b>COMPONENTS OF A REALISTIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY</b> .....              | <b>17</b>  |
| <b>CONCLUSION</b> .....   | <b>19</b>  |
| <b>ENDNOTES</b> .....   | <b>21</b>  |
| <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....   | <b>27</b>  |



## PREFACE

The concept of a strategic culture as proposed by Ken Booth and Russell Troad<sup>1</sup> is based on an assumption that within a state, nation, or politically relevant group there is a distinct and lasting set of beliefs, values, and habits regarding the threat and use of force. This set of beliefs stems from such fundamental influences as geopolitical setting, history, and political culture. In addition to shaping behavior, elements of strategic culture can be used to legitimize actions. The aphorisms of the “*Sun-tzu ping fa* (hereafter, *Sun-tzu*)” are well known to leaders throughout Asia. On the surface, it would appear then that *Sun-tzu* is a prime example of strategic culture at work today in that it potentially shapes and explains attitudes and behavior; but is *Sun-tzu* the inspirer or shaper of a belief, value or habit or is it cited to justify; that is, legitimize, the threat and the use of force?

The concept of strategic culture is a modern day enigma – many social scientists and strategists believe that it exists, but it is not readily quantifiable and does not lend itself to traditional Western debate or reasoning. This puzzle is difficult to solve because the relationship between culturalism and realism is not clearly defined. Booth and Troad argue that strategy consists of two interlocking parts: “statist military logic” and “national strategic traditions.” Therefore, both material and ideational factors are necessary for a comprehensive study of strategy.

Security scholar William T. Tow, provides the second piece to the strategic culture puzzle in his chapter entitled “Strategic Cultures in Comparative Perspective” in Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific Region. With respect to the Asia-Pacific states, Tow proposes that two very tentative conclusions can be made about strategic cultures in this region. The first is that Asia-Pacific states have traditionally used force as a means to build national unification and as a way of establishing state regime legitimacy and that it is highly improbable that it will be replaced by cooperative security any time soon. The second conclusion is that states out of self-interest can gradually revise their strategic culture in the direction of conflict avoidance.

The last piece to the strategic culture puzzle is that, while strategic culture may produce tendencies or create predispositions, it does not determine policy. Strategic culture may be an important factor in developing attitudes and shaping behavior, but cannot by itself fully explain outcomes. This is because other variables, such as technology, also affect policy and may actually be the dominant influence.

The intent of this paper is neither to attempt to isolate the stereotypic progenitor of Chinese strategic culture nor is it intended to argue that a strategic culture does or does not exist in Chinese foreign policy. Instead, this paper is intended to filter themes from *Sun-Tzu* and examine their coexistence in Chinese views on regional and global balances of power. I propose to do this through an analysis of the Chinese state’s policy towards its strategic periphery from the imperial era to modern era. Finally, this analysis will tread where strategic culture does not, it will offer a conceptual framework for a more responsive engagement strategy for the United States.

I wish to thank Professor Roger T. Ames, of the University of Hawaii, for his willingness to share his insights into Chinese philosophy and modern day paradigms. Most especially, I wish to thank Professor Donald W. Boose, Jr., of the U.S. Army War College, for sharing his knowledge of Asian affairs and for his commitment to this project and invaluable feedback.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ken Booth and Russell Troad, *Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific Region* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, Inc., 1999), 8.



Having heard what can be gained from my assessments, shape a strategic advantage (*shih*) from them to strengthen our position. By “strategic advantage” I mean making the most of favorable conditions and tilt the scales in our favor.

—Sun-tzu<sup>1</sup>

## **CLASSIC CHINESE WORLDVIEW**

The *Sun-tzu ping-fa* (Sun-tzu: The Art of Warfare) dates back to the Warring States period (c. 403-221 B.C.) making it the oldest and most widely studied military classic. The Warring States period was a formative phase of Chinese civilization. In addition to Confucian<sup>2</sup>, Mohist<sup>3</sup>, and Legalist<sup>4</sup> philosophers there were specialists schooled in military tactics and strategies for waging effective warfare.<sup>5</sup> Of these military specialists was a man named Sun Wu from the state of Wu, known honorifically as “*Sun-tzu*” or “Master Sun.”<sup>6</sup>

While the classical Western military theorists, Clausewitz and Jomini, focus on the operational level of war, *Sun-tzu* takes a more strategic view of warfare in that he is concerned with the art of warfare as part of a continuum that includes individual, tactical, operational, and strategic levels. This is not surprising because in the classic Chinese worldview these levels are distinct but inseparable. According to Roger T. Ames, the premise of classical Chinese culture is that human beings are irreducibly communal. Centripetal harmony and authority put the human being at the center of a radial pattern of roles and relationships. The overlapping human “centers,” or persons, families, and communities, become interrelated by authority. Authority is constituted as centers are drawn up into a balancing centripetal center and are suspended within it through patterns of deference. Authority resides in a role (“father,” “commander,” “ruler”), in the scope and quality of the extended pattern of relationships this role entails (“family members,” “soldiers,” “subjects”), and in the cultural tradition. Deference and extension of one’s influence is inspired by the effective application of the cultural wealth of this tradition to prevailing circumstances through one’s roles and relationships.<sup>7</sup>

## **STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE AND WEAK STATE-STRONG STATE ASSESSMENT**

The key and defining idea in The Art of Warfare is the importance of strategic advantage (*shih*). *Shih* has the connotation of physical position – not position as specific location, but rather as a fluid disposition ever responsive to context and includes intangibles such as morale, opportunity, timing, psychology, and logistics.<sup>8</sup> A prudent leader understands the situation of both friendly and enemy forces. Moreover, the leader calculates and shapes events and capitalizes on the momentum or timing to enhance the strategic advantage.

Two metaphors, the Great Wall and the Empty Fortress, used by Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, illustrate strategic advantage in the context of a weak state or strong state environment. The Great Wall is a symbol of weakness and strength signifying both the susceptibility to invasion and strength because it represents economic and cultural superiority and an ability to ward off invasion.<sup>9</sup> The Great Wall metaphor is highly evocative of *Sun-tzu*. China uses protracted defense to its strategic advantage to counter the superiority of the opposition's mobility, concentrated force, and explosive violence. A modern day example of this metaphor is that "[s]ince 1949 China has used ideological teachings and rhetoric, economic self-reliance, and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) prepared for defense in depth as its new great walls."<sup>10</sup>

The Empty Fortress is another symbol of mixed weakness and strength and dates back to a classic story of the Three Kingdoms. The assessment made by folk hero Zhuge Liang was that he was outnumbered in defense of a fortress-like walled city and was therefore vulnerable, but that he had troops on the way. By a clever plan of deception he concentrated his strategic advantage. He lowered the military banners, ordered his troops to hide, opened the gates, and sunbathed on the ramparts in view of the enemy soldiers. The adversaries concluded that the city was well defended and that Zhuge intended to deceive them. The enemy then decamped without attacking. Like Zhuge, the People's Republic of China (PRC) uses strategic positioning with regard to time, place, and correlation of forces and deception to magnify limited resources and deter enemies from military attack and ideological subversion.<sup>11</sup>

## **WAR AND ITS AVOIDANCE**

There is little doubt that *Sun-tzu* was greatly influenced by the Confucian-Mencian tradition, but he also figures prominently among the Legalists.<sup>12</sup> Despite the pacifist view of the Confucian<sup>13</sup> statecraft practitioners and not unlike the Legalist philosophers, "he did not advocate shirking from the use of force when it was deemed necessary and effective. Thus, *Sun-tzu* "was far more willing to apply coercion against a foreign power than were either Confucius or Mencius."<sup>14</sup> The first maxim, "[w]ar is a vital matter of state" clearly demonstrates this view. Having stated this, *Sun-tzu* emphasizes two principal lessons: war and its avoidance. The strategist's first priority is to avoid warfare because it always constitutes a loss and "[I]f one is not fully cognizant of the evils of waging war, he cannot be fully cognizant either of how to turn it to best account;" that is, capitalize on strategic advantage.<sup>15</sup> According to *Sun-tzu*, no matter how virtuous, or how great the centripetal harmony of a leader or government may be, there are times when they cannot be virtuous enough to maintain social and political order, and

it may become necessary to resort to arms. Furthermore, he cautions that even military victory is defeat in the sense that it requires an expenditure of the state's manpower and resources. For this reason, war is justifiable only when all possible alternatives have been exhausted, and must be entertained with the utmost seriousness. Once a commitment has been made to a military course of action, the goal is then to achieve victory at the minimum cost.

Pragmatism is the key distinction between *Sun-tzu* and the Confucian paradigm that "places nonviolent, accommodationist grand strategies before violent defensive or offensive ones in a ranking of strategic choices" and which stresses "'benevolent,' 'righteous,' and 'virtuous' government as a basis of security, ... casts military force as 'inauspicious,' to be used only under 'unavoidable circumstances,' and stresses the submission of the enemy without the resort to force"<sup>16</sup> and the hard *realpolitik* Legalist paradigm. For *Sun-tzu*, "the able commander's first concern is to guarantee the integrity of his own forces: 'He must use the principle of keeping himself intact to compete in the world.'"<sup>17</sup>

As part of the on-going debate about the strategic culture of the Chinese state, Alastair Iain Johnston argues that "China has historically exhibited a relatively consistent hard *realpolitik* or *parabellum* strategic culture that has persisted across different structural contexts"<sup>18</sup> and "reflects a set of characterizations of the external environment as dangerous, adversaries as dispositionally threatening, and conflict as zero-sum, in which the application of violence is ultimately required to deal with threats."<sup>19</sup> The concept of *Quan bian* is a key decision axiom of this paradigm and "stresses absolute flexibility and a conscious sensitivity to changing relative capabilities. The more this balance is favorable, the more advantageous it is to adopted offensive coercive strategies; the less favorable, the more advantageous it is to adopted defensive or accommodationist strategies to buy time until the balance shifts again."<sup>20</sup>

Michael D. Swaine and Ashley J. Tellis<sup>21</sup> provide a comprehensive survey of coercive and noncoercive measures used by the Chinese in imperial and modern times. Swaine and Tellis conclude that the Chinese state has frequently used force against foreign powers, but it has also employed a variety of noncoercive methods. In general, material or structural conditions as opposed to cultural factors have driven China's strategy on the use of coercive or noncoercive measures. Over broad periods of regime history decisions to employ various types of force have been generally pragmatic and calculative in that they are measured responses toward shifts in relative power relations with foreign entities, relative economic and social costs to the regime of using various measures, and changes in the structure of an often unstable domestic and external security environment. "Moreover, the historical record strongly suggests that

China's past use of force *against outsiders* has been largely limited to efforts to regain heartland territories lost to foreigners and to generally control or pacify periphery areas."<sup>22</sup>

The task for strategists in the United States is to develop a grand strategy for collaborative engagement with China that considers both the realist and ideational aspects of Chinese pragmatism. I propose to study this further through an analysis of Chinese policy on peripheral state, or "vital intersections."<sup>23</sup>

## **SECURITY FOR VITAL INTERSECTIONS**

From a historic perspective, attempts to consolidate control over the periphery were derived from a fundamental desire of imperial and modern Chinese states to affirm their legitimacy, authority, and status to domestic and foreign audiences and to defend the heartland from attack.<sup>24</sup> Chinese regimes have concentrated on protecting the heartland via border defense. From the Han Dynasty (3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. to 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D) until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century when the Qing Dynasty (Manchus), 1644-1911, came into contact with Western imperial powers, the outer geographic limits of China's strategic periphery remained relatively stable and encompassed large tracts of land along the northern and northwestern frontiers.<sup>25</sup> During this time, the northern part of present-day Southeast Asia and the Korean Peninsula were only intermittently regarded as part of China's strategic periphery. Ocean regions, to include Taiwan<sup>26</sup> which had been incorporated into China centuries earlier, adjacent to China's eastern and southern coastline (that is, Hainan Island, Japan, and the Russian Far East) achieved strategic value only at the end of the imperial era. Since the modern era, or the beginning of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, China's strategic periphery has expanded to fully encompass both continental and maritime regions.<sup>27</sup>

After the final decline of the imperial era, China went through a period of internal political fragmentation. In 1949, a unified but relatively weak nation-state under communist leadership emerged. During this period, there were significant geopolitical challenges arising from contact with industrialized nation-states and the increasing demands of economic and military modernization. There were also cultural changes, many of which could be attributed to the demise of Confucian concepts.<sup>28</sup> Yet, in the modern era China has not sought major expansion of its strategic periphery beyond its historical limits. This may be due, at least in part, to the fact that China has been in a weak state period throughout most of the modern era. As a function of its pragmatism, it would be expected that China would assess its relative strengths as well as the security challenge posed by Western industrial states and Japan and would avoid conflict out of self-interest.

Throughout China's history there have been periods of expansion and contraction of periphery control and of boundaries. These were primarily due to the rise and decline in state capacity and the eventual reemergence of a unified state. During both the imperial era and the modern era China engaged in "founding" efforts to reestablish and then consolidate Chinese influence along the periphery. Nationalist China sought to capitalize on Qing successes by proclaiming on February 15, 1912, in the articles of abdication of the last Qing emperor, that all former periphery territories that had acknowledged Qing suzerainty or were nominally under Qing rule were considered to be part of the Republic of China (ROC).<sup>29</sup>

There have been frequent, yet limited, uses of force against external entities. Military force was most often used when China was in a strong state period and in attempts to establish (or reestablish) relations of deference toward China, to absorb nearby areas such as Vietnam and Korea, or to deter or end attacks from the near or, in the modern era, distant periphery. Nationalist Chinese leaders in an effort to confirm their claim to Tibet and Mongolia sent military forces into both areas soon after the establishment of the ROC. Largely because of the weakness of the ROC regime, these efforts were not successful.<sup>30</sup>

Security did not require unambiguous military dominance over periphery areas. Noncoercive security strategies were used especially when China was in a weak state period and unable to dominate the periphery through military means or when the use of force was considered unnecessary or excessively costly.<sup>31</sup> During these times, diplomatic and economic (for example, imperial era tributary protocol) security strategies were often used for control or pacification.<sup>32</sup> Through a combination of political and military means, the PRC also attempted within the first decade of its establishment to reaffirm or consolidate Chinese control over virtually all the above periphery areas (including Taiwan, but excluding Outer Mongolia). The PRC formally incorporated Xinjiang, former Manchuria, and Inner Mongolia as provinces and Tibet as an autonomous region. The PRC was unable to consolidate Taiwan due to intervention by the United States in 1950.<sup>33</sup>

There has been strong, but sporadic, susceptibility of the Chinese regime to the influence of domestic leadership politics. This was largely the result of the idiosyncratic effect of friction between charismatic leaders and elites as well as the influence of recurring leadership debates over autonomy and the use of force. During the modern era, concerns for legitimacy and status have become less significant as a result of the collapse of the Confucian sinocentric worldview and security concerns have come to dominate calculations toward the entire periphery.<sup>34</sup>

## **WEAK STATE-STRONG STATE CALCULATIONS IN PERIPHERY CONTROL**

As a weak state defensive measure, between 1911-1935, the ROC undertook military actions against Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet to establish strong buffers against unprecedented security threats posed by imperialist powers, especially Russia and Great Britain. These efforts achieved limited success. At the time the ROC was weak and faced pressing security challenges arising from the communist insurrection and the Japanese invasion. Ultimately, even though it was not able to fully control these border areas, the nationalist regime was more effective in using diplomatic measures to reduce foreign influence along the periphery during the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>35</sup>

The PRC during the 1950s and early 1960s undertook similar military campaigns against the periphery from a much stronger position. The PRC was able to confirm the earlier formal incorporation of all periphery regions that had taken place during the Qing and early Republican periods. As a result of military actions, the PRC has exercised direct control, greatly exceeding the levels of control exercised by past Han Chinese regimes, over the periphery territories. In some instances the PRC was supported by communist Russia. Though decidedly weaker in relative military power than its adversaries, the PRC deployed military force to counter or deter incursions into or perceived threats by major industrial powers (such as the United States and Great Britain) into nearby periphery areas. This was the case in Korea, Tibet, Nepal, and heartland borders. The PRC leadership also planned to use military force to reestablish direct control over Taiwan.<sup>36</sup> These efforts were checked or complicated by the presence of a major continental industrial power to the north and west (the Soviet Union) and a major maritime industrial power to the east and south (the United States), as well as other smaller nearby powers.<sup>37</sup>

The PRC has not fully restored the level of influence over the periphery areas to that of the early Qing rulers. This does not imply that the PRC seeks to regain the level and type of control over or seeks expansion to encompass the periphery enjoyed by a strong imperial regime. What it does suggest is that the PRC at the present time remains relatively weak militarily and/or economically compared to the major industrial powers, such as the United States, Japan, and Russia, capable of deploying forces along its borders and is hampered by domestic and economic problems. Though the PRC has resorted to force less than during its early years, it should not be concluded that the communist regime is totally satisfied with the level of control that it is able to exert over the periphery.<sup>38</sup>

## **FINESSING PRAGMATISM – THE CALCULATIVE SECURITY STRATEGY**

In the advent of the modern era several new, or partly new, factors altered the specific form and application of China's noncoercive security strategies. Although they have not changed the basically pragmatic approach used in the application of such strategies to protect the periphery, five fundamental factors are of particular importance.<sup>39</sup>

- There has been an increase in direct forms of control over the traditional periphery, when possible, and a sustained highly sophisticated level of diplomatic skills to influence events both regionally and globally as well as adoption of broader strategies to counter actual or potential threats from both near and distant industrial powers.

- A new order of Leninist bureaucratic institutions supported by a strong military component replaced the Confucian basis for political-cultural order. This is combined with a multi-ethnically based definition of Chinese nationalism that ostensibly promotes an "alliance" between Han Chinese and the minority peoples of the traditional periphery.

- China has adopted the European interstate system combined with traditional sinocentric attitudes which depict China as an exemplary model of a nonhegemonic, nonpredatory, progressive state concerned with the plight of other underdeveloped states.

- There has been an intensification of the "victim mentality." The long-standing Chinese sensitivity to foreign threats and territorial incursions has accentuated the strong commitment to the creation of a powerful and respected Chinese nation-state able to redress past wrongs (for example, the seizure of Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan) committed by stronger imperialist states; to defend Chinese state sovereignty, national interests, and regime status in a larger international area dominated by the great powers; and to protect Chinese society against foreign "cultural contamination" and threats to domestic order and stability.

- Huge population increases and, until recent decades, significant declines in productivity per farm laborer have been the primary challenges to maintaining domestic order and well-being. These conditions have intensified the China's sense of vulnerability to domestic chaos and have fueled its perceived need to devote enormous energies to assuring internal order and well-being.

Even though fundamental security problems have generally remained the same for China, the combination of the above developments meant that it needed to change not only the form of diplomatic relations with the outside world, but the substance of its security policy also had to respond to changes in regional and global balances of power. The relatively weak state would have to rely on a calculative security strategy to ensure domestic order and establish and maintain control over its periphery while it concentrated its means toward acquisition of

sophisticated organizational, material, and conceptual capabilities and practices of an industrialized nation-state.<sup>40</sup>

The essence of diplomatic maneuvering throughout most of the communist period has been a version of the past weak state security strategy which carefully uses strategic positioning to enhance its strategic advantage. Toward the major powers, China's strategy was to be the weakest player in a complex strategic triangle of formal or informal alliances or strategic understandings with, first, the Soviet Union and then the United States. It has at times included extensive efforts to court lesser industrial states such as Great Britain, Japan, France, and Germany. It has also engaged in secondary efforts to elicit support from newly emergent Asian and African states through political and ideological appeals to Third World or socialist solidarity. These appeals have frequently included attempts to present China as a model of a peace-loving, nonpredatory, progressive developing state deserving emulation by other developing nations and were often conveyed through the enunciation of various "principles"<sup>41</sup> that ostensibly guide China's international behavior.<sup>42</sup>

The traditional objectives that the Chinese state has pursued over the centuries have not changed. However, China presently finds itself "between the times." It may be a rising power, but it is not strong enough relative to some of the key peripheral, regional, or global states. Past strong state strategies are not effective courses of action to pursue its objectives.<sup>43</sup> In keeping with its weak state-strong state security approach, since the 1980's China has adopted a "calculative" grand strategy that is neither "assertive" nor "cooperative." This calculative strategy is a sophisticated adaptation of China's traditional weak state strategy. As a means to achieve equilibrium or balance of power, China employs *constrained maximization*. It creates the foundations for a stronger, more modern state and increases its comprehensive national power (CNP)<sup>44</sup> in as non-provocative a fashion as possible to avoid precipitating regional or global responses that could retard the growth of that power. This strategy can be summarized by its three guiding elements:<sup>45</sup>

- A highly pragmatic, non-ideological policy approach keyed to market-led economic growth and the maintenance of amicable international political relations with all states, especially the major powers.
- A general restraint in the use of force, whether toward the periphery or against other more distant powers, combined with efforts to modernize and streamline the Chinese military, albeit at a relatively modest pace.

- An expanded involvement in regional and global interstate politics and various international, multilateral fora, with an emphasis on attaining asymmetric gains whenever possible.

By adopting this strategy Beijing gains two distinct benefits. First, it encourages continued foreign collaboration in underwriting China's rise to power by desensitizing China's political and economic partners to the potential problems of relative gains in Chinese capabilities. Second, in accentuating China's desire for cooperation, it provides Beijing with sufficient breathing space from external threats to uninterruptedly achieve its goal of increased national power.<sup>46</sup>

### CALCULATIVE STRATEGY AND TERRITORIAL CLAIMS

China's post-Mao approach to territorial claims is, in effect, a subset of its general strategic approach under the calculative strategy. China has pursued a generalized good-neighbor policy that has focused on strengthening its existing ties in Northeast and Southeast Asia; mending ties wherever possible in South and West Asia, and exploring new relationships in Central Asia. This omni-directional approach toward developing good regional relations is a concrete example of the pragmatic-calculative strategy in operation and the following three principles should set the tone for the United States in crafting a grand strategy.<sup>47</sup>

- First, the peripheral areas will remain highly important for security as they, relative to their own strengths, will no doubt pose challenges to Chinese power.
- Second, China today (weak state) remains incapable of altering the structure or the threat of force without further increases in relative Chinese power.
- Third, renewed contentions with key peripheral states could seriously impede China's prospects for a peaceful regional environment and, by implication, frustrate China's desire for increasing its CNP.<sup>48</sup>

To secure Chinese interests regarding territorial disputes there has been a two-pronged approach in Beijing's "calculative" strategy. If the dispute is considered to be minor and marginal to China's larger interests, Beijing has sought to resolve it amicably to pursue its larger goals.<sup>49</sup> If the dispute is significant but cannot be resolved rapidly to China's advantage by peaceful means, Beijing has advocated an indefinite postponement of the basic issue.<sup>50</sup> Using constrained maximization, Beijing has successfully avoided conceding any Chinese claims and has simultaneously prevented the dispute from destabilizing the peaceful environment that China needs to successfully complete its internal transformation.

The strategic advantages to this approach are that it creates a favorable world opinion in that China is viewed as a conciliatory state seeking to resolve all outstanding disputes

peacefully; it gives China a strategic pause in that it affords the PRC a relatively peaceful environment to gain economic strength and to restructure and modernize its armed forces at a time when the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) is relatively weak; it prevents balancing coalitions such as the United States and Japan from arising against China in the event Beijing pursued more coercive strategies;<sup>51</sup> and lastly, it is flexible. Although it is not possible to predict whether future Chinese leadership operating from a strong state position would conclude that the benefits of usurping control or more coercive bargaining would exceed the cost, it does allow the Chinese leadership to strategically position itself to resolve these disputes at a time of its choosing or when it has the strategic advantage.

The “one China, two systems” policy on the unresolved issue of Taiwan is an example of this calculative strategy. China would prefer to freeze the island’s presently ambiguous status unless Taipei changes the status quo by unilaterally seeking independence. In this case *Sun-tzu*’s prime directive to avoid warfare would be overruled by China’s long held belief that Taiwanese independence is nonnegotiable. China would then feel compelled to coercive action to counter the ideational assault as well as to avoid territorial loss. In championing the “one China, two systems” approach there is a straightforward recognition by the PRC that the PLA may simply not have the capacity (strategic advantage) to prevail in critical force-on-force encounters and that this dispute can be resolved down the line to China’s advantage by any means of its own choosing (strategic positioning) if its national capabilities are allowed to grow rapidly and undisturbed in the interim. During this interlude, the PLA can develop less provocative flexible deterrent options (FDO) and more diversified conventional military capabilities.<sup>52</sup> All the while, the Chinese economy would continue to benefit from its very lucrative trade with Taiwan.

#### CALCULATIVE STRATEGY BENEFITS AND RISKS

In the past ten years, the calculative strategy has resulted in a number of significant security gains for the PRC. Domestic order and well being have been strengthened as a result of sustained high rates of economic growth and major increases in the living standards of many Chinese. China’s overall regional and global status and prestige have increased. It has had a larger opportunity for political involvement and influence in Asia and beyond and has generated a huge foreign currency reserve. This gives China the economic means to partially compensate for the weakness in its military element of power. To this end China is able to purchase advanced weaponry and critical technologies from foreign states. Most importantly, even though many territorial disputes remain unresolved, the calculative strategy has contributed to

the maintenance of a relatively benign external environment that enables Beijing to make the processes of internal economic growth more self-replicating.<sup>53</sup>

The elegance of this calculative strategy is that Beijing has enhanced its strategic advantage by successfully desensitizing its trading partners. China is now on a path that, if sustained, could make China the largest economy in the world sometime in the first half of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Its economic success has been the result of its capitalizing on the markets (via exports) and the resources (via imports of technology) of its trading partners. Furthermore, by virtue of its rhetoric and actions aimed at exploiting all sides' desire for absolute gains, it has created the bases, or strategic positioning, for the kind of continued cooperation that inevitably results in further increases in Chinese power and capabilities (strategic advantage). China's transition to true great power status could occur largely because of its partners' desire for trade and commercial intercourse, provided that Beijing does not let any security competition derail the process.<sup>54</sup>

## **FUTURE SECURITY ISSUES**

Given its continued weakness in certain critical measures of economic and military power relative to the United States and key peripheral states such as Japan, Russia, and India; it is most likely that Chinese state-initiated changes to the international arena will be minimal in the years ahead and especially before 2015-2020.<sup>55</sup> The United States must design sufficient flexibility in its engagement policy to adapt to near term and longer range security threats which will include current as well as the potentially destabilizing second and third order effects of the very successes of the calculative strategy that might worsen after 2015.<sup>56</sup>

The United States must address China's growing military capabilities. Beijing has attempted to reassure the international community about its intentions through the issuance of its Year 2000 Defense White Paper.<sup>57</sup> While the Year 2000 White Paper was a vast improvement over the 1998 White Paper, there is still a considerable distance for China to go in order to reach regional or global standards for transparency.<sup>58</sup> There are still significant concerns over whether, and to what extent, China will seek to use its growing military capabilities to resolve local security competition and more generally to establish a dominant strategic position in East Asia over the long term. A potential future counterbalancing threat and regional security challenge is emerging as some of the more capable regional states have initiated a variety of military modernization programs and some weaker states have begun exploring new diplomatic and political forms of reassurance as a result of concerns over China's increasing capabilities and the uncertainty of the future U.S. regional presence.<sup>59</sup>

China may experience a greater sense of strategic vulnerability to external economic factors as its dependence on foreign markets, maritime trade routes, and energy supplies grows. This may increase pressures for expanding China's ability to control events beyond its borders. Compounding this is the fact that the concentration of China's major economic centers along the eastern and southern coastline, combined with the dramatic advances occurring in military technology, has increased China's vulnerability to a debilitating military attack executed from standoff distances well outside the traditional defensive perimeter that it has sought to maintain. Thus far, China has not responded to this problem by seeking unilateral solutions built around the development of power-projection forces able to operate at great distances from the Chinese Mainland. However, this looming threat has apparently resulted in initial decisions to create and maintain naval exclusion zones by acquiring military instruments capable of maritime barrier operations and to eventually establish a sustained naval presence capable of repelling armed incursions and of maintaining nearby offshore zones of influence through at least defensive sea control operations.<sup>60</sup>

The United States must be an active participant in a coalition for collaborative engagement focused on building economic alliances or security communities with its Western trading partners and China to raise and resolve issues of reciprocity, fair access, and responsibility. Western trading nations sometimes view China as an unfair economic partner and there is a possibility of economic and political retaliation if a stronger China is allowed to continue to "free ride" or "defect from" international and bilateral agreements or understandings and generally resists opening up many of its markets. Complicating matters further are strong suspicions in Beijing of efforts aimed at changing or containing China. Economic retaliation may be read as part of a larger more concerted effort to bring China to heel and could lead to or escalate Chinese recalcitrance and obstructionism in other issue-areas such as proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) or attitudes toward the U.S. military presence in Asia.

Primacy issues evolving around the United States as the sole global superpower strains Sino-U.S. relations. Discussion within the United States of the possible utility of "containing" or "constraining" China threatens the Chinese desire to recover its status and reestablish a position of geopolitical centrality in Asia. In recent years the Chinese have viewed U.S. policies as directly threatening core Chinese national security interests. The United States' engagement strategies such as "peaceful evolution" threaten China's conceptions of domestic order and well-being and our continuing political and military assistance to Taiwan is threatening to China's vision of territorial integrity and unity.

The most contentious issues which could derail China from its calculative strategy concern control over forces for autonomy. Among the most critical of such issues are the future of Taiwan and the Spratly Islands. Since the 1980s there has been a steady shift in Taiwan's political power from pro-reunification forces to independence minded forces. Such behavior, combined with Beijing's increasing reliance on territorially defined notions of nationalism, and its growing fear that Washington is directly or indirectly supportive of Taiwan's efforts, have compounded China's sense of concern over Taiwan and have increased China's willingness to use coercive diplomacy, if not outright force, to prevent the island from achieving permanent independence. Beijing may feel compelled to take aggressive political and military actions against what it perceives as provocative steps by Taiwan to strengthen its sovereignty. For this reason, the United States' forays into theater missile defense or national missile defense (TMD/NMD) are particularly upsetting to China. An effective TMD/NMD umbrella over Taiwan would negate the effectiveness of China's primary FDO, its missiles, against Taiwanese independence.

China has generally exercised considerable restraint in the pursuit of its claims to the Spratly Islands. In keeping with the calculative strategy's two-pronged approach toward territorial disputes, China has pragmatically agreed to shelve the sovereignty dispute with other claimants and pursue joint exploitation of any possible resources located in the area. However, China's restraint could evaporate if the other states were to become more aggressive in advancing their claims to the area, or if large viable oil or natural gas deposits were in this region. The lure of a plentiful and nearby energy resource may be overwhelming for an increasingly energy import-dependent China and could prompt Beijing to undertake efforts to seize control of all or some of the Spratlys or restrict naval transit of the area. Such actions could precipitate dangerous military confrontations with other claimants and possibly the United States.<sup>61</sup>

The United States must be especially sensitive to China's sense of vulnerability to a growing internal "public order crisis." Increasing wealth and the general liberalization of society have spawned a host of disruptive social problems; for example, endemic corruption, rising crime rates, significant pockets of unemployment, growing regional income disparities, overcrowding in cities, and increased strikes and demonstrations. There is a growing fear among some communist party elites and ordinary citizens that various social ills and economic dislocations threaten domestic order. Reactionary forces have called for greater developmental autonomy, limited foreign contacts, a more centralized, coercive state apparatus, and accelerated efforts to develop the capabilities necessary to control the periphery.<sup>62</sup>

## **ASSERTIVE CHINA OR COOPERATIVE CHINA**

The question concerning security issues after 2015-2020 is: After the calculative strategy how will China's pragmatism evolve? Swaine and Tellis have put forth two possible options – an assertive China or a cooperative China.<sup>63</sup> Predictions about an assertive or cooperative China are highly speculative because it is not possible to make definitive far-reaching pronouncements on the legacy of China's current calculative strategy. However, assuming that *Sun-tzu's* pragmatism is in fact a core element of China's realist and ideational strategic culture, it may be insightful to use it as the basis for a conceptual framework for the United States in developing its grand strategy to shape a cooperative China.

The overall development of a more effective engagement policy requires a better understanding of how China's calculative strategy relative to its capabilities might evolve over time to influence the form and intensity of China's cooperative or assertive behavior.<sup>64</sup> In order to develop a strategy that optimizes the chances for a cooperative China, it is important to consider how an assertive China may evolve. An assertive China scenario ascribes to the realist views of international politics. An argument can be made that assertive policies in the case of China may be more likely for two other reasons. First, as described earlier there is the unique and long-standing Chinese experience of geopolitical primacy and the association of that primacy with good order, civilization, virtue, and justice; and there is the historical record that suggests that Chinese regimes were not adverse to the use of force. If China does perceive itself to be strong state, then it would be probable that it will seek to establish some sort of hegemony to protect and promote its interest. However, also in keeping with this past tradition, this hegemony may not necessarily involve the physical conquest and occupation of neighboring countries, but it would include the use of various types of coercion to maintain an environment favorable to China's interest.<sup>65</sup>

The second reason for an assertive China will be as the result of steps taken by the United States, as the declining hegemon attempts to arrest its own decline and adopts more strident and overt policies to "contain" or "constrain" China's steadily increasing power.<sup>66</sup> Militarily, the United States would seek to further improve its capabilities in the face of significant increases in Chinese military power to ensure an effective defense of itself and its allies. Economically, the United States would restructure its economy and society to reverse unfavorable growth trends and increase its own technological growth or absorb technological innovations from elsewhere. Politically, the United States would attempt to preserve the existing international rules of governance, maintain political order by renewing its existing alliances, or develop new alliances by offering protection to states potentially threatened by the rising

power.<sup>67</sup> Ironically, from a Chinese perspective, this is not a scenario but the real world situation. China believes that the United States intends to keep China from achieving global power status. Therefore, the challenge for the United States is how should it immunize itself against the worse case scenario – a strong state assertive China – by desensitizing China so that it will concentrate its energies and resources to acquiring and maintaining regional security and will forego spending its treasure on acquiring military might.

## **A SECURITY STRATEGY FOR ASIA**

The United States is seen in Asia as a declining power. This is not because it lacks military might, but because its commitments to, and interests in, the region appear to be receding. The United States should take the lead in adapting a post Cold War security strategy for Asia that is responsive in spite of the fast-changing realities being experienced in this area. At the present time there are many windows of opportunity, but the United States could squander these opportunities unless it develops a realistic engagement strategy of its own. Our policy should underwrite programs designed to build lasting regional institutions, liberalize trade and investment, and stabilize ties of interdependence, pluralistic competition, and political accountability.<sup>68</sup>

The United States has no viable option but to remain engaged in Asia. Proponents of disengagement would have the United States abrogate its Cold War bilateral security ties, cut U.S. troop deployments; pull back naval bases to the mid-Pacific; and seek to impede the emergence of China and/or Japan as alternative dominant powers by acting as the neutral power broker among Japan, Korea, China, and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) or by mobilizing regional coalitions aimed at inhibiting Chinese or Japanese domination. Staying involved entails the lowest risks, costs, and uncertainties and conserves our strategic advantage. Disengagement would weaken our strategic advantage because it would undercut America's position in the region as well as its economic involvement. It would trigger a fierce power struggle, aggravate conflicts, and generate new problems at precisely a time when the region is going through a major transformation.<sup>69</sup>

## **CORE AMERICAN INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES**

Our policy toward China should be derived from the core American interests in Asia. These interests are to preserve peace and stability; to prevent an arms race and the spread of WMD; to encourage the long-term development of democratic societies; to ensure that Americans share in and benefit from Asia's growth through investments and trade; and to enable a richer Asia to assume more of the burdens of global responsibility. To realize these

objectives the United States must adapt and consolidate long-standing partnerships with Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand. It must strengthen its ties with the member states of the ASEAN. It must encourage China's emergence as an open, stable, prosperous, and democratic nation that contributes to global and regional security. Finally, the United States must foster the humane and effective governance of Asian countries.<sup>70</sup>

Obviously, these core interests are interrelated. Each is a means as well as an end. Peace in Asia is clearly the precondition for continued economic growth. Therefore, the United States must develop its own calculative strategy and must "shore up its flagging credibility and learn to share leadership with the region's other powers" by allowing Asia to shoulder its share of global responsibilities. The United States must be aware of lingering dangers and must build a cooperative engagement strategy by maintaining its commitments to current allies and engaging in new confidence building measures with potential allies, even with China. A healthy relationship with Japan is critical because the United States and Japan share the challenge of maintaining stability in Asia. Similarly, a policy that underwrites a stable and cooperative China is essential to this region's peace.<sup>71</sup>

#### A COOPERATIVE CHINA STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

The difficulty of developing a long-range (2015-2020) foreign policy for China is that China's rise to global power status is fraught with unknowns. There is no assurance that China's reluctance to resort to force or threat of force, especially as it applies to the issue of territorial disputes, will remain true either in principle or over the long term. China could use force for reasons that have little to do with its territorial disputes. For example, it may resort to military force as a consequence of deteriorating political relations with other powers or simply because of dramatic increases in China's military strength. Chinese use of force may be a natural extension of increased insecurity fueled by an intensified "victim mentality" and the persistent "century of national humiliation" sentiment. Although this will remain a concern for all of China's neighbors confronted by China's transition from weak state to strong state, "at least in the policy-relevant future (that is, to 2010-2020), most Chinese applications of force will probably be intimately bound up with attempts to stave off threatened territorial losses, as opposed to the pursuit of some other autonomous power-political goals."<sup>72</sup>

No matter who China's rulers might be, their objectives are likely to be to protect China's sovereignty and unity; to seek access to foreign technology, capital, and markets in order to maintain high growth rates; to demand a voice in international and regional affairs commensurate with their views of China's greatness; and to seek to be treated with dignity and

respect that enhances their legitimacy at home. Several deep-seated fears will be the driving factors behind Chinese foreign policy. These are a renewed Russian expansionism, Japanese remilitarization, American hostility to a powerful China not under its aegis, and Taiwan separatism. China will continue to regard peripheral states as areas vital to China's interest because these states were the bases that hostile forces used to weaken, penetrate, and divide China.<sup>73</sup>

It must be remembered that there are no fundamental conflicts dividing the United States and China. Therefore, some form of realistic engagement remains as the best policy option for the United States. The United States ought not to prematurely attempt to procure goodwill at any cost or adopt unilateral conciliation on important strategic issues until such time as China reaches true strong state or superpower status; that is, when it "enjoys relatively low sensitivity, vulnerability, and security interdependence because of massive resources and skill differentials and relative economic self-sufficiency."<sup>74</sup> Our policy should not be designed to assist the growth of Chinese power so that it may one day eclipse the United States and as long as there is some chance that Chinese assertiveness may not occur, U.S. strategy should neither create the preconditions for its occurrence nor retreat in the expectation that its occurrence is inevitable.<sup>75</sup>

#### COMPONENTS OF A REALISTIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

A realistic engagement strategy must be oriented toward encouraging a more cooperative China, whether strong or weak. At the same time, it must also preserve U.S. primacy in geopolitical terms. The United States must maintain its military and economic strength because these strengths have directly contributed to the primacy that has provided the conditions for both regional and global order and economic prosperity. A realistic engagement policy should draw on China's traditional pragmatic understanding of strategic advantage and positioning and should focus on eliciting Beijing's recognition that challenging existing U.S. leadership would be both arduous and costly and, hence, not in China's long-term interest.<sup>76</sup>

The United States should concentrate on the commonality of Chinese and U.S. objectives and should take advantage of the fact that projections for Chinese military power are many years, perhaps even decades, in the future. During the interim, a realistic engagement strategy would strengthen the network of economic interdependence that increases China's connection to the outside world, which in turn, also limits China's latitude in foreign affairs. At the present time, China's leadership is seeking assistance to develop institutions needed to transform China into an international partner. Our National Command Authorities, National Security Advisor, and

Secretary of Commerce must be personally committed to support China in developing a modern banking system and financial institutions; strengthening its judiciary, rule of law, and representative assemblies; and in improving telecommunications and transportation facilities. Encouraging China to adopt greater levels of integration into the international system is also the most effective means to encourage its progress toward a democratic form of government.

Successful engagement with the pragmatic Chinese state hinges on convincing China that the United States is genuinely interested in a dialogue between equals. As the foundation for its pragmatic engagement strategy, the United States should welcome China's integration into the international community and ease the path of entry, based on a clear understanding with Chinese leaders that America's forthcoming posture is conditional upon evidence that China will adhere to its international commitments and will shoulder its responsibilities as a major power. The United States should encourage the resumption of high-level visits and strategic dialogue between the leaders of China and the United States in each other's capital.

A pragmatic and calculative Asian policy requires an informed public, government, and military. As reported by the Asia Pacific Research Center, the American public is notably unprepared to sustain a comprehensive cooperative strategy for Asia. The American public must be informed about the importance of Asia to American interests. In the United States there is a distorted public image of Asia, a misunderstanding of the sources of Asian dynamism, an underlying fear of Asia, an inadequate sense of America's stake in Asia, ambivalent feelings about the major Asian powers, and no clear-cut messages emanating from our media coverage. Americans do not understand what the U.S. strategic interests in Asia are and do not have an appreciation "of what U.S. foreign policy has achieved in Asia: the region is at peace, is thriving, is economically intertwined, and is becoming more democratic."<sup>77</sup> American leadership must shape the climate by partnering with media, business, and government interests to provide consistently coherent and comprehensive messages to its citizenry about the underlying dynamics of the Asia-Pacific region and the ultimate importance of Asia to America's future.

The ways and means of the U.S. strategy should focus on attaining deeper levels of encounter, stronger degrees of mutual trust and confidence, and more clearly defined notions of reciprocity or equity. For example, to reinforce our stated objectives, we should send a clear message to China that it is expected to behave like a great power and should bear an increasing responsibility for regional and global security. China should be encouraged to support regional and global security by committing its resources, to include military or civilian manpower, to humanitarian and peacekeeping operations. The United States should promote more military-to-military contacts and should invite the PLA to participate in multi-national

training and exercises. These contacts would support U.S. and Chinese calculative strategies by providing more accurate assessments at the Pentagon and within China's armed forces of the other side's intentions, strategies, and capabilities.<sup>78</sup>

Long-term stability and China's capacity to manage the consequences of economic development depend largely on the effectiveness of Chinese domestic institutions. Open, democratic political systems and the rule of law are the natural long-run outcomes of prosperity. They are also the best assurance of a lasting peace. However, for the foreseeable future, the United States must be committed to a continued and robust American military presence in the region capable of deterring the use of force by anyone on matters where American interests are at stake. Our policy must make it clear to China's leaders that U.S. Forces are not directed against China, but to promote stability and preventing any country from threatening the peace.

The United States must also be prepared to discourage, and if necessary prevent, Chinese acquisition of capabilities, especially of WMD, that could clearly threaten core national security interests of the United States in Asia and beyond. The United States should be unambiguous in pursuing its revolution in military affairs, but should explore technological advances that will allow it to reduce its intrusive engagement silhouette by increasing the speed and lethality of its global reach. In order to desensitize or calm Chinese weak state "jitters" and insure China continues to pursue its calculative strategy, that is, prevent a reflexive arms race à la Cold War and preclude China from becoming another Russia; the United States should be prepared to reward China with business and infrastructure support packages.

American government and businesses should develop and provide measured and scaleable packages of peaceful science and technology (S&T) assistance to periphery states and should encourage China to lead a regional economic alliance. To enhance democratization, globalization, and Sino-U.S. balance of trade, the United States must be prepared to reward Beijing for greater accessibility to Chinese markets and especially, for concrete steps toward democracy, by allowing the exchange of prudently tailored amounts of S&T designed for peaceful applications.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on China's historical record of external security behavior regarding its perceived strategic periphery, and given the critical significance of such behavior on core U.S. national security interests, the U.S. engagement policy objectives should relate most directly to the alliance structure in Asia, the open international economic order, and the proliferation of WMD. At the present time China's calculative strategic policy emphasizes its economic development

over its military modernization.<sup>79</sup> The United States should not assume that China's priorities would not shift. The United States must be prepared to periodically reassess and adjust its policies to changes in the relative strength or weakness in Chinese power and must be flexible in order to adapt to changes in Chinese strength while maintaining its own strength. A stronger China may be less compelled to accommodate the United States or a weaker China may present a set of challenges similar to those experienced with North Korea today: famine, proliferation of WMD, and the potential for refugee migrations.<sup>80</sup>

The United States must also learn from *Sun-tzu* and develop its own pragmatic and calculative strategy for a collaborative security arrangement, which includes China along with our traditional allies, and applies our mutual strategic advantage toward maintaining a benign and non-threatening strategic environment. The United States must remain prepared, diplomatically, economically, and militarily, to deal with the consequences of a strong state China; that is, a more assertive China with greater military, economic, diplomatic, and information capabilities. Given that the Chinese state has a history of pragmatic realism and is especially attuned to the weak state-strong state power dynamic, the United States must manage and direct its own strategic advantage and strategic positioning to maintain its own primacy as well as to maintain Asian regional security as the best assurance of lasting peace.

WORD COUNT = 8,444

## ENDNOTES

1 Roger T. Ames, Sun-tzu: The Art of Warfare (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993), 104.

2 K'ung-tzu or Confucius (551-479 B.C.) did not intend to found a new religion. He intended to interpret and revive the unnamed religion of the Zhou Dynasty. Confucius believed that the basis of a stable, unified, and enduring social order lay in the rituals of the Zhou religion which he interpreted as ceremonies performed by human agents and embodying the civilized and cultured patterns of behavior developed through generations of human wisdom. All human relationships involved a set of defined roles and mutual obligations; each participant should understand and conform to his/her role. In addition to stressing social rituals, Confucianism also stressed humaneness. Family interactions were idealized. Members were to treat each other with love, respect, and a consideration for the needs of all. It prescribed a lofty ideal for the state. The ruler was to be a father to his people and look after their basic needs. People were to be loyal to the ruler, but for Confucius this loyalty included admonishing the leaders when they do wrong and refusing to serve the corrupt.

3 Mo-tzu (470-391 B.C.) was born a few years after Confucius' death. He was originally a follower of the teachings of Confucius until he became convinced that Confucianism placed too much emphasis on rituals and too little on religious teaching. The cornerstone of Mohist philosophy is that the peace of the world and the happiness of humanity lie in the practice of universal love. It is because of man's selfishness and partiality that the world is in chaos. The solution is that partiality should be replaced by universality because when everyone regards the states and cities of others as he regards his own, no one will attack the others' state or seize the others' cities. Mo-tzu applied the same principle to the welfare of the family and individual. Mo-tzu believed that warfare was perverse in that murdering men hardly benefited them yet people often praised war and called it righteous and the expenditures of warfare crippled the nation's livelihood and exhausted the resources of the people.

4 See note 12, below.

5 Ames, 3.

6 Ibid., 4.

7 Ibid., 64.

8 Ibid., 82.

9 Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1997), 24.

10 Ibid., 25.

11 Ibid.

12 Shu Guang Zhang, "China: Traditional and Revolutionary Heritage," in Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific Region, eds. Ken Booth and Russell Trood (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1999), 30. In contrast to Confucianism, legalist philosophy took a pessimistic view of human nature. Human nature was fundamentally evil and was thus inclined to do vicious

things. Severe laws and harsh punishments were the only means of securing order and security. The ruler's objective was to create a prosperous and powerful state and the people were made mutually responsible for one another's actions. Regarding foreign policy, a state's security relied on the ruthless exercise of power among other sovereign states fighting for survival and supremacy in a world of anarchy.

13 According to the classical Confucian worldview, a father or a magistrate or a commander or a ruler would derive his authority from being at the center, and order of the whole is naturally derived from the position of the individual at the center. A myth of the Confucian state was that the ruler's exemplary and benevolent conduct manifested his personal virtue and thereby drew the people to him and gave him the Mandate to rule.

14 Michael D. Swaine and Ashley J. Tellis, Interpreting China's Grand Strategy Past, Present, and Future (Santa Monica: Rand, 2000), 46.

15 Ames, 107-108.

16 Alastair Iain Johnston, "Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China," available from <https://www.cc.columbia.edu/sec/dlc/ciao/book/katzenstein/katz07.html>; Internet; accessed 3 October 2000.

17 Ames, 85.

18 Johnston, 1.

19 Ibid., 2.

20 Ibid.

21 Swaine, 49-50.

22 Ibid., 50.

23 Ames, 153-160. There are several passages in The Art of Warfare concerning strategically vital intersections. Some of these passages are: "The territory of several neighboring states at which their borders meet is a strategically vital intersection. The first to reach it will gain the allegiance of the other states of the empire." "When you are vulnerable on all four sides, you are at a strategically vital intersection. "[F]orm alliances with the neighboring states at strategically vital intersections ... ."

24 Swaine, 36.

25 The large tracts along the northern and northwestern frontiers include modern day Xinjiang, Outer and Inner Mongolia, Tibet, and Northeast China (i.e., former Manchuria).

26 Swaine, 38. Taiwan has historically been regarded as part of China's strategic periphery. During the Qing Dynasty, Taiwan was viewed as a potential security threat for three reasons: 1. It served for many years as a haven for the Ming loyalist Zheng Chenggong (Koxinga) and his heirs, who had harassed the Qing regime for decades after the establishment

of the dynasty in 1644. 2. During the last years of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), Taiwan was occupied and partly colonized by representatives of a formidable imperialist power – the Dutch East India Company. 3. It was viewed as a potential staging area for attacks on the Mainland by pirates (a major problem during the Ming) and by domestic rebels.

27 Swaine, 24-25.

28 Ibid., 32.

29 Ibid., 35. The regions included in the articles of abdication were Mongolia, Xinjiang, Manchuria, and Tibet. Xinjiang and Manchuria had already been formally incorporated as Chinese provinces in 1884 and 1903, respectively; but had been subsequently ruled by local warlords as quasi-independent states. Tibet had acknowledged Qing suzerainty but subsequently rejected the nationalist claim to the kingdom. Inner and Outer Mongolia, which had also been vassal states of the Qing, also rejected the nationalist claim. Taiwan was not included in the proclamation of 1912 because it had been formally incorporated into China centuries earlier and had become a part of the Chinese heartland through extensive Han Chinese migration.

30 Ibid., 21.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid., 65.

33 Ibid. 36.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid., 63.

36 Ibid., 64.

37 Ibid. 75-76.

38 Ibid., 64.

39 Ibid., 71-74.

40 Ibid.

41 Booth, 4-5. China claims that its foreign policy derives from the “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.” These are: mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual nonaggression, noninterference in each other’s internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. The wording of these principals has not changed since they were originally enumerated in 1954. At that time, China was trying to reach out to the non-Communist countries of Asia and these principals were intended to strengthen relations with neutral countries like India and Burma, and to mollify Southeast Asian governments that were fighting Communist insurgencies and concerned about the fifth-column potential of large

Chinese minorities within their borders. In present day China, the Five Principles serve as an alternative to the American view of a new kind of world order and explain why America should not be able to impose its values on weaker nations. The American world order as seen by the Chinese is one in which “international regimes and institutions, often reflecting U.S. interests and values, limit the proliferation of certain conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, constrain mercantilist economic policies that interfere with free trade, and limit sovereignty by promoting universal norms of human rights.” China’s alternative world view stresses the “equality of states in establishing international norms and the unfringeable sovereignty of all states large and small, Western and non-Western, rich and poor, democratic and authoritarian, each to run its own system as it sees fit, whether its methods suit Western standards or not.”

42 Swaine, 76-77.

43 Ibid., 112.

44 Michael Pillsbury, *China Debates the Future Security Environment* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2000), xxiv. Modern day Chinese foreign policy analysts try to calculate mathematically the hierarchy of the world’s future major powers. These calculations are consistent with the practices of ancient Chinese statecraft from the Warring States era. At least two teams, one at the orthodox Academy of Military Science and the other from the reform-minded Chinese Academy of Social Science, have calculated the “comprehensive national power” or CNP for the United States and China. According to the military forecast, China’s CNP by 2020 will grow equal to that of the United States in a multipolar structure. Russia, Europe, and Japan will be “poles” three, four, and five, each with half the power level attained by the United States or China. According to the “reform” civilian forecast, the United States will lose its hegemony not to China but to Japan. Tokyo’s national power will grow equal to that of the United States by 2010, followed closely by Germany. The civilian team rated China only as number eight by 2010. China and Russia score only half as high as the United States and Japan. Given these calculated power scores, Chinese analysts of the future focus intensively on assessing the intentions of Japan and the United States toward China, especially the strength of the “slandorous” and dangerous “China Threat Theory” in Tokyo and Washington.

45 Ibid., 113-114.

46 Ibid., 113.

47 Swaine, 129-130. China has unsettled territorial disputes with many important states on its periphery (e.g., Russia, Japan, Vietnam, and India.) Most of these disputes derive from the colonial era. New boundaries were drawn in accordance with the then prevailing local balances of power as opposed to historic, ethnic, social factors. As a result, China often “lost” marginal portions of border or periphery territory (e.g., the British annexation of the northern tip of Burma in 1886). It is impossible to determine the actual extent of the territorial loss because Chinese control was not well established; that is, it was often weak, occasionally nonexistent, and sometimes merely a function of the suzerain relationships between Chinese rulers and local rulers. Many disputes remain unsettled because for most of the postwar period China and its Asian competitors were relatively weak and the Cold War enforced a “pacification” of these disputes. What may be a more important than the loss of territory is the perception of

Chinese security managers who often refer to the much larger deprivation and humiliation suffered by China over the centuries. China, for the most part, appears to have accepted the borders it inherited in 1949, and to pursue mostly marginal claims as opposed to seeking renewed control over the larger expanses of territory it may have controlled or occupied at one point or another in its history. At the present time, Chinese territorial interests are focused mainly on disputes involving Russia, along the Ussuri River and along the Sino-Russian border west of Mongolia; India, principally Aksai Chin and in the Indian Northeast with respect to the McMahon Line and the status of the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh; the South China Sea, where China and several Southeast Asian states have claims on the Spratly Islands; Japan, over the Senkakus; and Taiwan. The Taiwan issue is probably the most complex dispute to resolve in that it involves both the political status of the island and the right to rule.

48 Ibid., 129.

49 Ibid., 131. An example of a territorial dispute considered to be minor or marginal to China's larger interest is the border issue with Russia where China's overarching interests in improving its political relationship with Moscow and securing access to Russian military technology has resulted in quick, hopefully permanent, solutions to the Ussuri River dispute. The border disputes with Kazakhstan and Kyrgystan are additional examples of this approach where Beijing moved quickly to resolve amicably its border issues, given Chinese interests both in preventing external support to the separatist movements in Chinese Central Asia and in ensuring access to the energy reserves of the trans-Caucasus.

50 Ibid, 132. China has adopted this tactic in the case of the territorial disputes with India, Japan, and several of the Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) states.

51 Ibid., 132.

52 David M. Finkelstein, "China's National Military Strategy." Available from <http://www.rand.org/publications/CF/CF145/CF145.Chap7.pdf>; Internet; accessed 19 October 2000.

53 Swaine, 141.

54 Swaine, 141-142.

55 Swaine, 142. By most indicators 2015-2020 is the earliest date when relative power capabilities would begin to be transformed to Beijing's advantage.

56 Ibid.

57 "'Text' of Year 2000 China Defense White Paper," 16 October 2000; available from <http://199.221.15.211/cgi-bin/cqcqi@rware.env>; Internet; accessed 30 October 2000.

58 Philip P. Pan, "China Offers Details on Military Operations," Washington Post, 18 October 2000, p. 18; available from <<http://ebird.dtic.mil/Oct2000/e20001018china.htm>>; Internet; accessed 19 October 2000.

59 Swaine, 143.

60 Ibid., 144-145.

61 Ibid., 148.

62 Ibid., 142-149.

63 Ibid., 183.

64 Ibid., 240-241.

65 Ibid., 232.

66 Ibid., 233.

67 Ibid., 234.

68 Daniel I. Okimoto et al., "A United States Policy for the Changing Realities of East Asia: Toward A New Consensus," Asia Pacific Research Center (1996): 7 [database on-line]; available from Columbia International Affairs Online.

69 Ibid., 12.

70 Ibid., 5.

71 Ibid.

72 Swaine, 133.

73 Okimoto, 10.

74 Ibid., 237.

75 Ibid., 238.

76 Ibid., 241.

77 Okimoto, 7.

78 Ibid., 15.

79 "'Text' of PRC White Paper on National Defense in 2000," 16 October 2000; available from <http://199.221.15.211/cgi-bin/cqcg1@rware.env>; Internet; accessed 30 October 2000.

80 Marcus Noland, Avoiding the Apocalypse The Future of the Two Koreas (Washington, D.C.: Institute for International Economics), 189. Estimates of the number of North Korean refugees into China and Russia range from less than 10,000 to 500,000 depending on the source.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ames, Roger T. Sun-tzu: The Art of Warfare. New York: Ballantine Books, 1993.
- “Annual Report to Congress on the Military Power of the People’s Republic of China.” Available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2000/china06222000.htm>. Internet. Accessed 22 January 2001.
- Beck, Sanderson. “Chinese Sages: Lao-zi, Confucius, Mo-zi, and Mencius.” Available from <http://www.san.beck.org/WP1-Chinese.html>. Internet. Accessed 17 February 2001.
- Berling, Judith A. “Confucianism.” Asia Society’s Focus on Asian Studies Vol. II, no. 1 (Fall 1982): 5-7. Available from <http://www.askasia.org/frclasrm/readings/r000004.htm>. Internet. Accessed 17 February 2001.
- Booth, Ken and Russell Trood, eds., Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific Region . New York: St. Martin’s Press, Inc., 1999.
- Carr, Caleb, ed. The Book of War. New York: Random House, Inc., 2000.
- Dreyer, June Teufel, ed. Chinese Defense and Foreign Policy. New York: Paragon House, 1988.
- Finkelstein, David, “China’s National Military Strategy,” Chinese Foreign Policy Net Security Issues.” Available from <http://www.rand.org/publications/CF/CF145/CF145.Chap7.pdf>. Internet. Accessed 19 October 2000.
- Global Trends 2015: A Dialogue About the Future With Nongovernment Experts. Available from <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publicaions/globaltrends2015/index.html>. Internet. Accessed 24 January 2001.
- Griffith, Samuel B. Sun Tzu The Art of War. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Hunt, Michael H. The Genesis of Chinese Communist Foreign Policy. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.
- Johnston, Alastair Iain, “Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China,” The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics, Peter J. Katzenstein, ed. Available from Columbia International Affairs Online.
- “Mo-tzu.” Available from <http://www.britannica.com/bcom/eb/article/printable/7/0,5722,54427,00.html>. Internet. Accessed 17 February 2001.
- Nathan, Andrew J. and Robert S. Ross. The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress: China’s Search for Security. New York: W.W. Norton, 1998.
- Noland, Marcus. Avoiding the Apocalypse The Future of the Two Koreas. Washington, D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 2000.

- O'Dowd, Edward and Arthur Waldron. "Sun Tzu for Strategists." Comparative Strategy 10 (1991): 25-36.
- Okimoto, Daniel I., Henry S. Rowen, Michel Oksenberg, James H. Raphael, Thomas P. Rohlen, Donald K. Emmerson, Michael H. Armacost, Bill Bradley and George Schultz. "A United States Policy for the Changing Realities of East Asia: Toward A New Consensus," Asia Pacific Research Center (1996). Database on-line. Available from Columbia International Affairs Online.
- Pan, Philip P. "China Offers Details on Military Operations," Washington Post, 18 October 2000, p. 18. Available from <http://ebird.dtic.mil/Oct2000/e20001018china.htm>. Internet. Accessed 19 October 2000.
- Paul, T.V., "Great Powers and Nuclear Non-proliferation Norms: China in South Asia," International Studies Association (June 2000). Available from Columbia International Affairs Online.
- Pillsbury, Michael. China Debates the Future Security Environment. Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2000.
- Pillsbury, Michael, ed. Chinese Views of Future Warfare. Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1998.
- Puska, Susan M. "New Century, Old Thinking: The Dangers of the Perceptual Gap in U.S.-China Relations," Army War College (U.S.). Strategic Studies Institute (1998).
- Robinson, Thomas W. and David Shambaugh. Chinese Foreign Policy Theory and Practice. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.
- Swaine, Michael D. and Ashley J. Tellis. Interpreting China's Grand Strategy Past, Present, and Future. Santa Monica: Rand, 2000.
- "Text' of PRC White Paper on National Defense in 2000." 16 October 2000. Available from <http://199.221.15.211/cgi-bin/cqcqi/@rware.env>. Internet. Accessed 30 October 2000.
- Tien, Chen-Ya. Chinese Military Theory. Oakville, Ontario: Mosaic Press, 1992.
- Waldron, Arthur. "The Art of Shi." The New Republic, 23 June 1997, 36-41.
- Zhang, Shu Guang. "China: Traditional and Revolutionary Heritage." In Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific Region, eds. Ken Booth and Russell Trood, 30, New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1999.