WHY CHINA SEEKS CONFRONTATION WITH THE UNITED STATES:
Insights from Human Evolution for Understanding Chinese Strategy


Submitted to:

Mr. Andrew Marshall
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The Pentagon
Washington, D.C.

Submitted by:

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**Table of Contents**

**Table of Contents Continued**

**Table of Contents Continued**

**Table of Contents Continued**

**Table of Contents Continued**

## Table of Contents Continued

## List of Tables

## About the Author

██████████████████ a political scientist, is the managing member of Thayer Limited, LLC. Formerly, he was a tenured associate professor in Missouri State University's Department of Defense and Strategic Studies, a department located permanently in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. ████████████ earned his doctoral degree from the University of Chicago.

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He has been a Fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and has taught at Dartmouth College and the University of Minnesota, and Masaryk University. He has been a consultant to the Rand Corporation and a Senior Analyst for the National Institute for Public Policy. Presently, he is a Fulbright Senior Specialist and has taught in the Czech Republic.

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From 2004-2008, he was an associate editor of ████████████████, the scholarly journal of ████████████████████████████, to whose Executive Council he was elected in 2005. In 2009, he was appointed the book review editor of ████████████████

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██████████████████████████████████████████████████████████ is one of the world's leading authorities on the important topic of how testosterone and other hormones affect decision-making.

(b) (7)(C) ████████████████████████████████████████

████████████████████████████ discussed with me his conception of how the Chinese leadership sees the world, and was a great aid to me when he shared his thoughts of how the Chinese see the United States, and the vulnerabilities of the United States.

(b) (7)(C) ██████████████████████████████████████████

██████████████████████████████ shared with me his impressive knowledge of evolution and how it informs state decision-making, particularly the proclivity for overconfidence in leaders.

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████████████████████████████████████ was a wealth of knowledge concerning how East Asians and Westerners do indeed see the world differently due to their different thought patterns.

(b) (7)(C) ██████████████████████████████████████████

█████████████████████████████ assisted me in thinking through how ecological

pressures have affected the Chinese versus Europeans, and why they have shared and different evolutionary impulses.

(b) (7)(C)

helped me to think through the logic of evolution in fairly fixed ecological conditions, which the Chinese have encountered for most of their long history, in contrast to Europeans, who have faced more variable conditions. (b) (7)(C) also was a great aid to me in formulating the logic of male behavior in leadership positions.

Lastly, any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Director, Net Assessment.

## Executive Summary

Whether China and the United States are destined to compete for domination in international politics is one of the major questions facing the United States Department of Defense. The answer to this question depends to a large degree on whether the Chinese will be accommodated to the international system led by the United States or whether it will seek to compete with the United States, resulting in intense security rivalry between Beijing and Washington. Given its importance, many research projects have addressed this issue.

To date, these analyses have lacked a fundamental understanding of human behavior provided by human evolution and how it affects strategy and China's strategic direction. In sum, they lack an understanding of key differences in Chinese and Western strategy.

To illuminate the differences, this study turns to evolutionary theory. Using insights from evolutionary theory and evolutionary psychology, this study creates a framework of evolutionary impulses to determine dominant themes in the Chinese conception of strategy both historically and at present. Next, the study applies the evolutionary impulses to Chinese strategic thought in order to capture how these impulses operate in the Chinese context and produce the key differences between Chinese and Western strategy.

The framework produced answers why China increasingly seeks confrontation with the United States, and thus permits the conclusion that intense Sino-American security competition is likely.

Human evolution serves as the foundation for all strategic thought through the creation of evolutionary impulses—specific and universal human preferences, such as why more power is preferred to less. The objective of the study is to understand how evolutionary impulses have affected Chinese strategy over time, and the Chinese strategic choice for confrontation with the United States. Viewed through the lens of human evolution, the answer is clear: China will choose confrontation with the United States.

This study informs the causes of Chinese national security behavior. It evaluates five major issues: first, determining the major components of Chinese strategy as informed by evolution and Chinese strategic thought. Second, it examines the implications of China's choice to confront the United States. Third, it examines whether evolutionary motivations for confrontation are offset or supported by ideology or other factors. Fourth, the study determines whether the Chinese choice for confrontation will change over time. Fifth, the domestic consequences for China if the Chinese fail in their bid for primacy are analyzed.

The major component of Chinese strategy is to dominate international politics: their view of international politics is hierarchical and they want to be on top.  This motivation is anchored in human evolution and Chinese history and worldview.  It explains why males are going to seek to maximize their power.  When this motivation is brought into a political context, it dovetails with major tenets of Chinese strategy and the political realism of Legalism in Chinese political thought.

Based in human evolutionary theory and evolutionary psychology, particularly the research of Simon Baron Cohen, Stephen Rosen, and Richard Wrangham, a framework of evolutionary impulses is created.  This framework is the drive for power, domination, and status, as well as ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and racism that often result in aggression and intense security competition with rivals.  It also demonstrates why human males—universally—are sensitive to power, domination, and status, relative and absolute balances of power, and conduct the calculus of conflict—whether and when to wage war and the usefulness of surprise attack.

This framework will be used in conjunction with French Sinologist François Jullien's argument on Chinese strategy—particularly the important concept of *shi* or *shih* (pronounced "sure")—and psychologist Richard Nisbett's argument on fundamental differences in thought between the Chinese and Westerners, to determine the Chinese strategic worldview.  Chinese strategy is similar in ultimate objective— dominance—as other great powers.

Indeed, the Chinese share many characteristics of great power challengers throughout history.  But unlike most previous challengers, Chinese strategy is characterized by fierce ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and racism.  China's strategy defines China as the world's metropole, and Beijing possesses a calculated quest for power and domination to realize this objective.  The drive for power and domination has been present historically in Chinese strategy, remains present today, and serves as the foundation for China's strategy to confront the United States.  However, as Jullien identifies, China's strategic approach is different and unique in many important respects, particularly its long timeline, an indirect approach to confrontation, and the desire to create conditions for victory over the United States without battle.

The study determines that the evolutionary impulses behind the Chinese choice to confront the United States can be offset or mitigated by other factors, such as ideology.  Although the evolutionary impulse for domination and conflict is widespread, it is mitigated in some contexts.  For example, the United Kingdom and the United States have an excellent security relationship because the evolutionary impulses are mitigated by other factors, such as common interests and strategic culture.  This will not be the case with China due to the absence of effective mitigating factors.  The analysis does recognize that China's ability to challenge the United States may be hindered by reduced economic growth due to demographic

imbalances, structural economic problems, and abuse and misallocation of water resources.

The study explores whether the Chinese decision to challenge the United States will change over time. This research is informed by historical analysis of great power challenges, power transitions in international politics, Chinese strategic history, as well as by evolutionary impulses. My approach allows me to determine that Beijing will not choose to change its strategy of confrontation with the United States.

Finally, it is important to consider what will happen to China's stability should its bid for dominance fail. To that end, the study uses insights from evolutionary theory, Chinese history, and the history of other failed hegemonic bids to understand the probable tumultuous domestic reaction to a failed bid for hegemony. Should China fail in its bid for primacy, the result will be sustained domestic unrest and the loss of legitimacy of the Communist Party of China. The best hope for democracy in China may be to defeat China's bid for primacy in international politics. Only then would the regime face a crisis of confidence and legitimacy equal historically to other periods of regime change in China. Regime change in China occurs when regimes have lost the "mandate of heaven," as evidenced by a monumental failure of major policy. It is then that conditions would be propitious for a radical change in Chinese domestic politics towards democracy.

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## Introduction to the Study

Whether China and the United States are destined to compete for domination in international politics is one of the major questions facing the Department of Defense.  The answer to this question depends to a large degree on whether the Chinese will be accommodated within the international system led by the United States or whether it will seek to compete with the United States, resulting in intense security rivalry between Beijing and Washington.  Given the centrality of the topic for the United States, China, and the international community, many research projects have addressed this issue.

To date, these analyses have lacked a fundamental comprehension of human behavior provided by understanding how human evolution affects strategy.  In sum, they lack an understanding of how evolution affects human behavior, specifically how it has caused differences in populations and their approach to strategy.

To illuminate the key differences, this study adopts an increasingly important approach to the study of international politics:  the application of evolutionary theory to understand human behavior in the realm of international politics.  Using insights from evolutionary theory and evolutionary psychology, this report creates a framework of evolutionary impulses to determine dominant themes in the Chinese conception of strategy both historically and at present.  Next, the report applies the evolutionary impulses to Chinese strategic thought in order to capture how these impulses operate in the Chinese context and produce the key differences between Chinese and Western strategy.

The framework answers why China increasingly seeks confrontation with the United States, and thus permits the conclusion that intense Sino-American security competition is likely.

Succinctly put: Our brain and consciousness are the products of evolution. Thus, evolution is the foundation for human thought, including strategic thought, through the creation of evolutionary impulses: specific and universal human preferences, such as why more power is preferred to less, more resources to fewer. The objective of the study is to understand how evolutionary impulses have affected Chinese strategy over time, and the Chinese strategic choice for accommodation or confrontation with the United States. Viewed through the lens of human evolution, the answer is clear: China will choose confrontation.

This study will focus on five sub-tasks:

(1) Determine the major components of Chinese strategy, as informed by evolutionary impulses and Chinese strategic thought;

(2) Examine the implications of China's choice to confront the U.S., and the inevitability of intense security competition between Beijing and Washington;

(3) Examine whether evolutionary motivations for confrontation are offset or supported by ideology or other factors;

(4) Determine whether the Chinese choice for confrontation will change over time;

(5) Analyze the domestic consequences for China if the Chinese fail in their bid

for primacy.

Based in human evolutionary theory and evolutionary psychology, particularly the research of Simon Baron Cohen, Stephen Rosen, and Richard Wrangham, a framework of evolutionary impulses will be created. This framework demonstrates how the drive for power, domination and status, as well as ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and racism often result in aggression and intense security competition with perceived rivals. It also demonstrates why human males—universally—are sensitive to power, domination, and status, relative and absolute balances of power, and the calculus of conflict—whether and when to wage war and the usefulness of surprise attack.

The framework is used in conjunction with French Sinologist François Jullien's arguments on the essence of Chinese strategy; University of Michigan psychologist Richard Nisbett's argument on fundamental differences in thought between the Chinese and Westerners; the Hudson Institute's China expert Christopher Ford's insightful identification of the Chinese worldview and conception of order among states; as well as Chinese strategic thought to determine the Chinese strategic worldview.

Chinese strategy is similar in ultimate objective—dominance—as other great powers. Indeed, the Chinese share many characteristics of great power challengers throughout history. Unlike most previous challengers—the Nazis are a clear exception—Chinese strategy is characterized by fierce ethnocentrism, xenophobia,

and racism.  China's strategy defines China as the world's metropole, and Beijing

possesses a calculated quest for power and domination to realize this objective.  The

drive for power and domination has been present historically in Chinese strategy,

remains present today, and serves as the foundation for China's strategy to confront

the United States.

However, as Jullien identifies, China's strategic approach is different and

unique in many important respects, particularly its long timeline, an indirect

approach to confrontation, and the desire to create conditions for victory over the

United States—ideally, without battle.

The study considers whether the evolutionary impulses behind the Chinese

choice to confront the United States can be offset or mitigated by other factors, such

as ideology or increasing wealth.  Although the evolutionary impulse for domination

and conflict is widespread, it is mitigated in some contexts.  For example, the United

Kingdom and the United States have an excellent security relationship because the

evolutionary impulses are mitigated by other factors, such as a shared ideology of

liberalism, common interests, and strategic culture.  This will not be the case with

China due to the absence of mitigating factors.  While the intent to challenge is likely

to be consistent, the analysis does recognize that China's ability to challenge the

United States may be hindered by reduced economic growth due to demographic

imbalances, structural economic problems, and abuse and misallocation of water

resources.

In addition, this study explores whether the Chinese decision to challenge the

United States will change over time.  This research is informed by historical analysis

of great power challenges, power transitions in international politics, Chinese strategic history, as well as by evolutionary impulses. My approach allows me to determine that Beijing is unlikely to choose to change its strategy of confrontation with the United States.

Finally, it is important to consider what will happen to China's stability should its bid for dominance fail. To that end, the study uses insights from evolutionary theory, Chinese history, and the history of other failed hegemonic bids to understand the probable tumultuous domestic reaction to a failed bid for hegemony. The conclusion is that a failed bid for dominance will de-legitimize the Communist Party of China. The implication of the loss of legitimacy is that the Party stands a significant chance of falling, perhaps to be replaced by a new form of political organization in China. Due to the weight of Chinese political culture and history, this is not likely to be a democratic government. A form of authoritarian government is in keeping with China's political culture and history. One component is absolute, should the Chinese Communist Party fall and China enters a new period of unrest, these events will not bring about a change in China's willingness to achieve hegemony. For the Chinese, that is China's rightful place in the world. It will only delay China's means to achieve it.

The scope of this study is to answer the *why* question: why does China increasingly seek confrontation with the United States. The framework produced is one that could be applied to other hegemonic struggles or other important actors in international politics to understand their behavior, for example, the motivations of *al Qaeda* and associated movements.

One other point should be made at the outset of this study. Due to the nature of this framework, there are important questions that are only touched about or not addressed. The most important of these is the *how* question: how does China seek to gain in influence against the United States and its allies. This study does address this issue in a limited way, but cannot give it the attention it warrants. The *how* question is deserving of further study. That said, it is important to understand *why* China seeks domination before coming to terms *how* the Chinese are attempting to accomplish their grand strategic goal.

**Policy Recommendations for DoD Decision-Makers**

This section summarizes recommendations for Department of Defense decision-makers from the standpoint of major arguments of each section of this study.

**Section One**
**The Chinese Choice for Confrontation: Evolution and Chinese Strategic Thought**

**Recommendation: Recognize that China is the most formidable Peer Competitor ever faced by the United States with great ambition and willpower to supplant the United States as the dominant state.**

Why does China seek to confront the United States? It wants to dominate. The reason why it wants to dominate lies in human evolution, Chinese strategy, and China's conception of itself as the Middle Kingdom (as Christopher Ford demonstrates).

Human evolution creates specific behaviors in leaders, egoism, drive to dominate, xenophobia, strong in-group/out-group distinctions that result in racism and ethnocentrism. For the United States and the West, these behaviors are checked by institutional and other forces. In China, they are encouraged.

The Chinese strategic worldview is heavily informed by impulses caused by human evolution, including a desire to dominate international politics, but also by xenophobia, racism, and ethnocentrism.

Domination is not territorial domination, with the exception of China's territorial disputes, but rather lording over the rest of world as the Middle Kingdom. From the Chinese perspective, this is a return to "normal" international politics before European colonization, when China was supreme, and recognized by all as such.

The Chinese desire to dominate should not be underestimated. They are profoundly confident in their ethnocentric and racist view of the world: China first and always. They are proudly unicultural, and believe their uniculturalism provides unity and is a great strength, in direct contrast to multicultural societies.

This sense of China's rightful place in the world translates into great will and determination to achieve China's goal of domination.

As a largely homogenous people, and having evolved in a stable ecological environment, it is not a surprise that the Chinese are xenophobic, ethnocentric, and racist, and their society reflects a strong male dominance hierarchy, as well as a considerable sensitivity to status and absolute and relative power.

The Chinese will seek to maximize their power through artful strategy, with great sensitivity to status and hierarchy, while trying not to provoke counter-balancing. At the same time, Beijing's leadership will exhibit increasingly risk-accepting behavior as China becomes stronger.

In addition to the argument of Christopher Ford, there is significant evidence from evolutionary psychology (Richard Nisbett) that Chinese leaders view the world differently than Western leaders in major ways. For example, the Chinese believe in constant change, but with things always coming back to the prior state. Also, the Chinese are more susceptible to "hindsight bias," which causes them to believe mistakenly that they were aware or cognizant of a situation or cause.

The dangerous situation caused by these biases is made worse by the propensity of China to be vulnerable to leaders with "extreme male minds" (Simon Baron Cohen). These are leaders, like Mao, with great domineering tendencies and with little empathy for their population, and who are more likely to be aggressive.

Also making the psychology of Chinese leaders worse is the greater likelihood that Chinese leaders will have high testosterone (John Archer, Stephen Rosen), as will Western leaders on average, which will contribute to aggression. In the West, this proclivity for aggression is checked by countervailing pressures and democratic institutions. These pressures and institutions are absent in China.

Evolutionary psychology also expects that Chinese leaders will be overconfident (Dominic Johnson and Robert Kurzban), and thus more willing to take chances or invite risks that will lead to deterrence failure.

When the history of Chinese strategy is considered, we see four major principles captured by the concept of *shi* (François Jullien), or strategic advantage: the importance of deception and espionage; flexibility in policies; the conditioning of the situation so that the enemy is defeated before battle has commenced; and the importance of the bold, surprise attack and the "clever strategy."

Chinese military history is replete with cases where the Chinese used force to achieve surprise and so delivered a strong psychological blow to the enemy, even when the enemy is stronger, in order to force the enemy to accept a *fait accompli*, retreat, or throw it off balance.

Even when China is in a militarily disadvantageous position, force, or the threat of force, may be used to create a crisis as a means of probing the adversary's intentions, weakening his resolve, undercutting domestic political support, separating him from his adversaries.  In sum, this means throwing the enemy off balance.

As a consequence of China's strategic principles, and anchored in the insights from evolutionary psychology, there is great risk of confrontation due, first, to Chinese belief that they are smarter, strategically more clever than the rest of the world; and, second, they do not recognize the importance of "friction" as identified by Clausewitz, and its impact on plans and military operations.  These Chinese beliefs invite misperception and deterrence failures.

When these insights from evolution and Chinese strategy are combined with traditional theories of power politics such as realism and power transition theory, this study expects increasing security competition with China.

In sum, expect that China is motivated by great willpower and will be increasingly opposed to United States' interests and position in the world.


## Section Two
### The Implications of China's Choice for Primacy

**Recommendation:  Recognize that China will not be dissuaded from confronting the United States.  Increasing security competition is inevitable.**

The strength of the evolutionary approach is to force the recognition that the Chinese will not be dissuaded or appeased from their decision to confront the United States.  That is hard to accept given what the consequences of this decision will be for the United States, China, their respective allies, and international politics.

While the decision may be identified with precision, the exact policy mix that China will adopt to advance this objective cannot be identified with certainty. It is likely to be a tactical combination.  That is, the Chinese will consistently adopt an amalgamation of cooperative policies and ones of confrontation, perhaps taking two steps toward their objective, and one step back as events

require, or as a mechanism to reassure neighboring states and important communities in the United States that its intentions are benign to minimize the formation of any effective countervailing balancing coalition.

Yet, China's challenge is not by stealth. What is distinctive about its approach is its openness. China has portrayed its rise as inevitable and nonthreatening, a "win-win" for everybody and a natural part of the emergence of a new just, and prosperous new world.

Expect that the Chinese will always adopt the appearance of rectitude, and of abiding by the norms of international politics.

This study's assessment is for a bolder, far more assertive China, working to bend international politics to its will and to advance its interests. From the Chinese perspective, this is the proper order of international politics.


**Section Three**
**Can Evolutionary Motivations Be Offset by Ideology**

**Recommendation: Recognize that China's choice for confrontation will not be offset by ideology, economic growth, or other factors.**

China's choice for confrontation will not be offset by economic growth or the considerable problems China faces as it modernizes, including adverse demographic changes, improper resource allocation, or a change in the direction of the Communist Party of China towards liberalization.

While there are many optimistic assessments of the future Sino-American relationship, China's choice for confrontation will not be offset by any of them because they are not powerful enough to hinder to re-direct China's ambitions.

The consequences of this recognition are equally profound and difficult for United States decision-makers. It requires abandoning the hope that China will be made a "responsible stakeholder," but to recognize, first, that the Chinese have the willpower to do what is necessary to achieve dominance; second, they have developed a grand strategic plan that it is sensitive to the considerable period of time it will take to achieve its fundamental objective; and, third, to achieve that dominance artfully. That is, to gain dominance in such a way as to provoke the minimum reaction from the United States or its allies, as Bismarck's unification of Germany did not provoke reaction while at the same time allowing Germany to become the dominant state of Europe.

China's growth, and thus ability to challenge the United States, may be limited by the consequences of its flawed domestic policies including the gender imbalance in favor of males due to its "One Child" policy, structural imbalances in its economy, bottlenecks in certain, critical industries, and the abuse of the environment, most critically in water resources.


## Section Four
## Will the Chinese Choice for Confrontation Change

**Recommendation: Recognize that China's choice for confrontation will not change for reasons identified by evolution and history. The best chance of changing China's choice comes from either maintaining the strength and position of the U.S. in world or by weakening China so that the ability to confront the United States will be postponed.**

China's choice for confrontation is unlikely to change for reasons demonstrated by evolution and by history.

Evolution's lesson is that once power is increased, the individual or the state wants more power to provide better for the family, in the case of the individual, or extended family group, in the case of the state. To abandon power equals abandoning resources from an evolutionary perspective. While some humans have done so, the very small number of individuals who have underscores the powerful drive humans possess to prefer more power and resources to fewer.

More power and resources increases the ability to provide for one's own needs, egoism, as well as making one better for one's family—the idea of inclusive fitness—whether one's family is one's genetic relatives, or one's family members who are more distantly related, the extended Chinese "family," which serves as the origin of the powerful ethnocentrism witnessed in China.

History's lesson is that rapid rises in power are especially dangerous for stability in international politics because the increase in power encourages the leadership to seek more, and to push for change—precipitously—in the international system.

The history of great power relations provides many examples of this. Germany's rise after its unification in 1871, the Soviet Union in its history, Italy under Mussolini, and militaristic Japan, are cases of ambition that were thwarted by the opposition of a stronger combination. Although this is not certain due to its domestic economic and political troubles, a major concern

with China is that it may be the stronger force, as it may be more powerful economically than the United States.  Given the imbalance of power, and provided the  trend in international politics—China will be seen as rising, while the United States is seen as declining—means that it will be difficult for the United States to provide a counterbalancing coalition.

Additionally, the United States is limited by its ideology of liberalism, whereas in previous cases the dominant state was not constrained by the stabilizing influence of liberalism—the need for popular support for foreign policy, its competitive political institutions, checks and balances, transparency, rule of law, and respect for  the rights of individuals.  Moreover, the United States does not wage preventive war due to its liberal ideology.  Preventive war is fundamentally at odds with the political principles and history of the United States.  In contrast, China is an unfettered state, allowing it to do almost anything to advance its rise.

Evolution and world political history suggest it will be very difficult to dissuade China from its choice for confrontation.

Even if there were a change in China's ideology, it is unlikely that a new regime would be substantially different than the present regime.  This is because of the Chinese self-identification of China as the exalted place apart from the rest of the world, as the Middle Kingdom between heaven and earth, which has been a consistent and major theme in Chinese history.

The only realistic chance of changing China's choice for confrontation comes from weakening China so that the ability to confront the United States will be postponed.  It is unlikely ever to be abated for the reasons discussed in this study:  the combination of drive due to evolutionary impulses, increasing military and diplomatic power due to its prodigious economic growth, and the Chinese ethnocentric, xenophobic, and racist perception of their place in the world.


## Section Five
## The Domestic Consequences of Failure for China

**Recommendation:  Recognize that the domestic consequences of a failed bid for primacy will be disastrous for China's regime. Accordingly, the balance of resolve will favor China over the United States.**

The domestic consequences for failure in the Chinese bid to supplant the United States as the world's dominant state will be severe for the Communist regime.  It would be a disaster that could only be paralleled in Chinese

history by the Mongol conquest or the trauma of colonization in the nineteenth century.

Accordingly, expect that the Chinese will be careful in their challenge to the United States to ensure that such a challenge is successful. That is, they win primacy and, by so doing, solidify domestic support and further legitimacy for the Communist Party. The fact that China increasingly challenges the United States should be taken as evidence that the Communist Party is indeed secure in its dominant position with popular legitimacy and support.

History's lesson is that failed bids for primacy lead to rivals challenging ruling elites, great political unrest among the population, and even to revolution.

When the hegemonic challenges throughout history are considered, one fact is clear: if the challenger fails, the results are disastrous for it.

When we specifically consider Chinese history, we discern the same result. Chinese history's lesson is that failure leads to revolt. If the revolt is not suppressed successfully, it leads to regime change. However, at present, there is modest evidence of attacks on the legitimacy of the Communist Party.

Given the consequences of failure, we should expect that China would be willing to take considerable risks to ensure that it wins in a clash with the United States. In sum, the balance of resolve lies with it. This is not unusual. The balance of resolve typically lies with the challenger, who is able to devote more energy and focus to its strategy to supplant the hegemon than the hegemon is able to devote to guarding against the rising challenger. This advantage is further strengthened by the willpower of the Chinese leadership and the themes of Chinese strategy, including *shi*.

Therefore, the balance of resolve will favor China over the United States. The pessimistic result is that the dominance of the United States will end, and probably far sooner than United States leadership expects.

To avoid such an outcome, the U.S. must devote more effort to understand the motivations of the Chinese, the strength of their will to defeat the United States, and to begin mobilizing the American people to size and scope of the challenge the United States faces. Chinese dominance is the not the Eleventh Commandment. There are many steps the United States can take to defeat China. But to do so requires recognizing what is unpalatable for many in U.S. leadership: The Chinese are a threat. The Chinese do seek to overthrow the

position of the United States in international politics, and much of the world order that the United States created.

Finally, the lessons of evolution are to know your environment, recognize that it is fiercely competitive, know who the predators are and the strength of their motivation, and be more adaptive than they are.

The lessons of power politics are to recognize competition is the fabric of international politics, great powers rise and fall, and leaders of states must recognize hard choices and possess the willpower to act to maintain their position in world politics, or see it lost to someone who wants it more.

## Chinese Dynastic Chronology:
## Major Periods in Imperial China

| | |
|---|---|
| Legendary Sage Emperors | 2852-2255 B.C. |
| Xia | 2205-1766 |
| Shang | 1766-1045 |
| Zhou | |
|     Western Zhou | 1045-770 |
|     Eastern Zhou | 771-256 |
|         Spring and Autumn | 722-481 |
|         Warring States | 403-221 |
| Qin | 221-207 |
| Former Han (Western Han) | 206 B.C.-A.D. 8 |
| Later Han (Eastern Han) | 23-220 |
|     Three Kingdoms | 168-280 |
| Six Dynasties | 222-589 |
| Sui | 589-618 |
| Tang | 618-907 |
| Five Dynasties | 907-959 |
| Northern Song | 960-1126 |
| Southern Song | 1127-1279 |
| Yuan (Mongols) | 1279-1368 |
| Ming | 1368-1644 |
| Qing (Manchus) | 1644-1912 |

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**Section One**

**The Chinese Choice for Confrontation:**
**Evolution and Chinese Strategic Thought**

This section of the study introduces the framework for understanding Chinese strategic choices. It begins with the recognition that there are many influences on Chinese strategy, including strategic culture, the history of strategic thought, perspectives offered by traditional theories of power politics, insights derived from evolutionary theory, as well as from the combination of traditional theories and evolution. That is, this study places power politics in the context of evolution to understand why human leaders always struggle for to gain more power.

To advance this discussion, I first introduce theories of power politics, which have been traditionally used to explain the rise and decline of states. When their insights are wedded to evolution, it is possible to understand the strength and determination of the Chinese, and thus the potency of the challenge posed to the United States.

Throughout history, rising hegemonic challengers have confronted dominant hegemons. These confrontations have almost always resulted in intense security competition and can yield hegemonic war. A review of history reveals that hegemonic conflicts are relatively rare. Unfortunately, like major earthquakes, their effects are profound. The Peloponnesian War, the Punic War, the Thirty Years' War, the War of the Spanish Succession, the Seven Years' War, the French Revolutionary and Imperial Wars, the Crimea War, World War One and World War Two, and the Cold War had lasting impacts on the international politics of the time. A hegemonic

struggle between China and the United States is sure to have equally significant consequences for the international system, as well as for the countries themselves.

This section of the study considers the major theories of power politics: Power Distribution, Power Transition Theory, Offensive Realism, and an Offensive Realism based on evolution. After this discussion, I will introduce traditional Chinese strategic thought, and explain why its key aspects—impulse for domination, lack of appreciation for the importance of friction—are informed by evolution and the unique conditions of China.

This section provides the foundation for the major components of the study. Accordingly, it is the longest and most theoretical section upon which the other sections will draw.

### I. Theories of Power Politics:  Explaining Hegemonic Conflict

All expectations about the future of the Sino-American relationship are anchored in theories of international politics. These theories frame expectations about likely scenarios, potential flashpoints, and issues of contention between the two powers. Theories are the foundations upon which scenarios and expectations of the relationship may be built. Accordingly, scenarios and expectations are only as good as their theoretical foundations.

While there are many theories that can inform the discussion of the future Sino-American relationship, for example, the democratic peace theory made famous by Michael Doyle—liberal democracies do not fight other liberal democracies—this study rejects idealistic considerations of the future of the relationship. Rather, it

considers theories of power politics, which are the most realistic theoretical approaches to the foundation of the Sino-American relationship, before offering its own theory to understand why confrontation with China is as certain as anything can be in international politics.

Adopting the perspective of power politics permits analysis of an old concept in international politics, far older than liberal democracy or economic interdependence: the struggle for hegemony in international politics. The power political perspective permits us to see similarities, as well as differences, with pervious periods of hegemonic conflict, from the Peloponnesian War (434-404 B.C.), the Punic War (264-146 B.C.), the Italian and Indian Ocean War (1494-1516), the Dutch-Spanish War (1580-1608), the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), the Wars of the Grand Alliance (1688-1713), the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1792-1815), the period of the two World Wars (1914-1945), and the Cold War (1946-1992).

This study will consider the following theories of power politics relevant for understanding the future of Sino-American confrontation: power preponderance; power transition theory; balance of power; offensive realism; before introducing evolutionary realism which most closely explains the motivations of China's leadership.

I. A. The Importance of Hard Power and Relative over Absolute Power
All power political theories begin with an understanding that the most useful instrument in international politics is hard power. In international relations, power

equals the amount of hard power a state possesses—its military, economic, diplomatic capabilities and effectiveness, population size, geographic position, technological prowess and adaptability, and natural resources. In essence, hard power pivots around three considerations: the number of people who can work and fight; their economic productivity and innovation; and the effectiveness of the political system in exacting and pooling individual contributions to advance national goals. This might be thought of as a country's efficiency and will power to achieve its goals.

Population is an essential component but cannot alone confer international power, as is clearly demonstrated by the relative weakness of Bangladesh, Indonesia, or Brazil. In order to be truly powerful the population must be productive. For this reason developed countries have far more influence than their developing counterparts. In a nutshell, this is why the United States dominates China today. But those advantages cannot be realized without political effectiveness, the ability of governments to extract resources to advance national goals and the will power to continue in the face of political or economic adversity or military setbacks or failures. Politically effective governments garner relatively more resources and have greater will, and are then able to expand national power. The example of Vietnam is important here. North Vietnam defeated a more populous and affluent South Vietnam in spite of massive assistance from the United States and allies to Saigon due to its ruthless extraction of resources, great will power, and assistance from key allies like the Soviet Union and China.

Finally, the number and wealth of allies is sometimes considered in discussions of hard power.  This is because allies often augment the dominant state's power through their military effectiveness, intelligence community, economic might, or natural resources.  Of course, allies may also introduce problems for the dominant state, seeking to use its power to advance the ally's interests.  But on the whole, allies are assets that strengthen and deepen the hegemon's capabilities.

To this list of the components of hard power, Harvard political scientist Joseph Nye's description of the importance of soft power—getting others to want what you want—is a significant contribution.[1]  Stalin's famous quip "how many divisions has the Pope," was intended to mock the power of the Catholic Church, but history turned his remark on its head.  The Pope could not evict the Red Army from Poland in 1945, but Pope John Paul II's role in undermining Communist rule in that country in the late 1970s and 1980s underscores the importance of soft power.  Indeed, soft power does have a role to play:  witness how Beijing is establishing Confucius Centers, cultural centers promoting Chinese language and culture worldwide, while undermining and denigrating Western culture and languages, especially English and the Anglophone world.

But soft power plays a secondary role.  This is because soft power, in the context of the Sino-American confrontation, occurs within the context of hard

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[1] Nye first developed the concept of soft power in Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Bound to Lead:  The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York:  Basic Books, 1991); and more fully developed in his *Soft Power:  The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York:  Public Affairs, 2005).

power.  It is the hard power capabilities of China and the United States that will determine the result of the confrontation.

The second starting point for all power political theories is the distinction between absolute and relative power.  While the absolute power that a state has is significant, what is more important is the relative power of the state—how it ranks in terms of power against the power of other states.

The example of Great Britain underscores this point.  In absolute terms, Great Britain is far more powerful than it was a hundred years ago—it has nuclear weapons after all.  However, in relative terms, Great Britain is much weaker than it was a hundred years ago.  The rise of Germany, Japan, the Soviet Union/Russia and the United States mean that Britain is weaker in comparison.  London is worse off than it was a hundred years ago when it ruled the waves and its empire was arguably the world's greatest military power.

International relations theories that focus on changing power relationships support the expectation of a Sino-American clash.  Robert Gilpin's power preponderance theory and A.F.K. Organski and Jacek Kugler's power transition theory focus on the consequences of a shift in power between a dominate state and a rising challenger.  The theory of the balance of power, perhaps the oldest power political theory, considers the prospects of alliance relationships for balancing the power of the rising state by the hegemonic state, or the reverse, the challenger wooing away the hegemon's allies.  The theory of offensive realism explains why states must maximize their power for their security in a dangerous world either

because anarchy forces them to do so (Mearsheimer) or because it is nature's default option (Thayer).  The arguments of this section are found in Table One.

<u>I. B. Gilpin's Power Preponderance</u>

Gilpin portrays international relations as a political system in which leading states govern.[2]  They draw on their wealth, power, and status to set the rules of international politics.  However, over time economic and technological diffusion occurs in the wake of the hegemonic struggle.  As the burdens of international governance and policing weaken the hegemon, challengers that seek to rewrite the rules of governance to their advantage emerge.  With its relative power ebbing, the weakened hegemon may become desperate enough to resort to force to forestall the increasingly urgent demands of a rising challenger.

Gilpin's power preponderance theory logically results in pessimism about the future of the Sino-American relationship.  The theory's expectation is that international trade, investment, and technology transfer, by licit or illicit means, will result in the steady diffusion of United States economic power, benefiting China.  As the U.S. confronts the numerous brushfires that threaten its global interests, it will be unable to devote sufficient resources to maintaining or restoring its former relative balances of power it had over emerging peer-competitors, illuminating the classic imperial overstretch problem:  too few resources to sustain obligations.

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[2] Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in International Politics* (New York:  Cambridge University Press, 1981).  A more historically detailed discussion that dovetails with the logic of Gilpin's theory is Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (New York:  Random House, 1987).

Implications for the Sino-American Relationship

Gilpin's theory predicts that the future of the Sino-American relationship will be like past hegemonic challenges. The United States will find it difficult to maintain the security structure it created, particularly in Asia. Defense spending will be reduced in absolute or relative terms. Its allies will increasingly question the credibility of its deterrent capabilities, as well as Washington's resolve. The result will be the ebbing of its power.

At the same time, the theory fully expects an increase in the likelihood of conflict but is indeterminate whether force will be initiated by a Chinese challenger armed with a force structure that is Washington's equal in most respects, and seeking to support its demands for greater influence over international arrangements. Or whether conflict is started by a besieged and overstretched American hegemon desperate to head off further decline.

Gilpin's theory is an important one for understanding how changes in the distribution of power occur in the past as well as at present. Its principal limitation is its lack of identification of a motivation for the challenger. If the change in the distribution of power continues to favor China, it is not evident why it will aggress, as time is in its favor.

I. C. Organski and Kugler's Power Transition Theory

A second theory useful for understanding the future of the Sino-American relationship is power transition theory. The major proponents of this theory are

A.F.K. Organski and Jacek Kugler.[3]  These scholars envision the international system

as a hierarchy of contending states in which the distribution of benefits reflects the

interests of the system's dominant actor, the hegemon.  When a rising state believes

it has the power to recast international hierarchy, supplanting the hegemon, it is

likely to be the aggressor in a major war in order to recast the rules of international

politics as the dominant state.

  This theory is similar to power preponderance theory because it emphasizes

shifts in the capabilities of the dominant state and the rising challenger.  One major

difference between the two theories is that Organski and Kugler's power transition

theory emphasizes the unequal distribution of technological advancement around

the world that leads to the rise of challengers that are both dissatisfied with the

status quo in international politics and powerful.  In time, hegemonic war results.

To understand why hegemonic war results, it is important to consider the causes of

satisfaction and dissatisfaction for the hegemon and challenger respectively.

  The motivations behind warfare are rooted in the relative political

satisfaction with how power is distributed and with the interests, institutions,

norms, and values, of the global hierarchy.  Conflicts are generated by the desire of

the state to improve its political position in the hierarchy.  The victor in the last

hegemonic war designs the institutions, norms, values, and rules for the next era in

international politics.  The hegemonic state and its allies are comfortable with the

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[3] A.F.K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (Chicago:  University of Chicago Press, 1980).  Also important is Jacek Kugler and Douglas Lemke, *Parity and War: Evaluations and Extensions of the War Ledger* (Ann Arbor:  University of Michigan Press, 1996).

"rules of the road" because they created these rules and they support their interests. They control most of the wealth, enjoy most of the prosperity, wield most of the power in global politics.

At the same time, a few states near the top of the hierarchy and most of the states at the bottom are dissatisfied with the existing system and want change. They view the international system as not conferring benefits equal to their expectations and long-term interests. They consider the international system to be unfair, corrupt, biased, skewed, and dominated by hostile forces. The rationale or grievance may be historical, as with Germany prior to World War II, personal, as with Libya, religious, as with Iran, among other causes. Despite differences in perspective, dissatisfied nations all view the global status quo as unfavorable and wish to change it. The largest proportion of dissatisfied states likely resides in the small power category, states with minimal influence in the international system. More worrisome are the great powers. They may have the ability to challenge the hegemon, especially as they reach the point of parity with the dominant state.

For power transition theory, parity is reached when the potential challenger reaches 80 percent of the resources of the hegemon. 80 percent is an arbitrary amount, but it is reasonable because the amount is sufficient for the rising state to consider overtaking the dominant state. It is also reasonable because it is sufficient power for the hegemon to become increasingly concerned with the rising

challenger.  Parity ends when the challenger exceeds the resources of the dominant state.[4]

In the aftermath of the hegemonic war, the process starts all over again as new technological developments foster the rise of a new challenger and cause the power of the hegemon to wane.

A second key difference from Gilpin's theory is that Organski and Kugler's theory focuses more on what it views with alarm as the "crossover" phenomenon, or the "overtaking" period.  This is the period where a challenger is about to overtake the dominant state.  The rising power enters a period of very rapid growth in its military power and its economic might.  It is poised to overtake the hegemon in relative power.

Historically, this period varies from years in some cases, as with the Anglo-German naval rivalry from 1906 to 1914, to decades, as with a state of constant security competition between Rome and Carthage during the three major wars of the Punic Wars period from 264-146 B.C.  In general, a shorter crossover period is more dangerous for incidence of hegemonic conflict because of the risk of misperception; although that point should not be pressed too far, as both the challenger and hegemon are cognizant of the fundamental intent of the other.  For the dominant state, the intent is to stay hegemonic.  For the challenger, it is to become the hegemon.

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[4] A good discussion is found in Ronald L. Tammen, Jacek Kugler, Douglas Lemke, et al., *Power Transitions:  Strategies for the 21st Century* (New York:  Chatham House Publishers of Seven Bridges Press, 2000).

The hegemon cannot match the growth of the rising power due to its mature economy and military power. Once this point is reached, hegemonic conflict is likely. As the gap in relative power closes, the hegemon becomes increasingly determined to prevent the challenger's rise through the combination of economic, diplomatic, and military means. The rising hegemon is equally determined to realize the transition to a new international order whose shape is determined by it. The stakes in this competition are the highest in international politics.

Consequently, the participants will evaluate all means necessary, including war, to realize their objective. Power transition theory expects the rising challenger to initiate the conflict as it overtakes the once-dominant state. The theory cannot define precisely what will be the cause of the conflict, but history shows that a dispute over territory or over allies, or the interests of allies, is likely to be the spark that causes the hegemonic war. Power transition theorists are aware that there may be a series of "sparks" or crises, none of which triggers the conflict, until, in fact, conflict erupts. For example, there were two crises over Morocco in 1905 and 1911, a crisis over Bosnia in 1908, and two small Balkan Wars in 1912-1913 before the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand resulted in the July Crisis, culminating in World War I.

Implications for the Sino-American Relationship

In broad gauge, power transition theory is useful for understanding why the rise of China will be a dangerous period in international politics due to the security competition between the United States and China. It is vague in defining at what

point the "challenger" may be identified precisely as a challenger. For example, was China a challenger in 1989 or 1991, which is a period very different from today? The theory would not suggest so, and, indeed, China was seen as an ally of the United States during the 1980s and even into the 1990s as the Soviet Union imploded. Thus, defining the challenger, and so the start of the "crossover" period is difficult for this theory to define with precision. In addition, the tools used to define the start of the "crossover" period are very broad, aggregate indications of power. Not considered by the theory, but more relevant would be considerations of relative military effectiveness.

Related to this point is another weakness. Consider China in the 1990s when its relative weakness vis-à-vis the United State was the greatest known in the present period of Sino-American rivalry. The theory fails to explain why the United States did not act against China in this period, when the challenger was weakest militarily and struggling to keep up with the hegemon. In such circumstances, one might expect that the hegemon should worry about the mere prospect of being overtaken at some point in the future and act early to preclude that outcome while the task is a more manageable one. There is ample precedence for this. Precisely this motivation was behind Germany's determination to fight Russia in 1914, sooner was better than later, when St. Petersburg's power would have grown and was thus in a "crossover" period of power transition.

I. D. Rasler and Thompson's Modified Power Transition Theory

Organski and Kugler's power transition theory has been adapted by Karen Rasler and William Thompson, both of whom are theorists of international politics. Their argument is that the cause of the rise of challengers is technological innovation that is concentrated in one state.[5] For example, the Portuguese edge was associated with shipbuilding, navigation, and the Indian Ocean spice trade. For the Dutch, the technological innovations were herring fisheries, shipbuilding, and textiles, in addition to controlling much of intra-European and European-Asian maritime commerce. For the British, they were shipbuilding, Atlantic commerce, and wool textiles. Later, they were cotton textiles, coal, steam engines, iron products and railroads. For the United States, it was steel, agriculture, petroleum, textiles, and later the rise of the service and information age economies. As its power grows, the rising state becomes dominant, first, regionally, and then, as its relative power continues to grow becomes a challenger to the dominant state.[6]

The basic pattern that emerges is one of innovational waves. Each innovational era plays itself out. The Portuguese could not maintain their monopoly on navigational secrets.[7] The Dutch did not have enough power to dominate European commerce forever. The British could not make the transition to steel, chemicals, and automobiles smoothly. Each innovator is succeeded by another state

[5] Karen A. Rasler and William R. Thompson, *The Great Powers and Global Struggle 1490-1990* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1994).
[6] Also useful is the discussion in Karen A. Rasler and William R. Thompson, *War and State Making: The Shaping of Global Conflict* (Boston: Unwin and Hyman, 1989).
[7] These and other cases are covered in detail in William R. Thompson, ed., *Great Power Rivalries* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999).

that outperforms the old lead innovator in its specialization and introduces new area of innovation as well. In the past, different sources of energy were also involved. Wind and peat gave way to coal. Coal gave way to petroleum. In time, no doubt that petroleum will give way to nuclear power or some combination of alternative energy sources.

Rasler and Thompson's theory acknowledges that potential challengers are often thwarted at the regional level. They are involved in hot or cold wars that destroy them, which is often the case for continental states. As evidence, they point to the bids for hegemony of France, Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union. The cases of Portugal, the Netherlands, Great Britain, and the United States are distinguished by pronounced and consistent oceanic capability and orientation. Such an orientation presupposes an elite and dominant domestic political coalition that is not biased against trade, navies, and the development of global power. It also implies a preference for developing large-scale commercial networks over acquiring territory for its own sake. Territory is far less valuable than wealth. A less explicit, historical corollary is that these same states were the ones most likely to develop adequate fiscal and credit procedures to be able to take on and defeat their larger and nominally wealthier adversaries at a regional level. Of course, the next step, victory in global warfare against the hegemon is also necessary.

<u>Implications for the Sino-American Relationship</u>

The implications of this theory for the future of the Sino-American confrontation are significant. China's growth over the last decades has been so significant that, absent

49

the United States' presence, it is clearly dominant regionally.  Its preference for

establishing commercial success over territorial gain where Chinese territory is not

concerned is evident, although it has demonstrated a significant willingness to use

force to advance its interests.  It has a strong currency, and is well developed in the

East Asian commercial hub (China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan) with strong fiscal

and credit institutions, which are becoming stronger as China continues its

explosive growth.

I. E. Copeland's Modified Power Transition Theory

As did Rasler and Thompson, political scientist Dale Copeland also modified

Organski and Kugler's theory.[8]  His focus is on the challenger.  The essence of the

argument is that the challenger is to blame for the hegemonic war.

Copeland submits that rising powers are always better off by not aggressing

against the declining hegemon.  Rather, waiting should be advantageous.  They will

become stronger as the hegemon declines in relative power.  For Copeland, the

motivation for conflict will come from the declining hegemon.  In the historical cases

of hegemonic war, Copeland argues it is the declining hegemon who wages

preventive war against the aspiring challenger.

There is no doubt that this motivation exists for the declining hegemon.  But

it is equally true that the rising hegemon should have a motivation to attack the

declining one as well.  One can imagine several scenarios where this might happen.

A likely one is that the rising state decides to attack the hegemon first, rather than

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[8] Dale C. Copeland, *The Origins of Major War* (Ithaca, N.Y.:  Cornell University Press, 2000).

waiting for the hegemon to launch a preventive war against it, from which it may never recover. A second scenario would be when the rising power launches an undeclared war against the hegemon, stealthily undermining it in world politics, discovering its weaknesses and vulnerability, wooing its allies away from it, sowing discord domestically, while never giving cause for the hegemon to strike against it, until the hegemon is either too weak or collapses from the weight of its burdens.

Implications for the Sino-American Relationship

The expected consequences for the Sino-American relationship are that the United States should be the entity that takes action against the Chinese to prevent their continued rise in power. While this is the implication of Copeland's theory, it is unlikely that the United States would be so risk accepting given the institutional safeguards that exist in the United States and for historical reasons as well. The United States has never waged preventive war, and both Truman and Eisenhower rejected pleas to do so against the Soviet Union, arguing that it was against the political principles of the United States.

I. F. Traditional Balance of Power Theory

Allies of hegemons and potential hegemons can play a key role in the rivalry between them. Having allies is a sign that a state is militarily powerful, credible, and influential. The fact that over 80 states have an alliance relationship with the United States is an indication of each of these factors in addition to the fact that states want to use U.S. military power to advance their aims. Having allies also is the closest thing we get to a vote of confidence in world politics. Lots of allies usually means

that the state has a lot of hard power and thus is worthy ally.  Allies are thus more willing to support the hegemon as the hegemon requires.

Conversely, the loss of allies is the closest thing we get to a vote of no confidence.  Allies back away from supporting the hegemon because its status is increasingly uncertain, and there is little desire to be on the wrong side of the rising, soon to be dominant, competitor.   It makes sense for regional allies to hedge their bets and begin increasing their own military capabilities or enter into an overt or tacit alliance relationship with the new hegemon.  When a hegemon is losing the support of its allies, that is a sign that it is losing its hegemonic status.

The logic of the balance of power is that states should balance against the aggregate capabilities of other states according to international relations theorist Kenneth Waltz, or, more precisely, they should balance against the threat posed by other states, as political scientist Stephen Walt argues.[9]  Walt submits that the degree of threat is determined by four factors:  capabilities, geographic proximity, the offense/defense balance, and indication of aggressive intentions.

The logic of the balance of power emphasizes balancing against the power of other states.  Balancing may be internal, creating military power to meet any threat

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[9] Prominent works of international relations on the logic of balancing are Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1987); and Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959); and Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass.:  Addison-Wesley, 1979).

posed.  Or balancing may be external, relying on allies to help meet the risks and

dangers of international politics.[10]

Implications for the Sino-American Relationship

The logic also suggests that Beijing should be concerned with the power of the

United States in Asia and globally, and seek to offset the danger U.S. power poses to

China's interests, but also that China's increasing capabilities will trigger a reaction

among its neighbors.  This reaction is anchored in uncertainty and concern over

how China may use its increasing military might.  As political scientist Stephen Walt

argues, aggregate power is a concern without a doubt, but so is geographic

proximity.  For instance, U.S. power may be greater than China's, but the United

States is a significant distance from Asia.  China is less powerful, but also is a

neighbor of India, Russia, and Vietnam.  For China's neighbors, proximity trumps

aggregate power, making the United States an attractive alliance partner.

For the Sino-American relationship, by the mid-1990s, there were already

clear signs of balance of power reasoning among Asian states.  Regional actors such

as ASEAN were seeking allies to compensate for their limited national strength and

Australia and Japan sought to reinvigorate security agreements with the United

States.

While balance of power theory does not argue that the interactive process it

depicts inevitably results in war, it does view the use of force as one of the options

available to states should they conclude that diplomacy backed by military power is

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[10] Robert Powell, *In the Shadow of Power:  States and Strategies in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.:  Princeton University Press, 1999).

ineffective.  The logic of balancing provides reasons to worry that the perception of China as a rapidly rising power could lead to military conflict in one of two ways. Prospective adversaries might see a sustained effort at countering Beijing's growing power as intolerably burdensome and resort to the use of force to end the competition.  Or, China itself might conclude that relying on its military clout is the most feasible way to offset the dangers posed to its international interests by the power others possess.  Balance of power theory only suggests that the resort to forces is possible, not inevitable.

Given this, the theory is indeterminate concerning the likelihood of the use of force.  An argument may be advanced that one of the decisive factors determining whether balancing will be peacefully conducted or result in war is the number of great powers in the international system, distinguishing between two equal great powers, a condition known as bipolarity, or three or more equal great powers, known as multipolarity.

Classical balance of power theorists like Hans Morgenthau or Henry Kissinger drew their insights from European politics during the classic age of diplomacy before the French Revolution and again after the defeat of Napoleon in 1815 to the start of World War One.  They argued that multipolarity was more stable—there was less likelihood of great power war because each great power had respected spheres of influence and would be conservative in foreign policy, lest one or more of their allies abandoned them as a reckless great power.  The implication of this is that were the world to return to multipolarity with the United States, China, and India equally powerful, at least in an aggregate sense, great power

54

conflict need not occur and the Sino-American rivalry might be muted by the complication of Indian power.  Indeed, this might be beneficial for the United States if India were aligned with it against China.

In contrast, drawing on the experience of the Cold War, Kenneth Waltz argued that bipolarity was more stable.[11]  The reasons the Cold War stayed cold according to Waltz is because bipolarity meant each had only one adversary.  The only state that had the power to seriously challenge the United States was the Soviet Union and the reverse.  The only country that could destroy the United States was the Soviet Union, and, again, the reverse was true.

Second, because of the great power of the two poles, they did not require allies to ensure their security.  Because of this, the security of the United States did not depend on its allies.  Indeed, its allies needed the United States more than the United States need them.  For example, France could terminate its commitment to the force posture of NATO in 1966 without destroying that alliance or threatening the security of the United States.  The Soviet Union could lose its great ally China in the Sino-Soviet split without destroying the security of the Soviet Union.

The third reason that bipolarity is more stable according to Waltz is that both superpowers get to know the other very well.  Both Moscow and Washington studied the other intensively.  One example of this was the nascent science of Kremlinology developed by the United States national security community.  Another

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[11] This argument is made in his *Theory of International Politics* and in "International Structure, National Force, and the Balance of World Power," in James N. Rosenau, ed., *International Politics and Foreign Policy* (New York:  Free Press, 1969); and "The Emerging Structure of International Politics," *International Security*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Fall 1993), pp. 44-79.

would be the characterization of the United States as the "main adversary" by the KGB.  The central focus of the both intelligence communities was the other and so was well studied.  Although there were intelligence failures for both sides, the fundamental consequence of this reciprocal understanding was that the risk of conflict due to misperception was reduced, as was the risk that a crisis would escalate.   Of course, such risk could never entirely be eliminated.

During the 1990s, many students of international politics, including in China, believed that the post-Cold War world would relatively quickly move beyond a brief era of American hegemony and that a multipolar world would soon emerge.[12]  This has not happened as American hegemony has proved to be more robust than anticipated by analysts and scholars of international politics expected.[13]  The stabilizing influence of American hegemony has had a significant impact on reducing rivalries such as between India and Pakistan, or China and Japan, that otherwise would result in intense security competition or war.

More recently, there was concern among balance of power theorists that the rise of China would be only one of several challenges to the hegemony of the United States.  There were concerns that Russia, a resurgent Japan, and India would emerge as peer competitors.  Were that to have happened, balance of power theorists were

[12] For an early assessment of China's post-Cold War path see William T. Tow, "China and the International Strategic System," in Thomas W. Robinson and David Shambaugh, eds., *Chinese Foreign Policy:  Theory and Practice* (Oxford:  Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 115-157.

[13] Scholars expecting a rapid return to a multipolar world were John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future:  Instability in Europe After the Cold War," *International Security*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Summer 1990), pp.  5-56; and Stephen Van Evera, "Primed for Peace:  Europe After the Cold War," *International Security*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Winter 1990-1991), pp. 7-57.

greatly worried about the higher likelihood of war for the reasons that Waltz

identified.  In addition, as Aaron Friedberg noted, key political influences that

reduced the dangers of multipolarity in Europe after the Cold War—consensus on

the lessons from the past fighting of wars, long experience at international

diplomacy, and the stability of domestic political orders—were absent in East Asia.[14]

To that list should be added that democracy is not as widespread, there are

relatively few institutions, and none with the strength of NATO in Europe, and

territorial disputes are numerous.

As the post-Cold War period became established, it is clear that the future of

international politics will be bipolar between China and the United States.  For the

balance of power theorists heavily influenced by Waltz's arguments, this should be a

force for stability between the two countries.  An unspoken assumption of such

reasoning is that China will act as the Soviet Union did.  But that is not likely given

the fundamental differences between the two countries, most notably in the amount

of aggregate power China will possess, which will dwarf Soviet power.  China will

not need allies to be sure, and, indeed, Beijing often seems to be determined to

alienate its neighbors and potential allies through its actions in the South China Sea.

But the risks of China rising are far greater than considered by balance of power

theorists.  The dangers of miscalculation are significantly greater because of the

boldness of and determination to confront the United States possessed by the

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[14] Aaron L. Friedberg, "Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia," *International Security*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Winter 1993-1994), pp. 5-33; and Friedberg, "The Future of U.S.-China Relations," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Fall 2005), pp. 7-45.

Chinese leadership.  Accordingly, balance of power theory expects trouble in the Sino-American relationship whether the future of international politics is bipolar or multipolar.

In sum, balance of power theory has been a useful tool to explain significant periods of international history and to identify the dangers and benefits of multipolar and bipolar systems.  Throughout history, the dangers identified have repeated themselves as great powers have taken gambles based on disastrous assumptions and incorrect predictions that have resulted in catastrophic wars.  But the usefulness for explaining the future of the Sino-American relationship is doubtful.  Simply put, China is not going to behave as balance of power theorists predict.

I. G. Mearsheimer's Offensive Realism

The core idea of offensive realism is that the security of a state may best be realized through maximizing the state's power.  More power is preferred to less because generally more power equals more security.  This straightforward idea is controversial, not the least among realists themselves, particularly the camp associated with defensive realism.  Defensive realists argue that too much power, for example, too much military power, will lead to balancing against the state, and thus threaten the security of the state.

The intent in this subsection is to introduce the theory comprehensively, and this requires commencing our discussion with classical realism, before turning to

Waltz's neorealism, the fountainhead of defensive realism, and then offensive realism.

Classical realism is a theory of international politics associated in contemporary times with George Kennan, Henry Kissinger, Hans Morgenthau, and Reinhold Niebuhr, and sometimes referred to as power politics, *Machtpolitik*, *raison d'etat,* or *Realpolitik*.  The essence of the theory is that states seek economic and military power to compete with others in the international system; they do so because they are composed of individuals who are egoistic and strive to dominate others.[15]  Egoism and dominance are the proximate causes of the realist argument. Ultimate causes are universal statements that explain proximate causes.  Proximate causes are deductively derivable from ultimate causes and focus on explanations of immediate occurrences.  Realists use these proximate causes of behavior widely, but none but the present author has explained their ultimate causation.[16]

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[15] Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*. Translated by R. Howard and A. B. Fox (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966); E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*. London: Macmillan, 1946); Robert Gilpin, *U.S. Power and the Multinational Corporation: The Political Economy of Foreign Direct Investment* (New York: Basic Books, 1975); Gilpin, "The Richness of the Tradition of Political Realism," in Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986); George F. Kennan, *Realities of American Foreign Policy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1954); Friedrich Meinecke, *Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison d'Etat and Its Place in Modern History* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1984); Hans J. Morgenthau, *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946); Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations* (New York: Knopf, 1956); Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1946); Michael Joseph Smith, *Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986).

[16] Note the concordance here with the use of *proximate* and *ultimate* causation in evolutionary biology: *proximate* causes of behavior are physiological triggers and mechanisms that give rise to a behavior (e.g. hormone changes cause birds to sing in

The ultimate cause of egoistic and dominating behavior was originally suggested by the eminent theorist of realism—Hans Morgenthau: humans, and thus states, behave as they do because they possess an *animus dominandi*, "the desire for power."[17] They seek power because human nature is fundamentally egoistic and malignant. Thus conflict and war occur because human nature is bad. Thomas Hobbes provided the foundation for this pillar of realist thought: humans are ruled by their insatiable desire for power. As he describes in *Leviathan*: "I put for a generall inclination of all mankind, a perpetuall and restlesse desire for Power after power, that ceaseth onely in Death."[18] This lust for power has created a state of war where humans live in reciprocal and permanent fear of violent death, and where peace is always precarious. Or, as German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck wrote: "The only healthy foundation for a state is egoism, not romanticism, and it is unworthy of a great state to dispute over something which does not concern its own interests."[19]

Like Hobbes, Morgenthau believed that the human *animus dominandi* manifested itself as the desire to dominate others. An individual's "desire for power...concerns itself not with the individual's survival but with his position among his fellows once his survival has been secured;" he continues, "his lust for power

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the spring); *ultimate* causes of behavior are the reasons why such behavior increases Darwinian fitness (e.g. birds sing to defend territory and attract mates).
[17] Morgenthau, *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics*, p. 192. Classical realism contains many assumptions that are not addressed here, such as: states desire survival; states are the key actors in international politics; and the nature of international politics is inherently one of conflict.
[18] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985[1651]).
[19] Bismarck quoted in A.J.P. Taylor, *Bismarck: The Man and Statesman* (New York: Vintage, 1967), p. 29.

would be satisfied only if the last became an object of his domination, there being nobody above or beside him, that is, if he became like God."[20] So encompassing is this desire for power that the tendency to dominate "is an element of all human associations, from the family through fraternal and professional associations and local political organizations, to the state."[21] The British imperialist Cecil Rhodes expressed this sentiment forcefully when he provided this rather remarkable comment: "These stars that you see overhead at night, these vast worlds which we can never reach. I would annex the planets if I could. I often think of that. It makes me sad to see them so clear and so far away."[22]

Two types of behavior were proposed as the proximate causes of the realist argument: egoism and domination.[23] Egoism refers to the individual's tendency to place his interests before those of others, his own and his family's interests before those of more distant relatives, and those of relatives before those of his community, state, and so on in ever-expanding concentric circles.[24] The desire to dominate, realists believe, is inherent in people, and this drive often turns into latent or physical aggression against those who oppose one's objectives.

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[20] Morgenthau, *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics*, p. 193.
[21] Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, p. 37.
[22] Quoted in Morgenthau, *Scientific Man Vs. Power Politics*, p. 193.
[23] Here we are concerned only with the minimal essential human traits necessary to construct the realist argument. We are not making claims about what individual realists do or should do. It is only important to the argument that realists consider these traits significant.
[24] Richard D. Alexander, *Darwinism and Human Affairs* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1979), p. 44; and Elliott Sober and David Sloan Wilson, *Unto Others: The Evolution and Psychology of Unselfish Behavior* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 2, 203-204, 224-227.

Leaders of states are expected to mirror this ordering, to place the interests of their state before the interests of others or of the world community, and to strive to dominate other states.  Realists argue that only by possessing power can individuals attack and conquer others, in addition to deterring attacks and defending themselves.  The principal result of this process is that balances of power will form and reform cyclically, producing both periods of stability and intense security competition in international politics.  Indeed, as Morgenthau insists, the desire to attain a maximum of power is universal among states and is one of the "objective laws that have their roots in human nature."[25]

Despite its long history as a theory of international politics and its widespread use by scholars and policymakers such as E.H. Carr, George Kennan, and Henry Kissinger, the traditional realist argument rests on weak foundations.  This is so because the ultimate causation they offer is noumenal, outside the realm of what science can investigate and demonstrate.  It is not possible to test whether an *animus dominandi* motivates humans.  Morgenthau does not explain how the proximate causes of egoism and domination may be derived logically from the ultimate causes they offer or how they can be tested scientifically.  Rather, he asserts that individuals possess a drive to dominate and thus must be egoistic or strive to dominate others.  The result is that the theory lacks a scientific ultimate cause.

Kenneth Waltz placed realism on a more scientific foundation by introducing a new realist theory:  neorealism or structural realism.  Neorealism points to international anarchy, a phenomenon we can evaluate, as the ultimate cause of state

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[25] Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, pp. 4, 37.

behavior. This more scientific foundation permits us to reach realist conclusions about international politics, such as the importance of power in interstate relations, without having to believe in the metaphysical concept *of animus dominandi* that Morgenthau suggested.

Waltz's core concept in *Theory of International Politics* is the anarchy that reigns in world politics. That is, there is no ultimate authority in international politics comparable to a domestic government that can adjudicate disputes and provide protection for citizens.[26] Without governmental authority, Waltz argues, the international system is anarchic, making international politics a dangerous environment, and a self-help system, where states must provide for their own protection through arms and alliances.

Anarchy allows Waltz to argue that states must behave much the way Morgenthau expected, but for different reasons. Moreover, he could advance these arguments without arguing that individuals or individual states possess an *animus dominandi*. That is the major distinction between realism and neorealism.

The theories share many assumptions in common, including: survival is the goal of states; there is a sharp distinction between international politics and domestic politics; international politics produces similar behavior, or socialization, among states; states are the key actors in international politics; and the use of force is always possible because it is the *ultima ratio* of international politics.

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[26] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 114-116; and Kenneth N. Waltz, "The Stability of a Bipolar World," *Daedalus*, Vol. 93, No. 3 (1964), pp. 881-909.

While anarchy provides the ultimate cause of state behavior, Waltz also uses a structuralist analysis in his argument. Structuralism is a method of study that focuses on the interaction of the parts, or units of a system, seeing them as more useful to study than the individual units themselves. Waltz uses structuralism to demonstrate how the distribution of power in international politics is critical for understanding whether war is more or less likely. He argues that a world where power is largely distributed to two poles, bipolarity, such as during the Cold War, is more stable than multipolarity, where power is about equally distributed to three or more great powers, such as in Europe before World War II.[27]

This is because superpowers achieve security more easily in bipolarity. To maintain its security, each superpower will balance against the other. It can do so more effectively in bipolarity than multipolarity because it faces only one other major threat: the other superpower. By wedding anarchy as an ultimate cause and structuralism as a method of analysis, Waltz created a new realist theory—neorealism—that improves upon Morgenthau's realism in two ways. First, it does not rely on noumenal ultimate causation; and second, it can explain and predict the likelihood of great power war in international politics.

John Mearsheimer's contribution to neorealism is also significant. In *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, he argues, like Waltz, that the anarchic international system is responsible for much trouble—wars, suspicion, fear, and security

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[27] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 161-193.

competition—in international politics.[28]  Also like Waltz, Mearsheimer argues that

bipolarity is more stable than multipolarity for three reasons:  first, it provides

fewer opportunities for war between or among the superpowers; second, there will

be smaller imbalances of power between the superpowers; and third, there is less

potential for great power miscalculation.[29]

However, unlike Waltz, who feared that too much power for a state would

lead to balancing against it and thus actually threaten its security, the genesis of

defensive realism, Mearsheimer argues that the international system requires states

to maximize their offensive power in order to be secure and to keep rivals from

gaining power at their expense.[30]  In fact, this systemic incentive is so powerful that

states would be hegemons if they could:  "A state's ultimate goal is to be the

hegemon in the system."[31]  Only by being the hegemon can the state be absolutely

sure of its security.  For Mearsheimer, states should behave this way not because

they are aggressive but because the system requires it:  this behavior is the best way

to maximize security in an anarchic world.

Mearsheimer's argument is a major contribution to a growing body of

literature within realist thought called offensive realism.[32]  In general, offensive

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[28] Mearsheimer also argues that because states have offensive military capabilities
and can never be certain of the intentions of other states, they are always afraid of
each other.  Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 3.
[29] Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp.  338-344.
[30] Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 1-8.
[31] Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 21.
[32] For an analysis of offensive realism and defensive realism see Sean M. Lynn-Jones,
"Realism and America's Rise: A Review Essay," *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 2,
(Fall 1998).  An exceptional study of realism, and in some respects the fountainhead
of offensive realism, is Ashley Joachim Tellis, *The Drive to Domination: Towards a*

realists argue that states are compelled to maximize their relative power because of competition in the international system. They will be secure only by acting in this way. As Eric Labs argues, "a strategy that seeks to maximize security through a maximum of relative power is the rational response to anarchy."[33] As the theory of offensive realism is now formulated by Mearsheimer, it is a type of neorealism because the principal causes of state behavior are rooted in the anarchic international system; however, as we show below, offensive realists need not depend on the anarchy of the state system to advance their argument.[34]

Implications for the Sino-American Relationship

Mearsheimer's offensive realism expects intense security competition or war with China because both states will strive to maximize their power within existing constraints. As a result of that activity, which for Mearsheimer is driven by the anarchic condition of international politics, each state will see the other as the only significant threat to its interests and its security.

As each will see the other as the principal threat, both will balance against the other with increasing intensity including arms racing, coercive diplomacy,

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*Pure Realist Theory of Politics* (Chicago: unpub. Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1994).

[33] Eric J. Labs, "Beyond Victory: Offensive Realism and the Expansion of War Aims," *Security Studies*, Vol. 6 No. 4 (1997), pp. 1-49.

[34] Fareed Zakaria proposes a variation of the offensive realist argument which he terms "state-centered realism," that is significantly informed by neorealism. He submits that in creating a foreign policy, a great power's intentions will be shaped by its capabilities, but he also recognizes that "state structure limits the availability of national power." Zakaria thus combines unit-level and systemic causes in his explanation of international politics. Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998).

**Table 1.**

**Theories of Power Politics and Their Predictions for Hegemonic Struggle**

| Theory | Causes | Result | Prediction Based on Previous Cases | Implication for Sino-American Competition |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Power Preponderance (Gilpin)** | Change in Economic Efficiency | Redistribution of Economic Power | Hegemonic State Will Fall | China Wins |
| **Power Transition (Organski and Kugler)** | Change in technology | Redistribution of Technological Power Causes Challenger's Economic Growth | Hegemonic State Will Fall | China Wins |
| **Power Transition (Rasler and Thompson)** | Innovation in technology | Nurtures Regional Challenger in Commercial Hub | Challenger May Be Defeated Regionally. If Moves to Level of Hegemonic Challenger, Challenger Likely to Win | China Has Acquired Dominance Regionally. Likely that China Wins |
| **Power Transition (Copeland)** | Same as Organski and Kugler | Same as Organski and Kugler | Challenger Will Challenge Hegemon | China Likely to Lose |
| **Balance of Power Theory (Walt and Waltz)** | Balancing Behavior | Growth of Challenger Should Prompt Balancing Against It | In the Context of Bipolarity, intense Security Competition. In the Context of Multipolarity, Intense Security Competition or War | Balancing against China |
| **Offensive Realism (Mearsheimer)** | Anarchy | All they can get. States maximize relative power, with hegemony as their ultimate goal | Intense Security Competition or War | War Likely. Victor Not Determined |
| **Offensive Realism (Thayer)** | Human Evolution. Anarchy, danger of predation, and resource scarcity produces Egoism, Dominance, In-Group/Out-Group Distinction | All they can get. States maximize relative power, with hegemony as their ultimate goal | Intense Security Competition or War | War Likely, and Initiated by Chinese. Victor Not Determined |

global competition, and crises.  Mearsheimer expects the military, economic, and diplomatic relationship with China to be similar to the Cold War with the Soviet Union.  In essence, the future of the Sino-American relationship will be a Second Cold War.

I. H. Offensive Realism Based on Human Evolution

All theories of international relations make assumptions about fundamental human behavior, "human nature."  Those assumptions used to be derived from anecdotal observation or deduction by philosophers, but in recent years they have become increasingly testable against scientific knowledge about human biology, psychology, and evolution.

This subsection explains the implications of human evolution for offensive realism.  I argue that human evolution has profound consequences—not least because competition among humans throughout our evolutionary history also occurred in conditions of anarchy and, not coincidentally, gave rise to similar behavior as states in the anarchy of the international system.  The legacy of human adaptation to anarchic conditions remains with humans today, and has important implications for international relations theory.  I argue that the best match between evolved human behavior and theories of international relations, more closely than any other theory, is offensive realism.

Few principles unite the diverse discipline of international politics, but one exception is the concept of *anarchy*—the absence of government in international politics.  As discussed above, anarchy is the ordering principle of international

relations and the starting point for most major theories of international politics. Indeed, anarchy's impact is so profound that it defines and divides the discipline of *international* politics (politics under conditions of anarchy), in contrast to *domestic* politics (politics under conditions of hierarchy, or government).

In fact, anarchy has been an equally significant influence for the entire 2 million year history of human evolution (and the 3.5 billion year history of the evolution of all life on Earth before that). It is not just that humans lack a world government today, they *never* had such a luxury. The fact that people have been subject to evolution by natural selection for hundreds of thousands of generations, and that human evolution occurred under conditions of anarchy has profound consequences for behavior, including how we perceive and act toward others. Humans evolved in the Hobbesian "state of nature," and the legacy of this evolution heavily influences human decision-making and action, including in the realm of international politics.

Significantly, human evolution serves as the foundation for theoretical analyses of human behavior, given that our current behavior is a result of selective pressures in our past, not of today. Theories purporting to explain human behavior make explicit or implicit assumptions about the motivations of humans, and the mainstream theories used in the discipline of international politics to explain the future of relations with China are no exception. General theories are better the more they explain across space and time; in other words, the more closely they coincide with empirical behavior across cultures and throughout history. The most

parsimonious theories of international relations, therefore, will ultimately need to incorporate evolutionary theory.

The central question is: which theories of international relations used for explaining Chinese behavior most closely match what we now know about human nature from the sciences? In other words, we would like to set out a scientific theoretical foundation for the study of strategy suitable for the 21st century. A considerable amount has changed in the last few years and decades about our knowledge of human nature. This body of work is rapidly advancing into the political science, international relations, and strategic studies literature.

My argument is that offensive realism is the theory that most closely matches what we know about human behavior from the sciences. This leads to predictions about state behavior in competitive environments, given that states are led by human beings.[35] The system and state matter, but so do leaders and decision-makers. Offensive realism is a theory that is equally useful in explaining human conflict at many levels, from tribal warfare, gang warfare, commercial corporations, civil wars, to great power behavior. Offensive realism captures many human universals, particularly when applied to political leaders.

The strategies that offensive realism predicts capture a human universal: men prefer more resources, more power, and more influence. These strategies are not unique to humans, characterizing male behavior across a wide range of species including most primates and mammals, as well as many other groups of vertebrates

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[35] Note this is a two-way claim: (1) human nature gives rise to behavior as described by offensive realism; and (2) offensive realism describes human behavior.

such as birds, fish, and reptiles.  However, these strategies did have unique implications for humans.  Indeed, those goals were so important to Darwinian fitness that they helped to *drive* the evolution of profound human intelligence, which means that people are artful in the mechanisms used to increase power: the best way to get more may be by fighting, or threatening to fight, but also by forming coalitions and alliances, co-opting, reducing an incentive to resist by providing a stake in ruling, and by winning status and the admiration of others, however that may be achieved.

Humans also recognize that to seek more is a gamble that might be lost, and so alignment with a stronger power may be the wiser course.  Finally, withdrawing from confrontation might be an option—being neutral like Switzerland may be the right choice.  However, rather than shying from power, such weak states are actually maximizing their potential power given limited means and opportunities.

One immediate criticism of this approach—or indeed of *any* theory of international relations based on the role of individuals—is why we should expect *individual* behavior to tell us anything about *state* behavior.  This study recognizes that many factors may affect the behavior of states: bureaucracies, organizations, international institutions, culture, or the international system itself, to identify only a few.  It also recognizes, as traditional theories of international politics have from the time of Thucydides, that humans do as well.  Many factors come between an individual leader and the actual behavior of the state, but that recognition in no way rejects a role for leaders—though it may dampen it.  While some theorists might wish to argue that Hitler and Bill Clinton would behave exactly the same at the helm

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of the same state in the same context, most scholars would allow at least some room for the role of individual behavior.

I see several reasons why human behavior is an important predictor of state behavior in the context of this study. First, the preferences of individual citizens are, at least to some extent, represented in those elected to office and the goals of the state. Second, bureaucracies and organizations are led and run by human beings, whose own dispositions, therefore, affect these apparatuses of the state. Third, state leaders are the actors that make important strategic decisions, which are thus potentially affected by their human dispositions and those of their advisors, even if tempered by decision-making protocols. Fourth, group decision-making mechanisms may increase the influence of relevant human dispositions, precisely because it is *groups* of men that are especially prone to behaviors associated with dominance, aggression, and coalitionary psychology. Finally, part of my argument is that states behave like offensive realists because it is the best strategy under anarchy, just as offensive realism argues and irrespective of human behavior. The role of human behavior might be, at a minimum, to rationalize and bolster it, although we argue it plays a much more powerful causal role.

Implications for the Sino-American Relationship

The implications of evolution's offensive realism for the Sino-American relationship are the same as Mearsheimer's. The difference is that the Chinese leadership will be the cause of the intense security competition in that relationship, rather than being caused by the impersonal and constant force of anarchy. Chinese leaders will drive

the competition because they are egoists, seek to dominate international politics, are xenophobic, ethnocentric, and racist.

Both theories expect intense security competition or war with China because both states will strive to maximize their power within existing constraints. As a result of that activity, each state will see the other as the only significant threat to its interests and its security.

Because each will see the other as the principal threat to its security, both will balance against the other with increasing intensity, including arms racing, coercive diplomacy, global competition, and crises. My theory expects the military, economic, and diplomatic relationship with China to be similar to the Cold War with the Soviet Union. In essence, the future of the Sino-American relationship will be a Second Cold War, but it will be worse for the United States as it will be the economically weaker pole. This economic weakness, over time, will lead to the loss of its dominant position in international politics if China's growth is not stopped or diverted.

## II. Evolutionary Impulses

Many criticisms of academic approaches to international politics are based on their unsubstantiated or incorrect assumptions about underlying human nature. At the dawn of the 21st century, one that will be dominated by science rather than philosophy, we have the opportunity to move away from assumptions about human nature to generating predictions based on scientific knowledge about human brains and behavior. Offensive realism contains explicit assumptions that behavior in the international system is self-interested, power maximizing, and hostile. This study's argument is that predictions from evolutionary theory match the human behaviors upon which offensive realism depends: egoism, domination, and the in-group/out-group distinction. These serve as the evolutionary impulses that guide decision-maker behavior, and will result in deleterious effects if not mitigated by governmental or educational policies, media, or cultural forces. These elements combine in the United States to protect U.S. decision-making from the direct effect of evolutionary impulse. In China, they reinforce evolutionary impulses.

### II. A. Egoism

Evolutionary theory offers two sufficient explanations for the trait of egoism. The first is a classic Darwinian argument: Darwin argued that an individual organism is concerned for its own survival in an environment where resources are limited. It has to ensure that its physiological needs—for food, shelter, and so on—are satisfied so that it can continue to survive and reproduce. The concern for survival in a hostile environment also requires that in a time of danger or great stress, an

individual organism usually places its life, its survival, above those of other members of the social group, the pack, herd, or tribe.  Egoistic behavior contributes to fitness. Of course, cooperation and even self-sacrifice is common in nature, but only where it brings return benefits to the individual's survival and, the Darwinian bottom line, reproductive success.

Even more important than Darwin's explanation for the origins of egoism is the idea of the selfish gene developed by William Hamilton and popularized by evolutionary theorist Richard Dawkins.  The selfish gene provides the second explanation for human egoism.  A conceptual shift is required here, as Dawkins focuses his analysis on the gene, not the organism, because it is genes that are replicated and so serve as the primary unit of natural selection.[36]  At one time there were no organisms, just chemicals in a primordial "soup."[37]  But different types of molecules started forming and in time efficient copy makers emerged.

However, they sometimes made mistakes, and some of these led to innovations that contributed to fitness, such as the formation of a thin membrane that held the contents of the molecule together to become a primitive cell.  Over time, these "survival machines" became more sophisticated by virtue of the evolutionary process, with cells becoming specialized, ultimately creating organs and sensory systems and so on.  But there is no intentionality in this process.  Genes

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[36] Dawkins has been criticized for his argument that natural selection occurs at the level of the gene.  For his reply emphasizing a nested hierarchy of natural selection see Richard Dawkins, *The Extended Phenotype:  The Long Reach of the Gene* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 112-114, 239.
[37] Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford:  Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 258.

did not want to create or inhabit organisms, or people, but the process continued nonetheless.  The fundamental point here is that "selfishness" of the gene increases its fitness, and so the behavior spreads. It was the only strategy to ensure survival in such a system.

The gene creates a basis for egoism because it is concerned only with satisfying its wants, principally consumption and reproduction.  The organism evolved as a way to satisfy the wants of the gene, and in a similar manner egoism evolved and spread because it was successful and produced more copies of itself in subsequent generations, while less egoistic individuals died out.  Egoism thus becomes a trait or adaptation in animals, such as humans, that aided survival.

Evolutionary theorists now recognize, following William Hamilton's concept of "inclusive fitness", that egoism is more complex than Darwin envisioned. Hamilton recognized that individuals are egoistic, but less so in their behavior toward genetic relatives, especially parent-offspring and sibling relationships.  This is because close relatives share many of the same genes—one-half for siblings and parents, one-quarter for aunts, uncles, and grandparents, and one-eighth for cousins.  As the preeminent evolutionary theorist J.B.S. Haldane explained in 1955, the gene that inclines a man to jump into a river to save a drowning child, and thus to take a one-in-ten chance of dying, could flourish as long as the child were his offspring or sibling.[38]  The gene could also spread, albeit more slowly, if the child were a first cousin since the cousin shares an average of one-eighth of his genes. Haldane thus quipped that he would give his life to save two of his brothers (each

[38] J.B.S. Haldane, "Population Genetics," *New Biology*, Vol. 18 (1955), pp. 34-55, 44.

sharing half of his genes) or eight of his cousins (each sharing one-eighth of his genes).

As a result of the ideas of Darwin, Dawkins, and Hamilton, evolutionary theory provides a scientific explanation for what is commonly known, that individuals favor those who are close genetic relatives.[39]  Similarly, realists also do not expect individuals or states to show cooperation behavior beyond their own self-interest.  Thus, evolutionary theory explains egoism and suggests why cooperation between unrelated individuals is difficult, but possible within the family or close kin group, especially for ethnically homogenous states like China.

Complex social behavior among *unrelated* individuals is also possible, but only as the result of interactions that bring net benefits to reproductive success in the long run, via reciprocal altruism, indirect reciprocity, or signaling.[40]  Even cooperation and helping behavior, therefore, are based on the selfish principles of Darwinian fitness.  Most evolutionary theorists expect no tendency toward cooperation or altruism beyond what is in the interests of the individuals involved and which brings return genetic benefits.[41]

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[39] And there is copious evidence from historical and contemporary times that such nepotism is a significant influence in politics, see Laura Betzig, *Despotism and Differential Reproduction: A Darwinian View of History* (New York: Aldine, 1986).
[40] Martin A. Nowak, *Evolutionary Dynamics: Exploring the Equations of Life* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006).
[41] There are some who argue that natural selection acted on groups as well as individuals ("group selection"), which may have led to genuinely altruistic traits in humans, see David Sloan Wilson, "Evolutionary Biology: Struggling to Escape Exclusively Individual Selection," *Quarterly Review of Biology*, Vol. 76, No. 2 (2001), pp. 199-205; and David Sloan Wilson and Elliott Sober, "Reintroducing Group Selection to the Human Behavioural Sciences," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (1994), pp. 585-654.  However, this remains controversial and requires

II. B. Domination

Evolutionary theory can also explain one of most important concepts for international politics: domination. Like egoism, the desire to dominate is a trait of human nature. As the eminent economist Robert Frank wrote that: "evidence suggests that we come into the world equipped with a nervous system that worries about rank. Something inherent in our biological makeup motivates us to try to improve, or at least maintain, our standing against those with whom we compete for important positional resources."[42]

In the context of evolutionary theory, domination usually means that particular individuals in social groups have regular priority of access to resources in competitive situations.[43] For most social mammals, a form of social organization called a dominance hierarchy operates most of the time. The creation of the dominance hierarchy may be violent and is almost always competitive. A single leader, almost always male (the alpha male), leads the group. The ubiquity of this social ordering strongly suggests that such a pattern of organization contributes to fitness. Alphas have the highest reproductive success, but followers can benefit too from membership within the group, biding their time for a chance to challenge the alpha male when they become strong or old enough.

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special conditions to overcome what are widely agreed to be the much more powerful forces of competition and selection acting on individuals.

[42] Robert H. Frank, *Choosing the Right Pond: Human Behaviour and the Quest for Status* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 7-8.

[43] M. Milinski and G.A. Parker, "Competition for Resources," in J. R. Krebs and N. B. Davies, eds., *Behavioural Ecology: An Evolutionary Approach* (Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1991).

It is important to note a fundamental sex difference here. Although all animals compete for food and resources, the competition for sexual access is particularly important for dominance behavior because it has such a direct impact on Darwinian fitness.[44] Because of fundamental differences in reproductive biology, males of virtually all mammal species are highly competitive with each other over females. It is this high level of inter-male competition that has led to the evolution of fighting, weapons and coalitions—behaviors likely to be under very strong selection pressure.[45] This is responsible for the hierarchical nature of group-living animal species. Individuals fight for rank. It is therefore not necessarily a surprise that there are demonstrated empirical differences between men and women in their behavior in laboratory experiments and the real world. Men tend to conform to relative-gains (zero-sum) motivations, while women tend to favor payoff-maximization (variable-sum) motivations.[46]

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[44] Malcolm Potts and Thomas Hayden, *Sex and War: How Biology Explains Warfare and Terrorism and Offers a Path to a Safer World* (Dallas: Benbella Books, 2008); and Robert L. Trivers, "Parental Investment and Sexual Selection," in B. Campbell, ed., *Sexual Selection and the Descent of Man* (Chicago: Aldine, 1972).

[45] Alexander H. Harcourt and Frans B.M. de Waal, eds., *Coalitions and Alliances in Humans and Other Animals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); G. A. Lincoln, "Teeth, Horns and Antlers: The Weapons of Sex," in R. V. Short and E. Balaban, eds., *The Differences Between the Sexes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Richard W. Wrangham, "The Evolution of Coalitionary Killing," *Yearbook of Physical Anthropology*, Vol. 42 (1999), pp. 1-30

[46] Lee Ellis, Scott L. Hershberger, Evelyn M. Field, Scott Wersinger, Sergio Pellis, Amir Hetsroni, David Geary, Craig T. Palmer, Kazmer Karadi, and Katherine B. Hoyenga, *Sex Differences: Summarizing More Than a Century of Scientific Research* (New York: Psychology Press, 2008); Anthony C. Lopez, Rose McDermott, and Michael Bang Petersen, "Hypotheses on Evolution: Coalitional Psychology and International Politics," Paper presented at the 2010 annual convention of the American Political Science Association, Washington D.C.; S.E. Taylor, L.C. Klein, B.P. Lewis, T.L. Gruenewald, R.A.R. Gurung, and J.A. Updegraff, "Biobehavioral Responses

The principles of dominance and deference apply equally to humans. It is thoroughly established that dominance/status-seeking behavior in humans is based on the same biochemical and neurological processes as in other mammals: the secretion and uptake of testosterone and serotonin modify status-challenging behavior.[47] However rational we may like ourselves to be, our judgments and decision-making are nevertheless influenced by the biochemicals circulating in our bodies and brains.[48] The strength of dominance hierarchies in humans is debated and varies empirically, but where it is suppressed (e.g., in egalitarian societies like the United States), its very suppression betrays the competition for dominance that simmers beneath the surface, and requires organized suppression in the first place.[49] At least among ambitious political leaders, competition for power and

to Stress in Females: Tend-and-Befriend, Not Fight-or-Flight," *Psychological Review*, Vol. 107 (2000), pp. 411-429; and M. Van Vugt, and B. R. Spisak, "Sex Differences in Leadership Emergence during Competitions Within and Between Groups" *Psychological Science*, Vol. 19 (2008), pp. 854-858.

[47] Stephen Peter Rosen, *War and Human Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); and A. Mazur, and A. Booth, "Testosterone and Dominance in Men," *Behavioural and Brain Sciences*, Vol. 21 (1998), pp. 353-397.

[48] Antonio R. Damasio, *Descartes Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain* (New York: Avon, 1994); Rose McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality: The Meaning of Neuroscientific Advances for Political Science," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (2004), pp. 691-706.

[49] Christopher Boehm, *Hierarchy in the Forest: The Evolution of Egalitarian Behavior* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001).

dominance is visible and pervasive.[50] The quest for leadership is evolutionarily old

but ever present.[51]

Ethologists categorize two principal types of behavior among social

mammals in a dominance hierarchy: dominant and submissive.[52] Dominant

mammals have enhanced access to food, territory and, most crucially, mates,

increasing their chances of reproductive success.[53] Acquiring dominant status

usually requires aggression.[54] Dominance, however, is an unstable condition; to

maintain it, dominant individuals must be willing to defend their privileged access

to available resources as long as they are able. This requires psychological

machinery to promote the requisite behaviors.

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[50] Betzig, *Despotism and Differential Reproduction*; Arnold M. Ludwig, *King of the Mountain: The Nature of Political Leadership* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2002); Allan Mazur, *Biosociology of Dominance and Deference* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

[51] Andrew J. King, Dominic D. P. Johnson, and Mark Van Vugt, "The Origins and Evolution of Leadership," *Current Biology*, Vol. 19 (2009), pp. 1591-1682.

[52] These are general categories of behavior and not the alpha and omega of ethological behavior. Christopher Boehm argues elegantly that humans are disposed to resent being dominated, and at least among humans, submissive individuals may only be biding their time until they see an opportunity to escape from their submissive status, see Boehm, *Hierarchy in the Forest*, pp. 237-238.

[53] Dorothy L. Cheney and Robert M. Seyfarth, *How Monkeys See the World: Inside the Mind of Another Species* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p. 35; Harcourt and de Waal, eds., *Coalitions and Alliances in Humans and Other Animals*; and Frans B.M. de Waal, *Chimpanzee Politics: Power and Sex among Apes* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

[54] For an excellent general analysis of the genetic origins of aggression and its chemical mediators in humans such as the hormone testosterone, its derivative dihydroxytestosterone (DHT), neurotransmitters such as serotonin, and some of the differences in behavior caused by these factors in men and women see William R. Clark and Michael Grunstein, *Are We Hardwired? The Role of Genes in Human Behavior* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 159-175; and Rosen, *War and Human Nature.*

Primatologist Richard Wrangham and ethologist Dale Peterson explain why an individual animal is motivated to vie for dominant status: "The motivation of a male chimpanzee who challenges another's rank is not that he foresees more matings or better food or a longer life."[55] Rather, "those rewards explain why...selection has favored the desire for power, but the immediate reason he vies for status....is simply to dominate his peers."[56] In other words, dominance behavior is just evolution's way of motivating us to attain higher reproductive success.

Dominant animals often assume behavior reflecting their status. For example, dominant wolves and rhesus monkeys hold their tails higher than other members of their group in an effort to communicate dominance. A dominant animal that engages in such displays is better off if it can gain priority of access to resources without having to fight for it continuously.[57] Submissive social mammals recognize what is permitted and forbidden given their place in the hierarchy (and all benefit when fighting is rarer). They often try to be as inconspicuous as possible. This

[55] Richard W. Wrangham and Dale Peterson, *Demonic Males: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence* (London: Bloomsbury, 1996), p. 199.
[56] Wrangham and Peterson, *Demonic Males*, p. 199. Also see Konrad Lorenz's classic work *On Aggression*, translated by M. K. Wilson (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966). Evolutionary theory is often allied with ethology, which can be defined loosely as the study of whole patterns of behavior under natural conditions. Both disciplines pay close attention to the evolutionary history of species and the manner in which behavior (instinct in particular) adapts organisms to their environment. They differ because "ethology focuses on the details of individual behavior, including the activity of the nervous system and the effects of hormones." See Charles J. Lumsden and E.O. Wilson, *Promethean Fire: Reflections on the Origin of Mind* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), p. 23.
[57] David P. Barash, *Sociobiology and Behavior* (New York: Elsevier, 1977), p. 237. In this respect, animal behavior is like deterrence and coercion in international politics. Animals, like states, signal their intentions in efforts to deter and coerce. As Waltz notes, "Force is least visible where power is most fully and most adequately present." Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 185.

behavior signals that the subordinate accepts its place in the dominance hierarchy and at least temporarily will make no effort to challenge the dominant animal.

Ethologists argue that dominance hierarchies evolve because they help defend against predators, promote the harvesting of resources, coordinate group activity, and reduce intragroup conflict.[58] The behavior offers significant advantages for social species.[59] A species that lives communally has two choices. It can either accept organization with some centralization of power, or engage in perpetual conflict over scarce resources, which may result in serious injury and deprive itself of the benefits of a communal existence, such as more efficient resource harvesting.[60] Ethological studies have confirmed that a hierarchical

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[58] Joseph Lopreato, *Human Nature and Biocultural Evolution* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1984), pp. 161-176; Donald L. McEachron and Darius Baer, "A Review of Selected Sociobiological Principles: Application to Hominid Evolution II. The Effects of Intergroup Conflict," *Journal of Social and Biological Structures*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (1982), pp. 121-139; Fred H. Willhoite, Jr., "Primates and Political Authority," *American Political Science Review,* Vol. 70, No. 4 (December 1976), pp. 1110-1126.
[59] Stanley Milgram also notes the importance of what he terms "dominance structures." He argues that the "potential for obedience is prerequisite of...social organization" Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View* (New York: HarperCollins, 1974), p. 124. Many in his experiments defined themselves as "open to regulation by a person of higher status. In this condition the individual no longer views himself as responsible for his own actions but defines himself as an instrument for carrying out the wishes of others." Milgram, *Obedience to Authority*, p. 134.
[60] In this respect, international politics resembles animal behavior. As an alpha male provides stability to the group, so too a hegemon in international politics, as many scholars recognize, may provide stability for lesser states in both the realm of international security and for international political economy (on the importance of resource harvesting for the development of dominance hierarchies, see Boone 1992).

dominance system within a primate group minimizes overt aggression and that it increases when the alpha male is challenged.[61]

For primates and especially humans, the dominance hierarchy may have produced a fortuitous result: great intelligence.[62] As cognitive psychologist Denise Dellarosa Cummins argues, it has had a profound effect on human evolution: "The fundamental components of our reasoning architecture evolved in response to pressures to reason about dominance hierarchies, the social organization that characterizes most social mammals."[63] Her study and others have found that dominance hierarchies have contributed to the evolution of the mind, which in turn has contributed to fitness.

According to Cummins, submissive individuals can detect, exploit, and circumvent the constraints of domination. If an animal can take what it wants by force, it is sure to dominate the available resources—unless its subordinates are smart enough to outwit it. To survive, a subordinate must use other strategies:

[61] For a review see Bruce M. Knauft, "Violence and Sociality in Human Evolution," *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (1991), pp. 391-409.

[62] McEachron and Baer discuss the origin of intelligence in humans and argue that conflict in early human history selected for intelligence, which led people to develop better weapons, which in turn selected for even greater intelligence, McEachron and Baer, "A Review of Selected Sociobiological Principles: Application to Hominid Evolution II," pp. 121-139. Also making the argument that warfare contributed to the evolution of human intelligence is Roger Pitt, "Warfare and Hominid Brain Evolution," *Journal of Theoretical Biology*, Vol. 72, No. 3 (1978), pp. 551-575.

[63] Denise Dellarosa Cummins, "Social Norms and Other Minds," in D.D. Cummins and C. Allen, eds., *The Evolution of Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 30. See also Robin Dunbar's work on the evolution of primate and human brain sizes in line with increasing social complexity. Robin I.M. Dunbar, "The Social Brain: Mind, Language, and Society in Evolutionary Perspective," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 32 (2003), pp. 163-181; and Dunbar, *The Human Story* (London: Faber and Faber, 2004).

deception, guile, appeasement, bartering, alliance formation, or friendship.  Thus,

intelligence is particularly important to the survival of subordinates.  "The evolution

of mind emerges," Cummins writes, "as a strategic arms race in which the weaponry

is ever-increasing mental capacity to represent and manipulate internal

representations of the minds of others."[64]

Humans and other primates evolved a mental architecture to address the

difficulties they encountered in dominance hierarchies.  These problems, which

"directly impact survival rates and reproductive success," include two crucial needs:

"the necessity to recognize and respond appropriately to permissions, obligations,

and prohibition," and the necessity "to circumvent the constraints of hierarchy by

dint of guile, particularly through successfully forecasting others' behavior."[65]

Because human mental architecture was shaped by evolution over a very long

period of time and changes only slowly, it remains part of human behavior today, as

a wealth of studies in cognitive psychology show.

Despite the "arms race" described by Cummins to outwit dominance, the

subordinate members of the group continue to participate in the dominance

hierarchy because doing so increases the chances of survival.  As ethologist David

Barash explains, if subordinates "are more fit by accepting" subordinate "ranking

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[64] Cummins, "Social Norms and Other Minds," p. 37; Richard D. Alexander, *The Biology of Moral Systems* (Aldine, N.Y.: Hawthorne: 1987), pp. 114-117.  R.A. Foley emphasizes the role of foraging for resources in the development of human intelligence, R.A. Foley, "Evolutionary Ecology of Fossil Hominids," in E. A. Smith and B. Winterhalder, eds., *Evolutionary Ecology and Human Behavior* (Chicago: Aldine de Gruyter, 1992).
[65] Cummins, "Social Norms and Other Minds," p. 30.

than by refusing to participate, then some form of social dominance hierarchy will result."[66]

Hierarchies thus led to adaptation to conformity to group norms. As a result, evolutionary theorist E.O. Wilson says: "human beings are absurdly easy to indoctrinate—they *seek* it."[67] Three factors cause this ease of indoctrination. First, survival in an anarchic and dangerous world dictates membership in a group and produces a fear of ostracism from it. Second, an acceptance of or conformity to a particular status quo lowers the risk of conflict in a dominance hierarchy. Third, conformity helps keep groups together.[68] If group conformity becomes too weak, the group could fall apart and even die out because of predation from rivals of its own or another species.[69] Thus, for most primates, belonging to the group is better—it increases chances of survival—than existing alone, even if belonging requires subordination.

These understandings have great consequences for the study of politics. Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, E.O. Wilson, and psychologist Donald Campbell, among others, suggest that humans readily give allegiance or submit to the state, or to ideologies like communism, or to religion, because evolution has produced a need to

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[66] Barash, *Sociobiology and Behavior*, pp. 239-240.
[67] E. O. Wilson, *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1975), p. 562, emphasis in original. Also see Albert Somit and Steven A. Peterson, *Darwinism, Dominance, and Democracy: The Biological Basis of Authoritarianism* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1997), pp. 77-84.
[68] Donald T. Campbell, "On the Genetics of Altruism and the Counter-Hedonic Components in Human Culture," *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (1972), pp. 21-37.
[69] Alexander, *Darwinism and Human Affairs*, p. 64.

belong to a dominance hierarchy.[70]  An overview of human history provides context:

much of it is a record of threats of force or wars to gain territory and resources.

Political institutions, whether monarchies or aristocracies, and leaders such as

Julius Caesar, Louis XIV, or Vladimir Putin typify dominance hierarchies—as do the

modern state and its many institutions, such as government bureaucracies and the

military.[71]

These political examples are readily evident, but dominance hierarchies also

have more subtle effects.  For example, they help explain why people obey authority.

Research on children's social interactions has shown that children as young as three

organize themselves into dominance hierarchies.  Perhaps most famously, Yale

University professor Stanley Milgram's psychological experiments show that

ordinary citizens in New Haven, Connecticut will obey those they recognize as

dominant even when they are using their power for clearly malevolent ends.[72]

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[70] Campbell, "On the Genetics of Altruism and the Counter-Hedonic Components in Human Culture;" Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, *Human Ethology* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1989); and Wilson, *Sociobiology*, p. 562.  Roger Masters explores the biological foundation of political organization fully elsewhere, Roger D. Masters, *The Nature of Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989). Of course, evolution does not inform the specific form of the political organization, ideology, or religion.
[71] Masters, *The Nature of Politics*; and Willhoite, "Primates and Political Authority," pp. 1118-1123.  International politics may also be conceived of as a dominance hierarchy, with the hegemon being the alpha male, and bids for hegemony contests between alpha males defending their resources, the hegemon, from another male who seeks to supplant him, a great power challenger.
[72] Milgram acknowledges the importance of the evolutionary process for obedience: "we are born with a *potential* for obedience, which then interacts with the influence of society to produce the obedient man." The capacity for obedience, he argues, is like the capacity for language where mental structures and a social milieu must be present. "In explaining the causes of obedience, we need to look both at the inborn structures and…social influences…. The proportion of influence exerted by each is a moot point.  From the standpoint of evolutionary survival, all that matters is that we

II. C. In-Group/Out-Group Distinction:  Xenophobia and Ethnocentrism

Egoism and dominance are important mechanisms for attaining security, but

especially important is attaining security from members of other groups—

interactions that can be lethal.  Evolutionary theory also provides important insights

for the in-group/out-group distinction commonly made by anthropologists,

psychologists, sociologists, and political scientists.[73]  Of the many biases unearthed

in the so-called "cognitive revolution" in psychology, the in-group/out-group bias is

one of most significant, widespread, and pervasive.  The fundamental point of this

division is that humans divide the world into an "Us," the in-group, versus "Them,"

the out-group, worldview.

Psychologists refer to the in-group as one's own group, to which one is

positively biased.  They argue that in-groups develop from a need for self-definition.

The in-group identity helps to define one both positively and negatively.  It provides

one with meaning and purpose, knowing one is a part of a community with common

interests, values, and goals.  One knows what one is not—a member of the out-

group.  In contrast, the out-group is stereotyped and homogenized as the "Other."

Among the many different categories of an in-group, the most common and

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end up with organisms that can function in hierarchies." Milgram, *Obedience to Authority*, p. 125, emphasis in original.  For a detailed description of Milgram's experiments, see Arthur G. Miller, *The Obedience Experiments:  A Case Study of Controversy in Social Science* (New York:  Praeger, 1986).

[73] S. T. Fiske, "What We Know about Bias and Intergroup Conflict, Problem of the Century," *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, Vol. 11 (2002), pp. 123-128; M. Hewstone, M. Rubin, and H. Willis, "Intergroup Bias," *Annual Review of Psychology*, Vol. 53 (2002), pp. 575-604.  A classic anthropological account is Raymond Firth, *We, The Tikopia* (London:  Allen and Unwin, 1957).

significant ones are family, friendship, age, race, sex, class, nationality, and citizenship.

Psychologist Henri Tajfel's famous in-group/out-group experiments demonstrate the force of these distinctions.[74]  Tajfel used as his subjects unrelated individuals to whom he assigned casual, trivial, or random categories; almost all of them formed groups on the basis of each of these categories, and discriminated against other groups on the basis of their new group identity.  Tajfel's further experiments had interesting results.  He gave his subjects three choices.  They could maximize the joint profit of both in-group and out-group; second, maximize the total profit of the in-group; or maximize the difference between the profit of the in-group and the profit of the out-group.  He found that the outcome that appealed most was the maximal differential between groups, which might also be called relative gains, even if this meant less in absolute terms for the in-group.[75]  Decades of research have replicated and confirmed the central finding: even strangers assigned into arbitrary groups very quickly display a strong favoritism towards their own group, and a strong dislike of other groups.  Tajfel's findings bring to mind the Russian parable about the peasant and the genie.  When a peasant finds a bottle and uncorks

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[74] Henri Tajfel, "Social Identity and Intergroup Behaviour," *Social Science Information*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (1974), pp. 65-93; and Tajfel, *Human Groups and Social Categories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).  For its relation to ethnic conflict see Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley:  University of California Press, 1995), pp. 144-147.

[75] Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, p. 145.  Also see Henri Tajfel and John Turner, "An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict," in W. G. Austin and S. Worchel, eds., *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (Monterey, Calif.: Brooks/Cole, 1979).

it, a genie appears and promises the peasant a wish. He replies, "Well, my neighbor has a cow and I have none. So, I wish for you to kill my neighbor's cow."

Individuals often appear to value relative differences or gains much more than absolute differences or gains, especially in inter-group conflicts. Nine surveys of "contentedness" in U.S. citizens between 1946 and 1970 show that the level of "happiness" is not linked to absolute income levels—the distribution of responses did not change even though national per capita income rose during this period by 56 percent.[76] Thus, a constant proportion of people remain unhappy despite being absolutely better off. The best explanation for this is that those same proportions of people continue to recognize that another proportion has more than they do. This effect was consistent between various advanced and less developed countries, and supported by data that people's perception in the U.S. of minimum acceptable wage grew roughly at the same rate as the national income—even though it was much higher than inflation.

The ubiquity of the in-group/out-group distinction across human cultures and across time suggests that it is an evolutionary adaptation. But rather than simply relying on ubiquity of behavior, evolutionary theory provides an ultimate causal explanation of the in-group/out-group distinction made by humans: it explains why such a mechanism would evolve. There are three major reasons why this is so.

First, given the paucity of resources in the Pliocene, Pleistocene, and Holocene environments of human evolution, cooperation with groups beyond one's

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[76] Frank, *Choosing the Right Pond*.

own would probably be rare, given the necessity of satisfying one's own, and one's

relatives, needs. Rather, considerable evidence points to intensive inter-group

conflict in our evolutionary past, from both archeological and ethnographic evidence

on pre-industrial societies.[77] Male deaths from warfare averaged around 15 percent

of the population—and in some societies are considerably higher—compared to 1

percent of the western population during the so-called "bloody" 20th century.[78]

Other human groups are commonly the most dangerous threat in the

environment.[79]

Second, in the Pliocene, Pleistocene, and Holocene environments, our human

ancestors faced varied and great threats, in the form of other animals and other

humans, as well as natural dangers such as disease, infections, complications from

injuries, and the environment. Rivers posed the risk of drowning, terrain posed the

risk of falling, and weather could cause freezing or dehydration. Even something as

simple as falling or slipping on a rock could cause a fatal injury. For example, it

appears from the preserved remains of "Ötzi", that he was first wounded and then

probably froze to death as he rested in the Italian Alps. As a result of these dangers,

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[77] Azar Gat, *War in Human Civilization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Jean Guilaine and Jean Zammit, *The Origins of War: Violence in Prehistory* (London: Blackwell, 2004); Lawrence H. Keeley, *War Before Civilization: The Myth of the Peaceful Savage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Steven LeBlanc and Katherine E. Register, *Constant Battles: The Myth of the Peaceful, Noble Savage* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003); and Wrangham and Peterson, *Demonic Males*.
[78] Samuel Bowles, "Group Competition, Reproductive Leveling, and the Evolution of Human Altruism," *Science*, Vol. 314 (2006), pp. 1569-1572; and Keeley, *War Before Civilization*.
[79] Alexander, *The Biology of Moral Systems*.

humans and other animals need the ability to rapidly assess threats and react quickly.

The in-group/out-group distinction may be thought of as the human mind's immediate threat assessment:  in sum, no threat/threat.  Is the outsider a threat to oneself or to one's family?  As psychologist Robert Bolles writes, "What keeps animals alive in the world is that they have very effective *innate* defensive reactions which occur when they encounter any kind of new or sudden stimulus."[80]  These reactions vary, he says, "but they generally take one of three forms:  animals generally run or fly away, freeze, or adopt some type of threat, that is, pseudo-aggressive behavior."[81]

These reactions are elicited by the appearance of a predator, and also by innocuous, but unfamiliar, objects or animals.  Bolles continues, "These responses are always near threshold so that the animal will take flight, freeze, or threaten whenever any novel stimulus event occurs….The mouse does not scamper away from the owl because it has learned to escape the painful claws of the enemy; it scampers away from anything happening in its environment."[82]  Likewise, he argues, the gazelle "does not flee from an approaching lion because it has been bitten by lions; it runs away from any large object that approaches it, and it does so because this is one of its species-specific defense reactions."[83]

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[80] Robert C. Bolles, "Species-Specific Defense Reactions and Avoidance Learning," *Psychological Review*, Vol. 77, No. 1 (1970), pp. 32-48, 33.  Emphasis in original.
[81] Bolles, "Species-Specific Defense Reactions and Avoidance Learning," p. 33.
[82] Bolles, "Species-Specific Defense Reactions and Avoidance Learning," p. 33.
[83] Bolles, "Species-Specific Defense Reactions and Avoidance Learning," p. 33.

He concludes, "The animal which survives is the one which comes into the environment with defensive reactions already a prominent part of its repertoire."[84] As a result, over the course of human evolution, strangers were first likely to fear one another, at least until they became familiar.[85]

Third, strangers might pose an important immediate threat. Given scarce resources, our human ancestors would have used their intelligence and ability to reason into the future to assess outsiders. Any outsider would be judged fairly quickly to determine whether his presence was a threat to their future resources. Would he compete for the scarce resources they needed to survive? Would he present competition for mates? Or would his presence threaten their position in the extended family or tribal group? In environments where resources were particularly contested, this could become extreme. For example, among the Inuit of the Arctic, "unfamiliar men would normally be killed even before questions were asked."[86]

Consequently, as with the great majority of animals, humans rapidly assess threats posed by conspecifics or other animal and natural threats. Of course, the human ability to assess such threats is much more complex than it is in other animals. Thus we may consider other variables, such as the possibility of immediate trade or trade and cooperation in the long run, given the constraints of Trivers'

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[84] Bolles, "Species-Specific Defense Reactions and Avoidance Learning," p. 33.
[85] J. Sidanius and R. Kurzban, "Evolutionary Approaches to Political Psychology," in D. O. Sears, L. Huddy, and R. Jervis, eds., *Handbook of Political Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); and D. Lieberman, J. Tooby, and L. Cosmides, "The Architecture of Human Kin Detection," *Nature*, Vol. 44 (2007), pp. 727-731.
[86] Richard W. Wrangham, *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human* (New York: Basic Books, 2009).

reciprocal altruism argument.  Trivers showed how animals can cooperate with unrelated individuals, as long as cooperation is reciprocated in the future with sufficient probability.  Animals have the "flight, freeze, or fight" instinct, as do humans, but human intelligence gives us a greater repertoire of behavior:  flight, freeze, fight, or cooperate—with the expectation that cooperation will be reciprocated.

But the option of cooperating with outsiders is relatively new in human evolutionary history, and so the central point remains:  humans and other animals need to be able to assess the threats posed by outsiders quickly, so they know how to behave to save and protect themselves and their relatives.  Do they cooperate, flee, or attack?  The in-group/out-group distinction is one solution that developed through evolutionary adaptation.

II.D. Xenophobia

Evolutionary theory allows us to explain why xenophobia evolved in humans. Xenophobia is also found in nonhuman animals.  Indeed, most species aggress against conspecifics, and most are territorial, as many dog and cat owners know from observation.[87]  The near universality of these behaviors suggests that they

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[87] A good introduction to xenophobia in animals is Charles H. Southwick, et al., "Xenophobia among Free-Ranging Rhesus Groups in India," in Ralph L. Holloway, ed., *Primate Aggression, Territoriality, and Xenophobia: A Comparative Perspective* (New York: Academic Press, 1974), pp. 185-209.  Also see Holloway, "Introduction," in *Primate Aggression, Territoriality, and Xenophobia*, pp. 1-9, 7; and Fred H. Willhoite, Jr., "Evolution and Collective Intolerance," *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (August 1977), pp. 667-684, 674-675.  For explicit application to humans see Ralph B. Taylor, *Human Territorial Functioning:  An Empirical, Evolutionary*

evolved in animals in the distant past.  The empirical evidence for this is widely

documented by ethologists and biologists and is so strong as to be overwhelming.[88]

In fact, the amygdala, one of the brain's most ancient neurological structures and

common to many animals, is involved in fear-related behaviors.  Ethologist David

Barash has found in his studies of humans and other animals that "both…tend to

reserve their most ferocious aggression toward strangers."[89]  Biologist John Fuller

concludes:  "xenophobia is as characteristic of humans as of ants, mice or

baboons."[90]  Physiologist Jared Diamond argues that "xenophobic murder has

innumerable animal precursors," and humans are unique in being the only species

to have developed the weapons necessary for killing at a distance.[91]  After a

comprehensive review of xenophobia in animals, Johan van der Dennen concludes

that it "is a widespread trait throughout the animal kingdom," one that helps to

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*Perspective on Individual and Small Group Territorial Cognitions, Behaviors, and Consequences* (Cambridge:  Cambridge University Press, 1988).

[88] For an excellent survey of this literature see Johan van der Dennen, "Ethnocentrism and In-Group/Out-Group Differentiation," in Vernon Reynolds, Vincent S.E. Falger, and Ian Vine, eds., *The Sociobiology of Ethnocentrism: Evolutionary Dimensions of Xenophobia, Discrimination, Racism, and Nationalism* (London:  Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 1-47, 20-22.  Also see J.A.R.A.M. van Hooff, "Intergroup Competition and Conflict in Animals and Man," in J. van der Dennen and V. Falger, eds., *Sociobiology and Conflict:  Evolutionary Perspectives on Competition, Cooperation, Violence and Warfare* (London:  Chapman and Hall, 1990), pp. 23-54.

[89] David P. Barash, *Sociobiology and Behavior* (New York:  Elsevier, 1977), p. 219.

[90] John L. Fuller, "Genes, Brains, and Behavior," in Michael S. Gregory, Anita Silvers, and Diane Sutch, eds., *Sociobiology and Human Nature* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978), pp. 98-115, 111.

[91] Jared Diamond, *The Third Chimpanzee:  The Evolution and Future of the Human Animal* (New York:  HarperCollins, 1992), pp. 220-221.

"maintain the integrity of the social group" and "ensures that group members will be socially familiar."[92]

While xenophobia is present in many animals, my central question is why the trait would also evolve and be maintained in humans. Why would fear of strangers and perceptions of them as threats exist in the repertoire of human behavior? Using inclusive fitness as a theoretical foundation, I see four reasons why evolving xenophobia would contribute to fitness.

First, many anthropologists, archeologists, and historians surmise that humans lived in extended family bands that fought against or to protect themselves against rival human bands as well as against large carnivores or packs of them, such as wolves or hyenas. This behavior is documented in humans and chimpanzees. This suggests that it was present in our common ancestor before humans and chimpanzees divided some four or five million years ago, although it has not yet been demonstrated since such evidence concerning our common ancestor is absent at this time.[93] However, in the Pliocene, Pleistocene, and Holocene conditions in which humans evolved, strangers were unlikely to be related to others living

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[92] Johan Matheus Gerradus van der Dennen, *The Origin of War: The Evolution of a Male-Coalitional Reproductive Strategy* (Groningen, Netherlands: Origin Press, 1995), pp. 457-458.

[93] See Frans B. M. de Waal, "Introduction," in Frans B. M. de Waal, ed., *Tree of Origin: What Primate Behavior Can Tell Us about Human Social Evolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 1-8, 2; and Alison Jolly, *Lucy's Legacy: Sex and Intelligence in Human Evolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 159.

nearby, and were likely to be competitors for scarce resources and, perhaps, also a threat to the group.[94]

Having thoughtfully reflected on the problem of xenophobia and conflict in human society, Diamond argues that competition for territory or other scarce resources is a central cause of xenophobia in humans: "Humans compete with each other for territory, as do members of most animal species. Because we live in groups, much of our competition has taken the form of wars between adjacent groups, on the model of the wars between ant colonies."[95] He continues, "as with adjacent groups of wolves and common chimps, relations of adjacent human tribes were traditionally marked by xenophobic hostility," which was "intermittently relaxed to permit exchanges of mates (and, in our species, of goods as well)."[96]

Second, xenophobia would be a mechanism of defense against communicable diseases, often caused by contact with strangers as the diseases they carried encountered a virgin population.[97] I do not argue that these humans understood modern epidemiology. Of course they did not. But they were intelligent. They did recognize the powerful effect of disease, judging from the history of European encounters with the rest of the world during the Age of Discovery and after. Indigenous peoples in Africa, Asia, and the New World understood quickly that disease affected the Europeans themselves. They could comprehend quite easily

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[94] Noting the importance of limited resources is Joel R. Peck, "The Evolution of Outsider Exclusion," *Journal of Theoretical Biology*, Vol. 142, No. 4 (22 February 1990), pp. 565-571.
[95] Diamond, *The Third Chimpanzee*, p. 220.
[96] Diamond, *The Third Chimpanzee*, p. 220.
[97] The powerful effect of disease on human society is documented in William H. McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1976).

that Europeans died in considerable quantities in Africa and Asia. In the New World, Native Americans comprehended rapidly that Europeans and their African slaves brought pestilence even if they did not realize how diseases were transmitted.

Moreover, the cultural histories of many societies are rife with stories about a stranger or groups of strangers bringing pestilence. In these traditions, a stranger or strangers were associated with harm or evil that affected the community. No doubt this was accurate on occasion because a stranger would bring disease to a virgin population, as occurs even today. Primitive peoples with no understanding of disease and its prevention would associate illness with malevolent spirits acting through the stranger, or else with witchcraft. Of course, strangers would also be affected by disease from the populations they encountered, but being new to a community and perhaps transient, their suffering would be less likely to be recorded or enter into an area's folklore or cultural history.

Third, because humans are the only species to kill conspecifics at a distance, fear of strangers may have been accelerated or become especially important as warriors introduced weapons of ever-increasing technological sophistication: the spear, the atlatl, and ultimately the bow and arrow. Armed with weapons, even a single individual, to say nothing of a group, would greatly increase the threat posed to another individual, especially if he were separated from his group. Weapons probably brought about the first revolution in warfare by allowing one human to kill another, even a stronger one, with less risk to himself since he no longer had to engage the other in close proximity with his fists or even a club. Given this technology and the necessity of hunting and foraging to survive, it would be

beneficial to stay in one's group if possible so the members could help fight off an

attack. It would be equally useful to be able to recognize group members and extra-

group members quickly and from as far away as possible.[98]

Fourth, a stranger might also be a threat to one's position in the dominance

hierarchy. As discussed above, most social mammals organize themselves in such

hierarchies. Ethologists argue that these hierarchies evolve because they aid in

defense against predators, promote the harvesting of resources, and reduce

intragroup conflict.[99] Hierarchies are needed largely because a species that lives

communally has two choices: it can either accept organization with some

centralization of power, or engage in perpetual conflict over scarce resources,

leading to potential injury and depriving the group of the benefits of a communal

existence such as more efficient resource harvesting. The ubiquity of this social

ordering strongly suggests that it contributes to fitness. Donald McEachron and

Darius Baer suggest that strangers would have to find a place in the dominance

hierarchy, which might entail conflict especially among those displaced by the

inclusion of the new member.[100] Such readjustments are certainly possible,

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[98] Donald L. McEachron and Darius Baer, "A Review of Selected Sociobiological Principles: Application to Hominid Evolution II. The Effects of Intergroup Conflict," *Journal of Social and Biological Structures*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (April 1982), pp. 121-139, 134.
[99] See James L. Boone, "Competition, Conflict, and the Development of Social Hierarchies," in Eric Alden Smith and Bruce Winterhalder, eds., *Evolutionary Ecology and Human Behavior* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1992), pp. 301-337; and K.E. Moyer, "The Biological Basis of Dominance and Aggression," in Diane McGuinness, ed., *Dominance, Aggression and War* (New York: Paragon House, 1987), pp. 1-34, for a summary of the ethological argument on this point.
[100] Donald L. McEachron and Darius Baer, "A Review of Selected Sociobiological Principles: Application to Hominid Evolution II," pp. 134-135.

although cleavages or internecine conflict in the group might lead some to seek the stranger as an ally.

Given these conditions, humans would consider other humans a threat and thus would rarely tolerate strangers. Low tolerance of strangers, or xenophobia, contributed to fitness and thus spread. As human communities grew larger, multiple groups would have reproduced, some containing genotypes that resulted in an increased suspicion of strangers. These genotypes would increase fitness by increasing the survival of the group over time. Like warfare, however, and indeed like much of human behavior, xenophobia may be augmented or weakened by psychological and cultural forces.

For these reasons, xenophobia contributes to fitness and thus explains why humans may react negatively to people with different morphological features, such as facial traits or skin color. If the genetic difference is physical, then identification of difference is obvious, such as that between Africans and Europeans, but xenophobia can be triggered even by small differences between neighboring tribes or populations, as Richard Alexander and Vincent Falger suggest.

They argue that the ontogenetic flexibility of humans, such as morphological differences, even slight ones, is sufficient to cause xenophobia.[101] While Alexander acknowledges that the causes of intense xenophobic reactions are complex, he explains, "it is possible that morphological differences alone make different countenances more or less communicative."[102] Then the "differences between

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[101] Alexander, *Darwinism and Human Affairs*, pp. 126-127.
[102] Alexander, *Darwinism and Human Affairs*, p. 127.

individuals of populations that diverged" because of geographic isolation or other factors that prevented exogamy, "could lead to xenophobic reactions."[103]

For example, Slavs typically have broad faces and Anglo-Saxons narrow ones; Tutsis tend to be tall, and Hutus short. Both Gérard Prunier and Christopher Taylor studied the 1994 genocide and found that the physical differences were tragically important because they allowed easier identification of Tutsis by the radical Hutus who were responsible for the genocide.[104] These differences facilitate a type of discrimination that could not exist between people who are morphologically very similar such as Irish Catholics and Protestants or Norwegians and Swedes, all of whom would likely have to listen to each other to determine who is who.

Still, visible or auditory cultural differences even between similar groups might provoke a xenophobic reaction. As Diamond explains, "xenophobia comes especially naturally to our species, because so much of our behavior is culturally rather than genetically specified, and because cultural differences among human populations are so marked."[105] As a result, "those features make it easy for us,

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[103] Alexander, *Darwinism and Human Affairs*, p. 127.

[104] Gérard Prunier, *The Rwandan Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 5-9, 249; and Christopher C. Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror: The Rwandan Genocide of 1994* (New York: Berg, 1999), pp. 40-41. Also see Pierre van den Berghe, *The Ethnic Phenomenon* (New York: Elsevier, 1981), pp. 73-74. Despite the physical differences, there were some cases of mistaken identity: "during the genocide some persons who were legally Hutu were killed as Tutsi because they looked Tutsi." Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999), p. 33.

[105] Diamond, *The Third Chimpanzee*, p. 220.

unlike wolves and chimps, to recognize members of other groups at a glance by their clothes or hair style" and react negatively to them.[106]

II. E. The Evolutionary Origins of Racism

From the evolutionary origins of xenophobia we can understand the origins of racism. As Diamond observes, humans are experts at recognizing in-groups and out-groups due to our evolution in dangerous and resource-deprived conditions. The ability to recognize those genetically related, and those not, and to do so in an instant, is one of the sources of racism.

Before the advent of advanced neural monitoring techniques, it was extremely difficult or impossible to identify the mechanisms underlying automatic biases that produce stigmas and stereotypes. Due to advances in brain imaging and neuropsychological methods, we are now able to "explore the role of specific neural regions and systems in complex social psychological phenomena such as a person's perceptions and racial prejudice."[107] Through an examination of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral structures associated with stereotyping and xenophobic responses, we can begin to build a more accurate theory of how these structures influence people's beliefs and expectations about out-groups.

According to Princeton professor of psychology, Susan Fiske, in order to understand the automatic behavior that can lead to intergroup conflict, such as prejudice, discrimination, fear, and mistrust, it is necessary to uncover the neural

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[106] Diamond, *The Third Chimpanzee*, p. 220.
[107] Belle Derks, Michael Inzlicht, and Sonia Kang, "The Neuroscience of Stigma and Stereotype Threat," *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (April 2008), pp. 161-181, 164.

and biological mechanisms that trigger automatic biases. Implicit Association Tests combined with brain imaging studies of the amygdala have shown that intergroup bias occurs automatically under minimal conditions among relatively unprejudiced people.[108]

Bias in intergroup relations is an automatic response across populations because, as John Tooby and Leda Cosmides point out, coalitional aggression and prejudice—against different racial and ethnic groups—are evolutionary traits that improved overall fitness by enabling members of a coalition to gain access to competitive "reproductive enhancing resources" and detect coalitions and alliances.[109]

Furthermore, evidence from brain imaging studies suggests that the amygdala plays a role in perception and behavioral responses to individuals of a different race or ethnicity. In a study by Amherst College professor of psychology Allen Hart and his colleagues on how perceptions of out-group members differ from

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[108] Fiske, "What We Know About Bias and Intergroup Conflict, the Problem of the Century," pp. 123-128; L. Ashburn-Nardo, Voils, C. I., and Monteith, M. J., "Implicit Associations as the Seeds of Intergroup Bias: How Easily Do They Take Root?" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 81, No. 5 (2001), pp. 789-799; J. Ronquillo, Denson, T. F., Lickel, B., Lu, Z. L., Nandy, A., and Maddox, K. B., "The Effects of Skin Tone on Race-Related Amygdala Activity: An fMRI Investigation," *SCAN*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (2007), pp. 39-44.

[109] John Tooby and Leda Cosmides, *The Evolution of War and Its Cognitive Foundations*, Institute for Evolutionary Studies Technical Reports 88-1 (1988); John Tooby, and Leda Cosmides, "Groups in Mind: The Coalitional Roots of War and Morality," in Henrik Høgh-Olesen, ed., *Human Morality and Sociality: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspective* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 191-234; and Robert Kurzban, John Tooby, and Leda Cosmides, "Can Race be Erased? Coalitional Computation and Social Categorization," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*, Vol. 98, No. 26 (2001), pp. 15387-15392.

in-group members, white and black participants viewed photographs of unfamiliar white and black faces while undergoing functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI).  For all participants, "the rate of response habituation within the amygdala to face stimuli [was] dependent upon an interaction between the race of the subjects and the perceived race of the face stimuli."[110]

These results suggest that the amygdala exhibits greater responses to unfamiliar, and possibly threatening, faces, than to familiar faces. Given the amygdala's role in what has been called a "relevance detector," which includes, but is not limited to, fear-related stimuli, the prejudice and anxiety that occurs between in-group and out-group members during initial interactions can lessen over time through prolonged exposure.[111]  Indeed, as a study by University of Pennsylvania psychologist Robert Kurzban and his colleagues found, by manipulating coalition formation and reestablishing coalition membership across racial cleavages, a person's identification can be changed to some degree.[112]

In the West, great countervailing pressure through governmental and educational policies, film, media, blogs, and other elements of popular culture has been placed on individuals to combat racism.  These measures have been very successful.  However, in China not only are they absent, but governmental and

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[110] A. J. Hart, Whalen, P. J., Shin, L. M., McInerney, S. C., Fischer, H., and Rauch, S. L., "Differential Response in the Human Amygdala to Racial Outgroup vs Ingroup Face Stimuli," *NeuroReport*, Vol. 11, No. 11 (2000), pp. 2351-2354, 2353.
[111] D. Sander, Grafman, J., and Zalla, T., "The Human Amygdala: An Evolved System for Relevance Detection," *Reviews in Neuroscience*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (2003), pp. 303-316.
[112] Kurzban, Tooby, and Cosmides, "Can Race be Erased? Coalitional Computation and Social Categorization."

educational polities, and popular culture tout the superiority of the Chinese people to the detriment of other races and ethnicities. As a consequence, the evolutionary drive of xenophobia, augmented by ethnocentrism as I will demonstrate below, translates directly into racist thought and action in China.

II. F. Ethnocentrism

Like xenophobia, inclusive fitness explains why ethnocentrism would contribute to fitness in human evolutionary history, and thus evolve in humans.[113] Ethnocentrism is commonly defined as a belief in the superiority of one's own ethnicity. Yet, defined this way, ethnocentrism would seem to have no evolutionary foundation as a belief. After all, one may hold many beliefs—that the earth is flat or that it is round, or that Roman Emperor Augustus was poisoned or that he died of natural causes—and these beliefs have no effect on fitness. So, it might seem that evolutionary theory has little explanatory traction for ethnocentrism.

Ethnocentrism is a collection of traits that predispose the individual to show discriminatory preferences for groups with the closest affinities to the self. Now the contribution of evolutionary theory becomes clear.[114] Here evolutionary theory can explain why ethnocentrism is common among people: because it stems from

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[113] Excellent accounts are found in van der Dennen, "Ethnocentrism and In-Group/Out-Group Differentiation," in *The Sociobiology of Ethnocentrism*, pp. 8-17, 37-47; Robin I. M. Dunbar, "Sociobiological Explanations and the Evolution of Ethnocentrism," in *The Sociobiology of Ethnocentrism*, pp. 48-59; and van den Berghe, *The Ethnic Phenomenon*, pp. 18-36.

[114] Ian Vine, "Inclusive Fitness and the Self-System," in *The Sociobiology of Ethnocentrism,* pp. 60-80. More formally, ethnocentrism is comprised of four discrete aspects of group behavior: In-group integration, the hyper-evaluation of the in-group, hostile relations between in-group and out-group, and derogatory stereotyping of out-group individuals and characteristics.

inclusive fitness.  Thus the phenomenon of ethnocentrism has its origins not merely

in one's random beliefs or opinions, but in human evolution.  Of course, even with its

foundation in human evolution, ethnocentrism—like xenophobia and almost all

behavior—is open to considerable environmental manipulation.  It may be either

suppressed or supported by cultural, religious, or political beliefs and authorities.[115]

I made this the basis for this argument above, in discussing the evolution of

xenophobia, but will briefly restate the central arguments here.  Since our genus

*Homo* first evolved in the Pliocene, humans have favored those who are biologically

related.  In general, the closer the relationship, the greater the preferential

treatment.  The vast majority of animals behave in this way, and humans were not

different in our evolution.  In a world of scarce resources and many threats, the

evolutionary process would select nepotism, thus promoting the survival of the next

generation.  However, this process is relative.  Parents are more willing to provide

for their own children than for the children of relatives, or rarely for those of

strangers.

The essence of an inclusive fitness explanation of ethnocentrism, then, is that

individuals generally should be more willing to support, privilege, and sacrifice for

their own family, then their more distant kin, their ethnic group, and then others,

such as a global community, in decreasing order of importance.  That people are

more willing to sacrifice for their family than for strangers or a larger community is

obvious.  In contrast, an individual like Mother Theresa is saintly.  Her willingness to

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[115] Also making this point is Dunbar, "Sociobiological Explanations and the
Evolution of Ethnocentrism," in *The Sociobiology of Ethnocentrism*, p. 56.

suffer and sacrifice for strangers throughout her lifetime is both noble and lamentable because her actions illustrate what we already know:  few people are willing to sacrifice to help strangers who require great care due to endemic poverty and debilitating illness.

The in-group/out-group division is also important for explaining ethnocentrism and individual readiness to kill outsiders before in-group members. Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt draws on Erik Erikson's concept of "cultural pseudospeciation," and says that in almost all cultures humans form subgroups usually based on kinship; these "eventually distinguish themselves from others by dialect and other subgroup characteristics and go on to form new cultures."[116]  As an unfortunate result of this process, such in-groups tend to perceive the out-groups as increasingly distant, from distant cousins to foreigners with strange customs and language.  Ultimately they may even see them as less than human, as another species:  animals.[117]

Distinguished Harvard biologist Edward Wilson also argues that ethnocentrism has a strong in-group/out-group component.  Ethnocentrism is the "force behind most warlike policies," as he notes:  "primitive men divide the world into two tangible parts, the near environment of home, local villages, kin, friends, tame animals, and witches, and the more distant universe of neighboring villages,

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[116] Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, "Us and the Others," in Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt and Frank Kemp Salter, eds., *Indoctrinability, Ideology, and Warfare:  Evolutionary Perspectives* (New York:  Berghahn Books, 1998), pp. 21-53, 41.

[117] Eibl-Eibesfeldt, "Us and the Others," pp. 42-46.  Also see Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, "Warfare, Man's Indoctrinability and Group Selection," *Zeitschrift für Tierpsychologie,* Vol. 60, No. 3 (1982), pp. 177-198.

intertribal allies, enemies, wild animals, and ghosts."[118] This "elemental topography makes easier the distinction between enemies who can be attacked and killed and friends who cannot. The contrast is heightened by reducing enemies to frightful and even sub-human status."[119]

Of course, while few scholars would doubt that ethnocentrism is a powerful force, we should not overestimate its power. It obviously can be offset or mitigated by other environmental pressures. In many examples from military history, for example, men of the same ethnicity killed each other readily. Ethnic ties did not keep Confederate Gen. Cobb's mostly-Irish Georgia regiments (the 18th and 24th) from firing on and decimating the Union "Irish Brigade" (the 28th Massachusetts) at Marye's Heights during the battle of Fredericksburg in December 1862.

Naturally, it is equally true that ethnic hatreds may be suppressed or even reconciled. The animus between the Scots and the English is well known; their shared history is filled with great conflicts that still resonate today in calls for Scottish independence. Nonetheless, for much of modern history, the Crown has repressed that hatred. Indeed, Scots have readily served the Crown even after repression.

However, where ethnocentrism is not suppressed but encouraged, as in Chinese media, popular culture, blogs, and educational system, there is the real danger that it thrives and is reinforced among the population and elites. The twin of

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[118] Edward O. Wilson, *On Human Nature* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), p. 111.
[119] Wilson, *On Human Nature*, p. 111.

ethnocentrism is racism.  Racism is a phenomenon we find all too often in Chinese popular expressions and social and political beliefs.  Unlike in the West, racism, xenophobia and ethnocentrism are allowed to flourish to China, and are not offset by countervailing pressures as in the West.

It would be a mistake to underestimate the power of racism, xenophobia, and ethnocentrism.  When an individual considers whether to support a larger group, several metrics are available.  One of these—and I stress only one—is ethnocentrism, a continuation of one's willingness to sacrifice for one's family because of the notion of common kinship.  As I discussed above, the ways humans determine their relations with unrelated individuals are complex, but key factors are physical resemblance, as well as environmental causes like shared culture, history, and language.  All of these metrics are very significant in China.  This is why we should expect the Chinese "family," composed of broad groups of agnates, to think of itself apart from other nations in international politics and always favor the "family" over outsiders.

In this section, I have shown that egoism, dominance, and in-group/out-group distinctions like ethnocentrism and xenophobia are not quirks of human behavior in certain settings.  Instead, they are systematic and consistent behavioral strategies.  These behaviors are common across mammals in general and primate species in particular, demonstrating deep evolutionary roots.  They are widespread because they increased survival and reproductive success and were thus favored by natural selection over evolutionary history.  The evolutionary origins and cognitive mechanisms underpinning them were laid down in an environment very different

from the one in which we now live, but they persist because our brains, which evolved over several million years, have not changed to keep pace with the rapid sociological and technological advances of the last few centuries.

Human decisions are not rational because they are not generated by a computer—purposefully built for objective decision-making. Human decisions are more like an ancient computer that has been permanently pre-programmed, sometimes in ways that seem obstructive or self-defeating to modern tasks. As much as we would like to install new, more efficient software, we cannot. We proceed using the pre-existing jumble of wiring that was laid down for different purposes, and using behavioral heuristics for implementing that wiring that were selected in another age. The only way to make predictions for the real-world outputs of our ancient brains is to understand the wiring and software that make it up, and that understanding can only come from evolutionary biology.

This study recognizes that humans are influenced by such things as culture, norms, rational calculation, and moral principles. Nevertheless, overwhelming evidence shows that people *also* behave in ways predictable from the biological knowledge outlined above. These behavioral mechanisms will shine through culture and conscious thought with differing strengths depending on the context. My contention is that significant parts of political behavior lack good explanation and predictive power because basic but powerful biological principles are currently ignored in the political science literature.

### III. Evolution and Offensive Realism:
### The Impact of Evolutionary Impulses on Rising Hegemons

Evolutionary theory's identification of the origins of egoism, domination, and ethnocentric in-group/out-group distinctions allows analysts of great power behavior to advance offensive realist arguments without seeking fundamental causes in either the anarchic international state system or in theological or metaphysical ideas, but rather in how humans actually behave. Offensive realism based on evolutionary theory reaches the same conclusions, but the ultimate cause is different: human evolution in the anarchic, dangerous, and resource-scarce conditions of the late Pliocene, Pleistocene, and most of the Holocene epochs. Specially, evolutionary theory explains why humans are egoistic, strive to dominate others, and make in-group/out-group distinctions. These adaptations in turn serve as a foundation for offensive realism.

The central issue here is what causes states to behave as offensive realists predict. No doubt anarchy is an important cause of such behavior. The fact that there is no world government compels the leaders of states to take steps to ensure their security, such as striving to have a powerful military, aggressing when forced to do so, and forging and maintaining alliances. This is a self-help system: leaders of states are forced to take these steps because nothing else can guarantee their security in the anarchic world of international politics.

This study argues that evolutionary theory also offers a fundamental cause for offensive realist behavior (see Table 2). Evolutionary theory explains why

individuals are motivated to act as offensive realism expects, whether an individual is the leader of a state, a captain of industry or a *conquistador*.

The human environment of evolutionary adaptation was anarchic, our ancestors lived in a state of nature where resources were scarce and dangers from other humans and the environment were great. When we reflect on the number and ubiquity of dangers, it is truly remarkable that a mammal standing three feet high, without claws or strong teeth, not particularly strong or swift, survived and evolved to become what we consider human.

Humans survived because natural selection honed adaptive behaviors to survive in those conditions. This environment produced the evolutionary impulsive behaviors examined here: egoism, domination, and the in-group/out-group distinctions like racism, xenophobia, and ethnocentrism. They are sufficient to explain why leaders will behave, in the proper circumstances, as offensive realists expect them to behave. That is, even if they must hurt other humans or risk injury to themselves, they will strive to maximize their power, defined as either control over others, for example through wealth or leadership, or control over an environmental circumstance, such as meeting their own and their family's or tribe's need for food, shelter, or other resources. It cannot be forgotten that power also meant protection from predation—either from animals or other humans.

Evolutionary theory offers realist scholars a novel intellectual foundation for offensive realism. Human evolution explains why people seek control over environmental resources—we are all egoistic and concerned about food and other resources—why we will struggle to control our group, and why some of us,

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particularly males, will seek to dominate others by maintaining a privileged position in a dominance hierarchy.  Clearly, as the leaders of states are human, they too will be influenced by their evolutionary legacy as they react to the actions of other states and as they make decisions for their own state.[120]

The in-group/out-group distinction is important to evolutionary theory's explanation of offensive realism because it explains why humans tend to favor their in-groups and revile or fear out-groups.  When the out-group is another state, we can see it as a threat to our state's resources or territory, or to our elite's political or economic interests.  By explaining the origins of the distinction between in-groups and out-groups, evolutionary theory shows why humans make the distinction readily, whether it is a sport fan's trivial in-group/out-group distinction, or a non-trivial, life-or-death distinction held by a Hutu or a Tutsi, a kulak or a commissar, a friend or foe.

The evolutionary origins of this distinction suggest that leaders, decision-makers, and citizens will fear other states because they represent out-groups that may have the power to take control from them if they cannot deter an attack.  Thus, evolutionary theory offers an explanation for why people will be egoistic, strive to dominate, and differentiate in-groups and out-groups.  This explains why people, especially leaders of states, are likely to behave as offensive realism expects if not checked by democratic institutions as in the United States.

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[120] Rosen, *War and Human Nature*; Rose McDermott, *Political Psychology in International Relations* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004); and McDermott, *Presidential Leadership, Illness, and Decision Making* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

**Table 2.**

**Major Realist Theories and Their Predictions**

Note: The unit of analysis varies (states for defensive and offensive realism, humans for classical realism and evolutionary biology), but all of them make predictions for state behavior. Evolutionary biology predicts the same behavior as Classical Realism and Offensive Realism, but offers a scientific foundation for the ultimate cause of great power and hegemonic behavior.

| | **Classical Realism** | **Defensive Realism** | **Offensive Realism** | **Evolutionary Biology's Foundation for Offensive Realism** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **What causes states to compete for power: Ultimate Cause** | Lust for power inherent in states due to *animus dominandi* | Anarchy | Anarchy | Anarchy, danger of predation, and resource scarcity produces Egoism, Dominance, In-Group/Out-Group Distinctions Like Xenophobia and Ethnocentrism |
| **Proximate Cause of Behavior** | Balance of Power | Security through power sufficiency | Security through power maximization | Security through power maximization |
| **How much power do states want?** | All they can get. States maximize relative power, with hegemony as their ultimate goal | Not much more than what they have. States concentrate on maintaining the balance of power | All they can get. States maximize relative power, with hegemony as their ultimate goal | As much as possible to maximize status, resources, and security for the extended "family" |

III. A. Evolution's Contributions:  Offensive Realism Is Nature's Default Option

Evolutionary theory makes two major contributions to the offensive realist theory of international politics.  It allows realists to recognize that offensive realism explains more than just state behavior but also individual behavior.  Offensive realism is a description of human nature, and human nature is likely to give rise to the kind of world described by offensive realism.

This is no accident.  Mearsheimer and others observed exactly the kind of behavior that evolutionary theories would predict.  It explains the behavior of humans in the environments of evolutionary adaptation, in more recent history, and may be applied to other cases to explain the behavior of non-state actors both today and before the state system was founded in 1648.  The theory might be used to explain the behavior and actions of many entities throughout history:  empires like Rome, indigenous tribes in Papua New Guinea or North America, conquests of South America, the American west, and the scramble for Africa, institutions like the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages, or commercial organizations from the East India Company to Coca Cola (see Table 3).

In sum, evolutionary theory explains why humans seek to gain resources and domination whether they are acting as an individual, like Pizarro who sought to conquer territory in the Incan Empire for its riches, or as an agent of an institution like the church, a corporation like Microsoft, or a state, like the premier of China.

This contribution to offensive realism is significant for two reasons.  First, offensive realists no longer need to depend entirely upon the anarchy of the

115

international state system to advance their argument.  As this study has explained, egoism, domination, and in-group/out-group distinctions are sufficient to explain offensive realism.  Wherever there is anarchy (whether in the human evolutionary past or in a world system of states), we expect the same behavior of the entities within those systems—whether individuals or states.

As a consequence, this makes the theory more powerful.  Offensive realists can now explain more than state or great power behavior.  When anchored on evolutionary theory, the theory of offensive realism will become a more powerful explanation of behavior.  It elucidates why sub-state groups—individuals, tribes, or organizations—will also often behave as their theory predicts, and to explain this behavior before the creation of the modern state system in 1648.  When it depends on anarchy as its ultimate cause, offensive realism needs a more specific condition, the state system, to obtain.  In fact, offensive realists do not need a state system. They only need humans.  Wherever humans form groups, be they tribes, organizations, or the leaders of states like China, we may expect them to behave like offensive realists.  This is partly because this is their evolved behavior, but also because it often remains the most effective strategy to ensure their goals if they are not checked by democratic institutions or liberal ideology.

Second, Mearsheimer's offensive realist explanation argues that people gain power to ensure security.  That certainly may be, as he demonstrates.  However, an overtone of this argument is that power or domination is distasteful for leaders— that they tolerate it only for the sake of their state's security.  They are forced to maximize power when perhaps they would rather cooperate or share power with

116

others.  Evolutionary theory suggests instead that humans, especially men, not only want and enjoy the pursuit of power, but that this is precisely why evolution made us enjoy these pursuits in the first place—because offensive realist motivations were the best way to ensure survival in a dangerous anarchic world.

The force of this motivation is revealed time and again in the victor's expression of the satisfaction of conquest.  As Chinggis Khan is purported to have said:  "The greatest happiness is to vanquish your enemy, to drive him before you, to see his cities reduced to ashes, to see those who loved him shrouded in tears, to ride his horses and to clasp to your bosom his wives and daughters."  It is no wonder that one percent of world's male population alive today is descended from Chinggis Khan.

Although not usually expressed in such stark terms, the pleasure of victory is widely recognized as a common phenomenon of human nature, and winning competitive interactions and dominating others is known to increase testosterone and dopamine responses in men.[121]

Malcolm Potts and Thomas Hayden argue: "male homo sapiens…have inherited predisposition to team up with kin—or perceived kin—and try to kill their neighbors."[122]  Within states, there is selection pressure for leaders with the

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[121] Allan Mazur, *Biosociology of Dominance and Deference* (Lanham, Md: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005); and Rosen, *War and Human Nature*.
[122] Malcolm Potts and H. Thomas Hayden, *Sex and War:  How Biology Explains War and Terrorism and Offers a Path to a Safer World* (Dallas: BenBella Books, 2008), p. 96.

**Table 3.**

**Anarchy and Resource Scarcity Lead to Similar Behavior in Different Domains**
Note: In all cases, holding onto the status quo is not good enough to ensure survival. Instead, the best strategy is a constant effort to maximize power to stay ahead of rivals.

| Domain | Actors | Source of Anarchy | Time period | Predictions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| International Politics | States | No world government | Now | Self-help behavior to maximize power |
| Human Evolution | Individuals | No political organization | Evolutionary past | Self-help behavior to maximize power |
| Domestic politics | Individuals, parties | Limited constraints on power | Now | Self-help behavior to maximize power |
| Civil wars | Individuals, factions | No government in control | Now | Self-help behavior to maximize power |
| Free Markets | Firms | No major constraints | Now | Self-help behavior to maximize power |

necessary political acumen to defend and advance the states interests.  Harvard

political scientist Stephen Rosen argues that there is a concrete explanatory linkage

between the logic of small clan aggression and the logic of state aggression.  He

notes that such men will rise to the highest level of political authority, despite

different political systems and cultural beliefs throughout the world:  "some

societies do embody values that reward strong responses to perceived challenges.

This means not only that men with a higher disposition to react strongly to

challenges will be rewarded, but also that, as these men interact with each other, a

cycle of reinforcing behavior would emerge that could explain…high levels of

aggression that are provoked and sustained by perceived affronts among habitually

interacting males."[123]

Once such cycle is established, "the culture might survive its…origins because

of institutions that inculcated and reinforced those patterns of behavior.  The

biological argument suggests that, in addition to those cultural factors, the ways in

which members of such cultures would tend to interact with each other would

produce elevated testosterone levels that would also create a self-sustaining cycle,

producing individuals who are prone to" dominance behaviors.[124]

Rosen argues that there are societies and institutions where selection for and

reinforcement of the behavior of high testosterone males is part of the fabric of the

society.[125]  This permits Rosen to be explicit about his prediction for state behavior:

a "population of states run by groups of men who are prone to react to perceived

[123] Rosen, *War and Human Nature*, pp. 89-90, 95.
[124] Rosen, *War and Human Nature*, pp. 89-90.
[125] Rosen, *War and Human Nature*, p. 95.

challenges by punishing the challenger should see more conflict.  Such systems will

be prone to war."[126]  He continues, "Nations that initiate wars as the result of the

dominant behavior of the ruling elites might tend to lose wars more often than those

countries that make decisions reflecting calculations about expected outcomes.  In a

very rough way, we might expect democracies, therefore, to do better than

oligarchies and tyrannies."[127]

A final insight from evolutionary theory is that behavior is contingent, not

fixed.  Animals may follow generalized decision rules but these give rise to different

behaviors in different contexts.  They fight when benefits are expected to exceed

costs, and not otherwise.  Chimpanzees, for example, will attack others when they

have a numerical advantage, but will retreat if they are outnumbered.[128]  This makes

sense from an evolutionary perspective, because a decision-making mechanism that

takes account of the probability of winning will spread at the expense of a decision-

making mechanism that ignores the probability of winning.  As such, an

evolutionary account does not necessarily expect animals, humans, or states to act

as offensive realists *all the time in all situations*.  Rather, as Mearsheimer points out,

offensive realists do best if they expand when the opportunity for gains presents

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[126] Rosen, *War and Human Nature*, p. 96.
[127] Rosen, *War and Human Nature*, p. 96.
[128] Richard W. Wrangham, "The Evolution of Coalitionary Killing," *Yearbook of Physical Anthropology*, Vol. 42 (1999), pp. 1-30; M. L. Wilson, N.F. Britton, and N.R. Franks, "Chimpanzees and the Mathematics of Battle," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London, Series B*, Vol. 269 (2002), pp. 1107-1112.

itself—they "try to figure out when to raise and when to fold."[129]  Evolution has been doing this for a long time.

III. B. Evolutionary Impulses Applied to China

Having presented the evolutionary origins of egoism, dominance, xenophobia, racism, and ethnocentrism, this study will examine how these evolutionary impulses are applied to China.  I argue that China's strategic thought is heavily informed by the environment in which the Chinese people evolved and that due to this environment, egoism, dominance, xenophobia, racism, and ethnocentrism have a significant affect on Chinese decision-making.

We may predict that the Chinese will seek to maximize their power artfully, with great sensitivity to status and hierarchy, while at the same time trying not to provoke counter-balancing.  Beijing's leadership will exhibit overconfidence, and increasingly risk-accepting behavior.  As a largely homogenous people, with usually weak tribes surrounding them, and having evolved in stable ecological environment, it is not a surprise that the Chinese are xenophobic, ethnocentric, and racist, and their society reflects a strong male dominance hierarchy, as well as a considerable sensitivity to status and absolute and relative power.

When we study the evolution of the Chinese people, we find that they are indeed as homogenous a nation, as homogenous as it is possible to find for the size of the population.  The genetic origins of the Chinese people have been well studied

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[129] Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 40.

by Luca Cavalli-Sforza and his colleagues.[130]  They explore the history of human differentiation by studying genetic divergence among groups.  This reveals the genetic history of the world's population.  Of interest for this study is the genetic origin of the Chinese.

Cavalli-Sforza and his colleagues demonstrate that the northern and southern Chinese have different genetic backgrounds.  The northern group's closest associates are the Mongols or the speakers of Altaic languages, and the southern group is most closely associated with the peoples of Southeast Asia.  Modern China is a country of 1.3 billion people and has been densely populated for millennia.  Internal migration has not been sufficient to create homogeneity, and so initial peopling must have been from two different populations, one from the north, the other from the south.

China has probably continuously been populated from the upper Paleolithic and some archaeologists believe that continuous occupation extends back even to *Homo erectus*.  In spite of considerable time for migration, the difference between populations has not been canceled and the genetic gradient is especially high in central China.  The pressure by pastoral nomads from the north has been strong throughout the last 2,300 years and has certainly contributed to some genetic difference, but the disparity between north and south most probably antedates the nomads' expansion.

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[130] L. Luca Cavalli-Sforza, Paolo Menozzi, and Alberto Piazza, *The History and Geography of Human Genes*, abridged ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994).

The differences between the north and the south go back to the Paleolithic. The northern and southern Neolithic of China maintained the differences and the substantial population growth from agricultural development must have strengthened them. Changes in the composition of the population because of the invasion of the northern nomads probably helped maintain the differences between these groups.

The building of the Great Wall (third century B.C.) was a response to incursions by nomads but was not sufficient to repel them. The north lost an estimated 35 million people, a third of the whole population of China and three quarters of that of the northern provinces, because of massacres and systemic genocide by the Mongols of Chinggis Khan and his successors in the thirteenth century. At the time, some northern Chinese migrated to the south, but these migrations may have been partially reversed later.

Today, there are at least 52 "minorities" or isolated ethnic groups in China. Some of these are known to be late arrivals, such as the Uighurs of the most western province of China. Almost half of these ethnic groups live in the Yunnan and may be enclaves of the original inhabitants. By far the majority of modern Chinese call themselves Han, split into northern and southern groups, with the east (the lower Yangtze) being somewhat of an amalgamation. All the Han speak Sino-Tibetan languages, but genetically the northern Han are closely related to Mongolian and Japanese people (northern Mongoloids), and the southern Han to the Vietnamese and the Mon-Khmer who belong to the Southeast Asian or southern Mongoloid cluster. The diffusion of Sino-Tibetan languages to all of mainland China is a

consequence of the early political union of the whole country under northern rule at the time of the Qin and Han dynasties over 2000 years ago.

As a result of this homogenous environment, the Chinese people have closer kinship bonds than do most states. The Chinese are homogenous in myth, but also in reality, as compared with most states in international politics.

Understanding the genetic relationship possessed by the Chinese is key to understanding the potency of evolutionary impulses toward egoism, domination, xenophobia, ethnocentrism and racism. But it is also important to understand the geopolitical environment in which the Chinese have lived for millennia.

When we consider the issue of Chinese or Western imperial expansion from the perspective of geopolitics, the seed of Western expansiveness came from Greco-Roman use of the sea and other trade routes which developed economic exchange, colonies and empires in the Mediterranean two thousand years before nineteenth century European imperialism succeed in conquering most of the world.

In contrast, preeminent Sinologist John Fairbank argues that the core of Chinese strategy must be understood as originating in fundamental concern for order at home instead of expansion abroad. This stems from her landlocked situation in North China, which is remote from other centers of civilization and from sea routes that would permit economic exchange or communication with other civilizations.[131] Ancient China had no equivalent to the Trojan War, Peloponnesian War, pressure from Persia, or confrontation between Carthage and Rome. The

[131] John K. Fairbank, "Introduction: Varieties of the Chinese Military Experience," in Frank A. Kierman, Jr., and John K. Fairbank, *Chinese Ways in Warfare* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974), pp. 1-26, 3.

unified Chinese empire went through a full millennium of growth and change before the modest amount of sea trade with Southeast was of any importance to it.

Chinese history is marked by frequent warfare before 221 B.C. and imperial control thereafter. Ancient China's drive for order and unity was a long process during which approximately 150 small, family-ruled, states were gradually consolidated into a dozen or so big states, which were then reduced to a half a dozen and then, again through conflict, to final unification in 221 B.C.

In the earlier part of the 500 year long process, during the 250 years known as the Spring and Autumn period from about 722 to 481 B.C., warfare was frequent. In the sub-period known as the Warring States period, wars became more intense, organized, and severe, fought by bigger states with more sophisticated weaponry and larger armies. Old institutions were destroyed and replaced by new ones that reshaped Chinese military organization, taxation, bureaucracy, innovation and ideas.[132]

This was mirrored in European history with the Military Revolution of the Seventeenth century that witnessed Europe move from some 500 political entities to around 20 by 1900. In China, no fewer than 110 states were extinguished during the Spring and Autumn Periods, leaving 22 that survived the struggle. Very quickly their number was further reduced, and due to this period China was on the path to political unification which it has maintain ever since, with the significant

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[132] These are usefully explored in Francis Fukuyama, *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2011), pp. 110-127.

interruption due to intervention by Western powers and the Japanese between 1842 until the victory of the Chinese Communist Party in 1949.

The technological changes that facilitated consolidation were the crossbow in the middle of the Warring States period and the use of iron for weapons in about the middle of the fourth century B.C.  These innovations coincided with the development of bigger and more disciplined armies of conscripts.  Chinese warfare had been dominated by aristocratic war chariots, much as medieval warfare in Europe was dominated by knights.  War chariots gave way to infantry.  Soon afterward, cavalry was introduced, its role in warfare borrowed from the Mongols, the northern "barbarians" which were not a significant threat to China at this time.  Strategy and tactics were addressed in published works for the first time, the most significant and most famous was Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, which dates from 400-320 B.C.

For Fairbank, *The Art of War* is a classic that captures the ancient military advisers' accumulated wisdom as to how warfare should be conducted.  *The Art of War*'s emphasis on unsettling the mind of the opponent and unsetting the plans of one's opponent places great weight on the primacy of mental attitudes in military affairs and strategy, as this study will consider below.

Because the Chinese are homogenous and have existed in a stable environment with respect to external wars, the evolutionary impulses have not been mitigated as they have been in other countries for several major reasons.  The first of these is invasion and role it plays in reducing some evolutionary impulses.  Conquest and occupation is one way genetic homogeneity is diluted and thus it

becomes harder to create myths of ethnic homogeneity. This is not true of China, which has only been occupied for brief periods, in comparison to the length of its history, by the Mongols, the Manchus, Western powers, and the Japanese.

The second of these is greater inaction with the rest of the world for economic purposes. Trade increases understanding of the practices of the rest of the world. The Chinese have not had advanced economic exchange with the rest of the world for most of their history. Rather, they have done the reverse. Until recently, the Chinese have intentionally not sought to trade with the rest of the world in significant amounts due to their sense of superiority to other peoples and the goods and services they may provide.

The third of these is if there is countervailing pressure against dominance, xenophobia, ethnocentrism, and racism as there has been in the West. Western educational and political institutions, media, and popular culture have heavily criticized power politics, the legitimacy of Western rule, xenophobia, ethnocentrism and racism for over a generation. The result of these efforts has been to change how Europeans and Americans relate to their countries. Long gone are the days of "America: Love It or Leave It." In contrast, the Chinese do not recognize these behaviors as anything but natural. For the Chinese it is right and proper that Chinese people believe themselves to be not just better but superior to the rest of the world. There is no countervailing pressure against the racism expressed in public settings, blogs, and elsewhere against all those who are not Chinese, but especially against Africans and African-Americans. The comments about former

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice posted online during her visits to China are unprintable.

In essence, the Chinese have a sense of racial superiority to the rest of the world which, like all supremacist beliefs, includes the conception that the "natural" condition of the world is when China is the dominate state.  These beliefs are absolutely legitimate in public discourse in China and are underestimated at the peril of the United States.

III. C. How the Chinese See the World:  Important Differences with Western Thought

This subsection closely studies key works in evolutionary theory and evolutionary psychology.  These works reveal how the Chinese see the world, and the evolutionary impulses in strategic thought.  These impulses inform the psychology of Chinese leaders who are typically representative of what Simon Baron Cohen terms "extreme male" minds—due to high levels of testosterone—and to that end they will seek to supplant the United States as the dominant state through confrontation.  Finally, it considers why China's leaders will be overconfident.

How do China's leaders see the world?  Chinese history gives us important insights, as Christopher Ford's excellent and essential book demonstrates.[133]  Ford conducts a careful review of China's attitudes towards international politics and the proper international system.  He argues that the Chinese leadership perceives the international system to be hierarchical, with China's rightful place being at the top of the hierarchy.  This is China's rightful place because the leadership truly believes

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[133] Christopher A. Ford, *The Mind of Empire:  China's History and Modern Foreign Relations* (Lexington:  University Press of Kentucky, 2010).

that China is the most virtuous, advanced, and cultured civilization, and expects that all other peoples will be transformed by China's gravitic attraction of greater virtue, while wanting to control, directly or indirectly as necessary, the direction and outcomes of international politics. It is the end of the Westphalian system, sovereign states are not equal, and China need not respect sovereignty. Rather, the essence of China's worldview is China first, always, and by definition.

If we move beyond Ford's exceptional analysis and probe even deeper than history's important lessons, we can understand that evolution gives us key insights. Evolution expects that the Chinese leadership will be egoistic, domineering, xenophobic, racist, and ethnocentric. Moreover, there are likely to be other important differences with the rest of the world's leaders that this subsection will address.

It has long been a suspicion of evolutionary psychologists that the world's leaders think in similar ways. This is because there are certain types of intellect and drive that allow one to succeed at such high levels. To put it plainly: just as some types of brains are overrepresented in prisons, overrepresented in physics or computer science departments at universities, so too there are certain types of brains that are overrepresented in leadership positions.

At one level that is true for Chinese leaders as well. They will be representative of great ambition and drive, as are most of the world's leaders. At a deeper level, there are important differences, as University of Michigan psychologist Richard Nisbett identifies.

To advance the analysis it is important to begin with the work of evolutionary psychologist Robert Kurzban and Antonio Damasio. Robert Kurzban explains the essence of the evolutionary psychology approach as consisting of four elements: first, it is a scientific approach; second, it used a computational theory of mind, which means that you can think of the mind as a machine that processes information, brains are machines with functions; third, it is committed to Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection and the human brain is sculpted by evolution; and fourth, our minds have the design they do as a result of how the genes that build them fared in the past—our minds are modules consisting of many different parts, and these parts often "believe" different, often mutually inconsistent things.[134]

Kurzban relies heavily on the work of Harvard evolutionary psychologist Steven Pinker, and advances the argument that humans naturally believe contradictory information, and have an emphasis on consumption rather than saving—high-calorie foods, sexual activity, power, and other stimuli for which the human reward system evolved. The implication of this is that people in positions of power will act to maximize what their brain is telling them, domination, in the case of what is relevant for this study. That is one of the default options of the human brain, and should be expected unless there is a countervailing pressure guarding against it.[135] Another implication is that leaders, like other people, have proclivities

[134] Robert Kurzban, *Why Everyone (Else) Is a Hypocrite: Evolution and the Modular Mind* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2010).
[135] Kurzban, *Why Everyone (Else) Is a Hypocrite*, pp. 159-161. Also see Steven Pinker, *How the Mind Works* (New York: Norton, 1999).

toward self-deception, to be overconfident and often hold mutually inconsistent beliefs at the same time.  Western governments work against this through vetting of policies, but one consequence of this is that Chinese leaders may be prone to beliefs that contribute to deterrence failures due to the less rigorous vetting process.

Damasio demonstrates that the famous philosopher René Descartes got it wrong we he wrote that "I think, therefore I am."[136]  The human mind is a not a Cartesian one, divorced from the body and emotions.  Rather, the human mind is completely incorporated into somatic processes, such as emotion.  What we consider thought is produced in the brain but influenced by brain functions and other aspects of the body.  Indeed, there is overwhelming evidence that emotion, and emotional memory, are directly linked to thought.

As a result of advances in evolutionary psychology, including the use of functional magnetic resonance imaging (commonly known as fMRI) and positron emission tomography (PET), we now know that the human mind is heavily influenced by the environment and body.  How the brain interprets actions and makes decisions is complicated, imperfect, greatly depends upon emotions, and varies among humans.  There is tremendous variation in the human brain, with the result that threats that work in most circumstances will not work in all and that the appreciation of consequences cannot be assumed.

Evolutionary psychology is causing a revolution in our understanding of the human brain.  Comprehending the human brain is now possible due to an

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[136] Antonio R. Damasio, *Descartes' Error:  Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York:  Avon, 1994).

understanding of genetics, neural processing, and technology like fMRI, which allows scientists for the first time to be able to understand how the human brain functions by identifying brain regions with increased blood flow corresponding to increased neuronal activity, after a stimulus (such as the word "cat") is provided to a patient.  Much work remains to be done by evolutionary psychologists, but the results are already impressive.  The data are troubling for any discipline or theory that assumes a rational actor.

Damasio's research reveals that human brains do indeed differ significantly. There are two major reasons why this is so.  First, these physical differences may be natural; for example, caused by variations in genotype, which, in turn, is a result of evolution by natural selection. It is important to bear in mind that evolution does not guarantee what we would deem perfectly rational behavior—this is because what is in the genes' best interest may not be in the vehicle's best interest.  An understanding of evolution allows us to grasp that humans are rational enough to survive in the environments of evolutionary adaptation.  Equally certain, evolution also produced mental pathways or shortcuts that lead to irrational outcomes. Evolutionary psychology is only now beginning to document these mental shortcuts or problems with perception that lead to irrational outcomes.  Phobias may be of this category, arising out of the recurrent threats faced by humans in the environments of evolutionary adaptation.

Second, the physical differences may be temporary or permanent as a result of biological differences, infection, intoxication, or emotional or physical trauma. Damasio demonstrates his argument in part through the classic example of

spectacular trauma in the 1848 tragedy of Phineas Gage, a Vermont railroad worker

who had a 3ft metal rod pass through his brain in an explosion, which did not kill

him, but removed the limbic areas of his brain—the part of the brain concerned with

moral reasoning. Gage survived and lived until 1861, but he was a completely

different person.  The rod that passed through the left side of his skull compromised

the prefrontal cortices in the ventral and inner surfaces of both hemispheres while

preserving the lateral, or external aspects of the prefrontal cortices. The part of the

brain critical for normal decision-making, the ventromedial prefrontal region, was

greatly injured or removed hindering or eliminating Gage's ability to plan for the

future, to conduct himself according to the social rules he previously had learned,

and to decide on the course of action that ultimately would be most advantageous to

his survival.

Gage's story is remarkable and vivid, but not unique.  The medical literature

contains many other examples of less dramatic injuries to the brain that reveal

results that are equally as interesting as Gage's saga.  These cases have allowed

physicians to recognize how complicated trauma to the brain is, and how it affects

moral choices, and how emotions influence moral judgment.  A study of patients

with focal damage to the ventromedial prefrontal cortex (VMPC) is particularly

important.  The VMPC projects to basal forebrain and brainstem regions that

execute bodily components of emotional responses, and neurons within the VMPC

encode the emotional value of sensory stimuli. The study reveals that patients

exhibit generally diminished emotional responsivity and markedly reduced social

emotions (for example, compassion, shame and guilt) that are closely associated

with moral values, and also exhibit poorly regulated anger and frustration tolerance in other circumstances. At the same time, there was no impairment of their ability to reason logically, general intelligence, or declarative knowledge of social and moral norms.

In essence, these patients differ from the rest of the population only when it comes to high-conflict personal moral dilemmas, such as sacrificing some lives for a greater good. In life-or-death situations, these patients have no emotional reaction, and so people with this rare injury expressed increased willingness to kill or harm another person if doing so would save others' lives, and they might also be willing to sacrifice a population for the greater good. We should expect China's leaders to have an overrepresentation of these types of individuals.

In addition to these insights, scholarship has demonstrated that there are very important differences in how the Chinese see the world versus how Westerners do. University of Michigan psychologist Richard Nisbett argues that there are significant differences in ways in which East Asians and Westerners conceive of the world.[137] Asians have a more collective and interdependent way of thinking about the world, with a broader, contextual view of society, and possess a belief that events are highly complex and determined by many factors. In contrast, he finds Westerners individualistic and independent, which is consistent with the Western focus on particular objects in isolation from their context and with Westerner's belief that they can know the rules governing objects and therefore can

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[137] Richard E. Nisbett, *The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently…and Why* (New York: Free Press, 2003).

control the objects' behavior.  In sum, East Asians are circular; Westerners are linear.

Nisbett submits that people really differ profoundly in their system of thought—their worldviews and cognitive processes—and in attitudes and beliefs as well as values and preferences.  For example, the Chinese believe in constant change, but with things always moving back to some prior state.  They pay attention to a wide range of events.  They search for relationships between things; and they think that you cannot understand the part without understanding the whole.  Whereas, Nisbett submits that Westerners live in a simpler, more deterministic world than the Chinese.  They focus on salient objects or people instead of the larger picture.  They think they can control events because they know the rules that govern the behavior of objects.  Nisbett explores these differences across the following domains:  in science and mathematics, Asians excel but do not produce the degree of revolutionary science that Westerners do.  In attention and perception, he finds that East Asians are better able to see relationships among events but East Asians find it relatively difficult to disentangle an object from its surroundings.

Concerning causal inference, he determines that Westerners are likely to overlook the influence of context on the behavior of objects and even of people.  East Asians are more susceptible to "hindsight bias," which allows them to believe they were cognizant when actually they were not.  In the organization of knowledge, Western infants learn nouns at a much more rapid rate than verbs whereas East Asian infants learn verbs at a more rapid rate than nouns.  East Asians group objects and events based on how they relate to one another, whereas Westerners are more

likely to rely on categories.  In the realm of reasoning, Nisbett finds that Westerners are more likely to apply formal logic when reasoning about everyday events, but this insistence on logic causes them to make errors too.  East Asians are more willing to entertain apparently contradictory propositions, which can be beneficial as well.

The Western and East Asian approaches to the world have maintained themselves for thousands of years.   The causes of the differences in cognition are ecological, which gave rise to different economies and social structures.  In China, these emphasized harmony, the relations among objects and their relationship to each other.  Processes of attention, perception, and reasoning will develop that focus on detecting the important events and discerning the complex relationships among them.  In the West, the world is a place where the behavior of objects is governed by rules and categories, and so it was crucial to be able to isolate the object from its context, and to infer of what categories the object is a member, as well as to infer how rules apply to those categories.  Thought processes would then develop to serve those functions for Westerners.

For the contemporary world, Nisbett finds the following eight major differences:  first, patterns of attention and perception, with Easterners attending more to environments and Westerns attending more to objects, and Easterners being more likely to detect relationships among events than Westerners; second, basic assumptions about the composition of the world, with Easterners seeing substances where Westerners see objects; third, beliefs about the controllability of the environment, with Westerners believing in controllability more than Easterners;

fourth, tacit assumptions about stability versus change, with Westerners seeing

stability where Easterners see change; fifth, preferred patterns of explanation for

events, with Westerners focusing on objects and Easterners casting a broader net to

include the environment; sixth, habits of organizing the world, with Westerners

preferring categories and Easterners being more like to emphasize relationships;

seventh, use of formal logic rules, with Westerners being more inclined to use logic

rules to understand events than Easterners; and eighth, in the application of

dialectical approaches, with Easterners being more inclined to seek the Middle Way

when confronted with apparent contradiction and Westerners being more inclined

to insist on the correctness of one belief versus another.

### III. C. 1. The Extreme Male Minds of China's Leaders

As Kurzban, Damasio, and Nisbett show, advances in cognitive psychology have

been significant for understanding how the human brain operates and how it varies

among people.  The psychology of leaders is increasingly being studied, as well as

the major differences in male and female psychology.

One of the principal cognitive psychologists is Cambridge University's Simon

Baron Cohen.  Baron Cohen argues that evolution has a profound impact on male

and female cognition.[138]  There is a male brain and a female brain.  Males are

evolved to emphasize problem solving, analytical ability, and systemizing.  In sum,

males are good with things:  they have islets of ability, are obsessive with systems,

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[138] Simon Baron Cohen, *The Essential Difference: The Truth about the Male and Female Brains* (New York: Basic Books, 2003); and Baron Cohen, *The Science of Evil: On Empathy and the Origins of Cruelty* (New York:  Basic Books, 2011).

and repetitive behavior.  These abilities would have had many advantages over evolutionary time:  using and making tools, hunting and tracking, trading, and in establishing power and social dominance, aggression and leadership.  Females are evolved to emphasize empathy, concern, and communication including language ability.  In sum, females are good with people: social sensitivity, communicative sensitivity, and imagining others' thoughts and feelings.  These abilities would have had many advantages in the environments of human evolutionary adaption, including for making friends, motherhood, social mobility, including moving to your mate's community, and for decoding their male partner's next move.

In a group, either all males, or mixed, males quickly establish dominance hierarchies, which reflects their lower empathizing and their higher systemizing skills, because typically a hierarchy is established competitively, usually by one person pushing the others around, uncaringly, in order to become the leader.  This behavior is also seen in primates.  In an all female groups, women will establish social rank, but this is usually accomplished cooperatively.

Baron Cohen submits that there are extreme categories of these brains: the extreme male and extreme female brains.  Testosterone, particularly in the womb, has a significant impact on creating extreme male brains, if it is in excess, or extreme female brains, if it is absent.  He finds that extreme male brains are different in the many parts of the brain that influence empathy:  the medial prefrontal cortex, orbito-frontal cortex, frontal operculum, inferior frontal gyrus, caudal anterior cingulate cortex and anterior insula, temporoparietal junction, superior temporal

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sulcus, somatosensory cortex, inferior parietal lobule, inferior parietal sulcus, and amygdala.[139]

Extreme male brains account for greater numbers or degrees of autism, including Asperger's, serial killers, and leadership of all kinds: economic, social, political.   Most political leaders will have extreme male minds.  They will have precise, exact, demanding minds, with little empathy.  As a consequence, analysts should expect that most of the actions of leaders will act in the manner evolutionary realism expects, if their actions are not checked by democratic institutions.

The behavior of Mao and Stalin capture extreme male minds.  The Jung Chang and Jon Halliday detailed biography of Mao reveals many examples of his utter ruthlessness toward friends, rivals, and the Chinese people, as Mao is quoted as saying in 1962:  "We need the policy of 'keep people stupid,'" and his brutal policies were responsible for the deaths of over 70 million people in peacetime, at least 38 million and possibly as many as 45 million alone during the great famine.[140]  Frank Dikötter quotes Mao's statement to Party colleagues during the Great Famine from 1958-1962:  "When there is not enough to eat, people starve to death.  It is better to let half of the people die so that the other half can eat their fill."[141]  As Soviet leader

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[139] Baron Cohen, *The Science of Evil*, pp. 29-41.
[140] Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, *Mao:  The Unknown Story* (New York:  Knopf, 2005), p. 487.  Frank Dikötter estimates 45 million died in his *Mao's Great Famine:  The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe, 1958-1962* (New York:  Walker Publishing, 2010), p. x.
[141] Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*, p. 134.

Nikita Khrushchev is quoted as telling his colleagues: "When I look at Mao I see Stalin, a perfect copy."[142]

Of course, Stalin's life is replete with examples of his ruthless ambition, brutal ingenuity, keen intelligence, and lack of empathy. As Stanford Historian Norman Naimark describes him, Stalin was: "Hard, cold, cruel, and impassive."[143] Naimark captures the essence of the extreme male mind as evidenced in Stalin's psychology: "It was as if he was missing the frontal lobe of the brain in which empathy for his victims would have been found. There was absolutely no sense of regret at the number of dead and broken….The lives of Soviet citizens that were entrusted to his leadership were to Stalin—for all intents and purposes—without inherent value."[144]

The detailed biographies of Stalin written by Simon Sebag Montefiore demonstrate that Stalin was the classic extreme male mind identified by Baron Cohen.[145] Montefiore relates a revealing remark Stalin made while in exile in 1915: "At a boozy dinner, Kamenev asked everyone round the table to declare their greatest pleasure in life. Some said women, other earnestly replied that it was the progress of dialectical materialism towards the workers' paradise. Then Stalin answered: My greatest pleasure is to choose one's victim, prepare one's plans

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[142] Chang and Halliday, *Mao*, p. 464.

[143] Norman M. Naimark, *Stalin's Genocides* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 45.

[144] Naimark, *Stalin's Genocides*, pp. 31-32.

[145] Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Young Stalin* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2007); and Montefiore, *Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar* (New York: Knopf, 2003).

minutely, slake an implacable vengeance, and then go to bed.  There's nothing

sweeter in the world."[146]

Psychologists have long known about sex differences in aggression.  But

advances in fMRI and other techniques have allowed us to understand aggression in

even greater detail.  Certain regions of the brain have been linked to these different

types of aggressive and violent behaviors.  Most notably, the prefrontal cortex has

been recognized as an important regulator of social and aggressive behavior.

Additional findings suggest that this region of the brain functions as a critical filter

between the violent images themselves and the decisions people make in choosing

how to respond to them.  Likewise, neuroimaging evidence from studies of patients

with acquired lesions to the prefrontal cortex (PFC) has revealed that prefrontal

damage can result in a syndrome similar to psychopathy.[147]  Individuals with early-

onset PFC damage, the most famous being Gage, demonstrate impaired social

behavior, insensitivity to future consequences, and an inability to respond to

punishment contingencies and behavioral interventions.  With the case of Gage, such

antisocial behavior was the result of trauma to the prefrontal region, but more

recent functional imaging studies have shown that drug abuse can also impair the

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[146] Montefiore, *Young Stalin*, p. 255.
[147] S. W. Anderson, Bechara, A., Damasio, H., Tranel, D., and Damasio, A.,
"Impairment of Social and Moral Behavior Related to Early Damage in Human
Prefrontal Cortex," *Nature Neuroscience*, Vol. 2, No. 11 (1999), pp. 1032-1037.

orbitofrontal cortex and cause psychopathic-like behavior and impulsive decision-making.[148]

Furthermore, Robert Davidson and colleagues argue that impulsive aggression and violence can be associated with a dysfunction between the interactions of the core neural substrates, particularly the PFC, the amygdala, hippocampus, hypothalamus, anterior cingulated cortex (ACC), insular cortex, ventral striatum, and other interconnected structures involved in the "various aspects of emotion, affective style, and emotion regulation."[149] Among these, the amygdala has received the most attention due to its active role in the regulation of emotion, specifically fear, and its appraisal of danger during fight-or-flight scenarios. Impulsive, affective aggression is believed to occur when the PFC is incapable, usually due to lesions, of inhibiting the amygdala and suppressing negative emotions.

### III. C. 2. The Link Between Serotonin and Aggression

Scientists have discovered a link between aggression and the neurotransmitter serotonin. Too much serotonin in the synapse has been linked to aggression. At the neurotransmitter level, dysfunction in emotional regulation can produce a disruption in the serotonergic (5-HT) system, specifically a reduction of the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) of 5-HT metabolite 5-hydroxyindoleacetic acid (5-HIAA),

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[148] E.D. London, Ernst, M., Grant, S., Bonson, K., and Weinstein, A., "Orbitofrontal Cortex and Human Drug Abuse: Functional Imaging," *Cerebral Cortex*, Vol. 10 No. 3 (2000), pp. 334-342.

[149] R. J. Davidson, Putnam, K. M., and Larson, C. L., "Dysfunction in the Neural Circuitry of Emotion Regulation: A Possible Prelude to Violence," *Science*, Vol. 289, No. 5479 (2000), pp. 591- 594, 591.

which has been shown to cause impulsive aggressive and violent behavior.[150]  When

serotonin is clearly from the synapse, aggression is decreased.  Interestingly, studies

of both children with disruptive behavior disorder and recidivist violent adults

show that 5-HIAA levels can predict future aggressive behavior.[151]

From an evolutionary perspective, the relationship between lower 5-HT

levels and aggressive behavior makes sense.  Serotonin is believed to regulate our

most primitive drives and emotions, such as sexual desire, mood, appetite, sleep,

pain, and aggression.  Aggressive behavior, like the rest of these basic human

emotions, is not necessarily bad.  As stated earlier, aggression is considered to be an

adaptive function that allowed our ancestors to compete for resources, mates, and

status.  Even today, in a social environment much different from that of our

ancestors, aggression, usually in the form of competition and self-confidence, allows

us to overcome obstacles and reach our desired goals.

Problems occur, however, when the biological mechanisms associated with

aggression are inappropriately triggered by cues and stimuli that once posed a

threat to survival.  A classic example is the fear of snakes even though snakes no

longer represent a serious daily threat to our survival.  For some individuals, on the

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[150] Davidson, et al., "Dysfunction in the Neural Circuitry of Emotion Regulation," p.
592.
[151] M.J.P. Kruesi, Hibbs, E. D., Zahn, T. P., Keysor, C. S., Hamburger, S. D., Bartko, J. J.,
and Rapoport, J. L. (1992), "A 2-Year Prospective Follow-up Study of Children and
Adolescents With Disruptive Behavior Disorders: Prediction by Cerebrospinal Fluid
5-Hydroxyindoleacetic Acid, Homovanillic Acid, and Autonomic Measures?" *Archives
of General Psychiatry*, Vol. 49, No. 6 (1992), pp. 429-435; and M. Virkkunen, De Jong,
J., Bartko, J. and Linnoila, M., "Psychobiological Concomitant of History of Suicide
Attempts Among Violent Offenders and Impulsive Fire Setters," *Archives of General
Psychiatry*, Vol. 46, No. 7 (1993), pp. 604-606.

other hand, aggressive and violent behavior is common, and in some instances uncontrollable, due to a genetic or acquired deficiency in the serotonergic system. For individuals with low 5-HT levels, impulsive behaviors, such as "out-of-place" aggressive responses, antisocial violent crime, and sexual abuse are an inescapable reality that requires medical attention and assistance.

Scientists have also found significant variation in the gene, known as MAOA (monoamine oxidase-A).  There are two major forms—one is MAOA-L because carriers of this gene produce low (L) levels of a key enzyme; the other is MAOA-H because carriers produce high (H) levels of the enzyme.  Low levels of MAOA often mean high levels of neurotransmitters in the synapse.  According to Baron Cohen, people with MAOA-H are less aggressive, and people with MAOA-L are overrepresented in warrior cultures like the Maoris in New Zealand.[152]  For this reason, it is called the "warrior gene."

The consequence of this is that there are genetic reasons for variation in aggression across peoples.   Some peoples will tend to be more aggressive, and some more passive.  Although the results are not yet available, scientists are studying peoples to determine which have greater than average MAOA-L.

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[152] Baron Cohen, *The Science of Evil*, p. 132.

III. C. 3. The Effects of Testosterone on Aggressive Behavior

Like serotonin, dysfunction in testosterone levels has long been implicated in aggressive and violent behavior.[153] Testosterone is an androgenic steroid found in both men and women, but with much higher concentrations in the former. Among men, however, young adult males tend to show higher rates of aggression and physical violence, such as fighting and homicide, compared to older members of the same sex, especially those that are married with children.[154]

Differences in the testosterone levels between individuals can be attributed to both social and hereditary factors. While both animal and human studies suggest that testosterone levels are linked to aggressive acts, such as fighting, assault, and dominance behavior, the role testosterone plays in aggression remains a polarized debate in the social science literature.[155] However, despite the controversy over the existence of a direct link between criminality and testosterone, high levels of testosterone have been reported in populations of aggressive individuals, such as criminals with personality disorders, alcoholics, and spousal abusers.

Testosterone appears to play a decisive role in competition as well. This desire for competition associated with increased testosterone levels are

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[153] John Archer, "Testosterone and Human Aggression: An Evaluation of the Challenge Hypothesis," *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (2006), pp. 319-345.

[154] John Archer, "Sex-Differences in Aggression in Real-World Settings: A Meta-Analytic Review," *Review of General Psychology*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (December 2004), pp. 291-322; and P. B. Gray, Kahlenberg, S. M., Barrett, E. S., Lipson, S. L. and Ellison, P. T., "Marriage and Fatherhood are Associated with Lower Testosterone in Males," *Evolution and Human Behavior*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (2002), pp. 193-201.

[155] John Archer, "The Influence of Testosterone on Human Aggression," *British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 82, No. 1 (1991), pp. 1-28.

psychological variables that increase performance success, such as a high self-confidence and a motivation to win.  This argument has been made by Dominic Johnson and will be considered in detail below.  Likewise, within the context of a simulated crisis game, a study by Rose McDermott and colleagues found that "high-testosterone subjects are much more likely to engage in unprovoked attacks against their opponents than their lower-testosterone counterparts."[156]

Through the integration of behavioral endocrinology and cognitive neuroscience, recent brain imaging studies have provided insights into the neural mechanisms associated with the relationship between testosterone and aggression, particularly how the endocrine and neural systems interact to regulate aggressive behavior.  A recent study has shown that testosterone increases aggressive behavior by reducing the ability of the medial OFC to govern self-regulation and impulse control following social provocation.[157]  In addition to affecting the Orbitofrontal Cortex (OFC), a study by Birgit Derntl and colleagues found a correlation between testosterone levels and amygdala activation.[158]  Similar to its influence on the OFC, increased levels of testosterone improved the amygdala's ability to process threat-related stimuli, especially during episodes of anger and fear.  Essentially, the higher

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[156] R. McDermott, Johnson, D., Cowden, J., and Rosen, S., "Testosterone and Aggression in a Simulated Crisis Game," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 614 (2007), pp. 15-33.

[157] P. H. Mehta and Beer, J., "Neural Mechanisms of the Testosterone-Aggression Relation: The Role of Orbitofrontal Cortex," *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, Vol. 22, No. 10 (2010), pp. 2357-2368.

[158] B. Derntl, Windischerger, C., Robinson, S., Kryspin-Exner, I., Gur, R. C., Moser, E., and Habel, U., "Amygdala Activity to Fear and Anger in Healthy Young Males is Associated with Testosterone," *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, Vol. 34, No. 5 (2009), pp. 687-693.

the testosterone level, the faster, and with more accuracy, the response. In turn, these findings suggest: "when confronted with human facial expressions, testosterone prepares females and males for further behavioral action by enforcing more automatic and autonomic processes leading to attentional shifts and decrease of subconscious fear thereby facilitating approach behavior."[159]

But the scholarship of John Archer is most important for understanding male patterns of aggression due to variations in testosterone.[160] He finds that direct, especially physical, aggression was more common in males than females at all ages sampled, was consistent across cultures, and occurred from early childhood on, showing a peak between 20 and 30 years. The overall pattern indicated males' greater use of costly methods of aggression rather than a threshold difference in anger. War would be one form of the more costly methods of aggression.

Archer suggests that when provoked, men respond in various ways, such as direct aggression, flight, or delayed aggression. Which is selected depends on the level of provocation and an assessment of the opponent's fighting ability. If high, a "delayed hostility," was a characteristics response. This involved doing nothing at the time but feeling frustrated and planning revenge later. Other studies suggest that this is a typically male way of responding.

Men show a greater tendency than women to harbor thoughts of revenge. Also, men have been shown to report more homicidal fantasies than women, and

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[159] Derntl, et al., "Amygdala Activity to Fear and Anger in Healthy Young Males is Associated with Testosterone," p. 691.
[160] Archer, "Sex-Differences in Aggression in Real-World Settings," pp. 291-322; also Archer, "Testosterone and Human Aggression," pp. 319-345.

their fantasies are more frequent and long lasting.  The probable mechanism

underlying the sex difference in direct aggression is the greater male than female

willingness to take risks.  This is consistent with findings that impulsiveness and

lesser weighing of long-term consequences are associated with greater physical

aggression and violence in young men.  Finally, a man is more likely to aggress when

he perceives that his reputation will be permanently affected by not responding

with physical aggression to an insult.

The implication of this is that due to the competitive nature of their political

system and the absence of democratic institutions, China's leaders are likely to be

extreme male minds, more risk accepting than average populations, and more likely

to aggress in common male ways identified by Archer, Mehta and Beer, and Derntl.

III. C. 4. Why Chinese Leaders Will Be Overconfident

The evolutionary perspective also allows us to understand why China's leaders are

likely to be overconfident.  Kurzban and Dominic Johnson argue that states are no

more rational than people.[161]  Just as people are overconfident, so are states.

Rational states should agree on their differences in power, and should not fight.  But

states are susceptible to exaggerated ideas of their ability to control events, their

own virtue, and of the future.  This bias is one of "positive illusions," (or adaptive

overconfidence) and its origins are in human evolution.  The human tendency

toward overconfidence was favored by natural selection because of the advantages

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[161] Kurzban, *Why Everyone (Else) Is a Hypocrite*; and Dominic D.P. Johnson, *Overconfidence and War: The Havoc and Glory of Positive Illusions* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004).

it conferred.  First, it paid off in the long run because the costs of failure arising from overconfidence often matter less than the missed opportunities arising from accuracy or for an abundance of caution.  Second, overconfidence has been shown in numerous contexts to facilitate more effective mental, social, and physical functioning.  Third, it can increase performance in conflict—even against a stronger opponent because it boosts resolve and bluffs an opponent.

The essence of this argument is that overconfidence is a "strategic error" of the brain.  Overconfidence causes people to do strategically useful things from the standpoint of evolution, even if the motivations or capabilities of the actual person are wrong.  Sometimes it is beneficial to be strategically wrong, especially if everyone else believes the same.

These findings suggest that overconfidence can provide significant advantages in challenging, competitive environments like international politics.  Since opponents can exploit the same tactic, however, there will be a competitive escalation, an arms race, among adversaries to outdo one another.  All other things being equal, in such an arms race high-confidence players will beat low-confidence players.

A second study done by Johnson and his colleagues argues that evolutionary theory provides a new way to understand why leaders are overconfident.[162]

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[162] Dominic D.P. Johnson, Rose McDermott, Emily S. Barrett, Jonathan Cowden, Richard Wrangham, Matthew H. McIntyre, and Stephen Peter Rosen, "Overconfidence in Wargames: Experimental Evidence on Expectations, Aggression, Gender, and Testosterone," *Proceedings of the Royal Society (B)*, Vol. 273, No. 1600 (October 2006), pp. 2513-2520.

Overconfidence has long been noted by historians and political scientists as a major cause of war. However, the origins of such overconfidence, and sources of variation, remain poorly understood. Mounting empirical studies now show that mentally healthy people tend to exhibit psychological biases that encourage optimism, or positive illusions.

Positive illusions are thought to have been adaptive in our evolutionary past because they served to cope with adversity, harden resolve, or bluff opponents. Today, however, positive illusions may contribute to costly conflicts and wars. Testosterone has been proposed as a proximate mediator of positive illusions, given its role in promoting dominance and challenge behavior, particularly in men. To date, no studies have attempted to link overconfidence, decisions about war, gender, and testosterone. But in experimental wargames the authors discovered four major findings: first, people are overconfident about their expectations of success; second, those who are more overconfident are more likely to attack; third, overconfidence and attacks are more pronounced among males than females; and fourth, testosterone is related to expectations of success, but not within gender, so its influence on overconfidence cannot be distinguished from any other gender specific factor.

Overall, these results constitute the first empirical support of recent theoretical work linking overconfidence and war. They conclude that states, particularly rising hegemonic powers, appear to overestimate their relative power. A recurring theme among studies of the causes of war, and specifically hegemonic conflict, is that overconfidence is frequently associated with the outbreak of

violence.

This proclivity to overconfidence is made worse by the fact that China is an authoritarian state.  As a consequence, the safeguards against overconfidence provided by democratic institutions and rival centers of political power, as between the presidency and Congress, a free press and commentators, and public participation in elections are absent.  Mechanisms that would greatly increase the likelihood that overconfidence is checked in the United States are absent in China, with profound consequences for the rest of world as China continues to grow in power.  We should expect Chinese leaders to be overconfident as a result of the inflation of their own capabilities and willpower.  The consequence is a greater likelihood of increased aggressiveness by China, and of deterrence failure.

<center>IV. Chinese Strategic Thought</center>

The value of the evolutionary impulses is significant, and can be augmented by analysis of Chinese strategic thought. The objectives of this section are to serve as an introduction to Chinese strategic thought. To accomplish this, I first consider the lasting legacy of Chinese thought, particularly Legalism. Second, I address the general differences between Chinese strategic thought and Western thought. Third, I consider the ten major contributions made by French Sinologist François Jullien for the understanding of Chinese strategy.

IV. A. Three Classical Schools of Thought:  Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism

There is a common contention that three classical schools of Chinese thought, Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism (rightfully understood as realism or power politics), strongly influence China's stance in international politics and strategic thought. That is accurate at one level, just as it would be accurate to write that Christian thought and realism, or power politics, as having had great influence for the West in the conduct of international politics since the rise of the modern state system in 1648.

Just as schools of thought in the West have risen and fallen in influence over the years, so too they have in China. Christian thought was once a major pillar for understanding how the West conducted and legitimized the practice of international politics and strategy. While still notable for some states, its influence is not what it was. Realism, or the pursuit of self-interest in international politics, has been consistent across cultures and periods. The same is true for China. Each of these

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schools of thought has significance and adherents, but they are not equally valuable for understanding Chinese thought.  Legalism, despite the name, appropriately thought of as realism, is consistently influential across the scope of Chinese history, and in each dynastic period.

Confucius, of course, is the principal thinker of Confucianism, and its main work is *The Analects*.  Confucianism is not quite a religion, not quite a political philosophy, and not limited to a code of personal ethics.  Confucianism has nonetheless become each of these elements throughout Chinese history.  It is the closest thing that China has ever had to a state religion, and is more systematic than Daoism in prescribing a moral code for governments and individuals.  In Confucianism, moral perfection is both attainable and the overarching goal, while the responsibility of government is to enhance the moral qualities of its subjects.  This it does primarily by setting a good example, as subjects look up to government in much the same way that children look up to their parents.  Since mankind is neither inherently good nor evil, good conduct breeds good conduct, and the preponderance of good may be enough to suppress evil.  People are also tied together by a common culture, and so government must lead people in the exercise of religious rites, in order to attain (or at least appear to attain) divine favor and express solidarity with the people's most cherished views.  When everyone knows their place in the social hierarchy, subordinates look up to their superiors and superiors do not abuse their responsibilities, happiness abounds and society is at peace.

Daoism's main thinker is Lao Tzu. Its main work is *Tao Te Ching*. In contrast to Confucianism and Legalism, Daoism is difficult to classify, as it refers to various traditions that, when considered collectively, essentially constitute a Chinese folk religion. Certain strains emphasize ancestor worship and the immediate presence of the supernatural, others are more elite and philosophical, and others still consist of a more organized religious doctrine. The Dao means "the way," but that term can be applied to a wide variety of concepts, as evidenced in the military texts that refer to the Dao of anything from the art of ruling to manipulation of terrain. Generally, Dao refers to a spiritual ideal that can be divined and attained by paying attention to natural phenomena. It is represented by the famous yin and yang: the contrary but complementary forces that drive the motion of the universe. Divination, ritual sacrifice, and fasting are common means of "practicing" Daoism. It is very difficult to summarize such a diffuse system, but for the purposes of analyzing Daoism to better understand the military texts, one can manipulate material forces in such a way as to attain a spiritual ideal, since spirits drive the material world. Wisdom, humility and compassion are the chief virtues by which one can ascertain the Dao.

Legalism's main thinkers are Shang Yang and Han Fei and the principal works are *The Book of Lord Shang*, and *Hanfeizi*. An explicitly political philosophy, Legalism has received little official favor throughout Chinese history, but is nonetheless no less influential than Confucianism in determining the character of dynastic rule. It rejects out of hand Confucius' proposal that men can be molded, and assumes that human beings as a whole are morally wayward, seek to dominate others, and driven primarily by self-interest. While Western liberalism makes the

same assumption and attempts to utilize that self-interest for the common good, Han Fei and others insists that government must suppress man's natural instincts by rigorous enforcement of the laws.  The ruler, rather than benevolently tend to his flock, should remain distant, mysterious, and utterly supreme in all things, to be feared rather than loved.  Similarly, interstate relations are starkly portrayed as being in the state of nature, and any tactic, from aggressive warfare to trickery and assassination, are legitimate means of ensuring the security of the state.  Very few rulers openly promoted this philosophy; in many cases, texts were burned and the names of Legalist thinkers barred from public discourse.  Most emperors openly proclaimed Confucianism and embraced the image of the loving father rather than the cynical despot.

Recognizing this, we can identify similar behavior in the West.  Just as politicians and political leaders throughout Western history have proclaimed that Christian principles have inspired or motivated their actions, when closer consideration reveals that the action was undertaken for reasons of power politics. That is to advance the interests of the leader, or his state.  Thus, Machiavelli or the Borgias of medieval Rome would recognize the Legalist arguments and policy recommendations, just as Han Fei would recognize Henry V's, Talleyrand's or Bismarck's actions, and more than that, heartily approve of them.

Thus, the three schools of thought are not really three for guiding Chinese strategy, there is only one for the Chinese, and that is the Legalist, or Realist school of thought.  United States policymakers should consider China to be the archetypical

Realist state, although an aspect of China's realism is that it will be carefully shielded in China's declarations and public diplomacy.

The consequences of this recognition are equally profound and unpleasant for United States decision-makers. It requires abandoning the hope that China will be made a "responsible stakeholder," but to recognize that the Chinese have the willpower to do what is necessary to achieve dominance, to have developed a grand strategic plan that it is sensitive to the considerable period of time it will take to achieve its fundamental objective, and to achieve that dominance artfully. That is, to gain dominance in such a way as to provoke the minimum reaction from the United States or its allies, as Bismarck's unification of Germany did not provoke reaction while at the same time allowing Germany to become the dominant state of Europe.

Whether the Chinese will be as artful as the Germans in the second-half of the nineteenth century cannot be known, but accurately understanding the past permits analysts to recognize similarities in political causes and conditions. There are good reasons to expect a more benign environment including differences in geography and bipolarity in the structure of the international system. Equally important and more worrisome for stability, there are key differences as well, including the dangers of rising states, specific practices in the conduct of Chinese politics, particularly the practice of *shi* and the propensity for surprise attack, that suggest it will be far worse.

IV. B. Chinese Strategic Thinkers

It is a curious aspect of Chinese strategic thought that when one creates a list of major Chinese strategic thinkers, one might expect that one would find an author or group of authors for every major historical period that would reflect progress in technology, in tactics, or experience in battle. This is the situation in Western strategic thought. Western strategic thought proceeds from the Greeks through Caesar, Machiavelli, and Clausewitz. However, the overwhelming majority of Chinese strategic thought is based upon the texts from the Warring States period, most notably Sun Tzu. For example, while military texts proliferated in the Ming dynasty, nearly all of them comment on or directly reference one or many of the *Seven Military Classics*, and those texts, even two thousand years after their first appearance, still represent the main curriculum in military education.

There is surprising diversity in these ancient texts. Some of them are entirely martial, and go into great detail on formation, tactics, and advice for specific battlefield situations. Others are of a decidedly more philosophical bent, and treat war through the lens of internal politics, diplomacy and justice. However, dynastic texts, such as the Ming memorials, are so heavily based on the *Seven Military Classics* that, with rare exceptions, they lack originality. There does not seem to be a major conceptual shift in military thought until Mao and his doctrine of People's War, which, while very much a product of circumstances, offered a coherent and modern system that still provides the framework of debate for generals and admirals in the present day.

This does not mean that Chinese strategic thought has been wholly consistent or static until the Communist era. I also recognize that Chinese strategic thought has been informed by many factors, including its geographical position. Rather, it is more accurate to recognize that the foundations were laid in ancient times, and most thinkers since have been grappling with the concepts developed in those texts, and interpreting contemporary events through the prism of those texts for their insights and knowledge. For the present study, as for most studies addressing Chinese strategic thought, Sun Tzu is the most important Chinese strategic thinker due to the sophistication of his thought and his emphasis on deception, opportunity, the calculation of power, and patience.

IV. B. 1. The Importance of Sun Tzu

The name of Sun-Tzu has become synonymous with Chinese military thought, and the sole work attributed to him, *The Art of War* or *The Art of Warfare*, is among the most influential military texts of all time. Throughout Chinese history, it is the standard against which nearly every single subsequent military text compares itself, explicitly or implicitly. Countless generals and scholars, from the Warring States era through the Q'ing dynasty, studied and taught this text, and there is an inexhaustible body of commentary. Even Mao would cite Sun Tzu to validate his own doctrines. The sheer ubiquity of Sun Tzu in Chinese military culture, which has of course spilled into the rest of Asia and the West, has led many, accurately or not, to assert that the *Art of War* is the "bible" of Chinese strategic thought that, more than any other text, best characterizes Chinese strategic culture.

A possible contemporary of Confucius, Sun Tzu is nonetheless writing before

Confucian principles began to wield political influence, and so discussions of

internal security, the moral rectitude of the ruler and benevolent conduct between

rulers is practically non-existent.  His concern is waging war, which is assumed to be

both constant, inevitable and the linchpin on which the survival of the state hangs.

Foreign policy is treated only insofar as it helps the military situation at hand, such

as his injunction to cultivate allies on a shared border with the enemy.[163]  The text

simply assumes a state of war against an unnamed enemy in which the only

objective is military victory. The nature of a multipolar state system, long-range

goals beyond the immediate conflict or the best way to rule a conquered people, are

beyond the scope of the text.

Most of Sun Tzu's advice is suited toward the general, who may not be the

ruler, conducting his army in the field, and policy is presumably left to policymakers.

This point is emphasized by Michael Handel's consideration and comparison of

Clausewitz and Sun Tzu:  "Sun Tzu clearly recognizes the supremacy of *raison d'etat*

over all other considerations.  War is a rational activity of the last resort (the *ultima*

*ratio*) that correlates ends and means to enhance the vital interests of the state:  it is

a *political activity* as we understand it in the modern world.  The decision to initiate

war is therefore political and must be made by political not military leaders."[164]

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[163] Sun Tzu, *The Art of Warfare*, trans. by Roger Ames (New York:  Ballentine Book, 1993), Chapter 11.
[164] Michael I. Handel, *Sun Tzu and Clausewitz Compared* (Carlisle Barracks, Penn.: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 1991).

While Sun Tzu's treatment of nonmilitary means, namely diplomatic trickery, espionage, feints and bribery is a famous aspect of the work, it is important to note that none of these constitutes an end unto themselves. Rather, they must lay the groundwork for eventual military action if they are to be considered effective.

Sun Tzu is clearly influenced by Daoist style and principles in his writing. He refers to the "Tao of warfare" or the "Tao of victory" repeatedly, and many passages are driven by ying-yang like contrasts (in order await the disordered, in tranquility await the clamorous (Chapter 7)...balance the hard and the soft in all things (Chapter 11)...feigned weakness is borne from strength (chapter 5). Also, in the second paragraph of Chapter 1, he ranks the "true nature" of warfare as the Tao, the Heaven, the Earth, generals and laws of discipline. This clearly evokes the Daoist vision of a cosmic hierarchy, but he then goes on to clarify that Tao is a codeword for morale, Heaven another word for weather, and Earth is simply terrain. He thus arguably commences his work with a gentle mockery of the prevailing philosophy, and the rest of the work goes on to contrast this spiritual ideal with a stark realism in which plunder and conquest are wholly acceptable. For him, victory comes from deception and trickery along with speedy and ruthless application of force. Men who by nature want to live must be molded through rigorous training so that they are not afraid to die.

The five major themes of the work are important to understand as they are still widely referenced by Chinese officials and commentators. The first of these is that warfare is the highest affair of state. Second, there is a strong aversion to fixed or siege warfare, mobility and fluidity are prized over static forms of warfare. Third,

deception is the key to victory.  Fourth, there is a stress on the importance of espionage so that knowledge about the opponent is gained to defeat him efficaciously and ideally without fighting.  Fifth, Sun Tzu counsels patience to craft a military situation to one's own advantage.  One must structure a situation so that victory is assured and be careful not to engage in a fight until victory is certain.

While the writing of Sun Tzu is shaded by Daoism in that it is written in Daoist style, the substance of the work is more closely associated with realism—in essence, doing what is necessary to win.  It is also fully informed by the important concept of *shi*, discussed at length below in the consideration of Jullien's important writings.

Finally, *The Art of War* is noteworthy for his relative silence on a theory of just or righteous war, which heavily informs Confucian thought.  Indeed, *The Art of War* may be thought of as the anti-Confucian text.  The word "righteous," which will appear frequently in other Chinese military texts, appears only once, in an ironic paragraph exhorting leaders to forego a hidebound moral objection to espionage.  This clearly suggests that the argument he is making is a realist or Legalist one.  Also, his one other reference to morality occurs in Chapter 11, when he insists that a "hegemon" is by nature unable to rally his own people, ensure the support of his alliances or properly intimidate foes because "he does not nurture the authority of others under Heaven."  It is one of Sun Tzu's few statements on grand strategy, which has partially contributed to the false perception of Chinese strategic thought as reactive, anti-hegemonic and willingly bound by limited aims rather than

accurately recognized as far more complex with clearly defined tenets of aggression, expansion, and desire for greater glory or power.

IV. B. 2. The Importance of Sun Bin

Sun Bin's later work, *The Art of Warfare* or *Military Methods*, echoes Sun Tzu's major themes.[165]  Lost for centuries, this text was rediscovered only in the early 1970s, but likely enjoyed circulation even during the Warring States period and beyond, as biographies of him were written centuries after his probable death, and his text was discovered in the tomb of a Han emperor.  Sun Bing is inevitably tied to Sun Tzu, as tradition cites him as a direct descendant and the two texts were discovered together.  According to various accounts, he was a highly successful general, and his advice is heavily based on his own alleged experiences.  The full knowledge of the text is frustrated by several incomplete passages and guesswork by translators.

Despite those limitations, Sun Bin is significant due to his similarities and differences with Sun Tzu.  Sun Bin's debt to his alleged ancestor is immense.  His fundamental principles are very similar:  warfare as the greatest affair of the state, aversion to siege and protracted warfare, his painstaking attention to terrain, the utility of deception, hiding danger from soldiers until the danger arises, balancing rewards and punishments, the importance of espionage and the need to develop and rely on espionage networks, and refusal to engage in battle until the situation is developed and victory is assured.

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[165] Sun Bin, *The Art of Warfare*, trans. by D.C. Lau and Roger T. Ames (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2003).

There are a few significant departures that may indicate either a different personal preference or a shift in cultural norms over the century or so since the death of Sun Tzu. Most readily apparent is his more extensive treatment of righteousness, virtue and benevolence, words that appear often enough to suggest that such Confucian watchwords are seeping into everyday vocabulary. On several occasions, he cites virtue as a general's most necessary trait and the surest means of uniting the army and achieving victory. Additionally, his attitude toward civilians is more charitable than Sun Tzu, whose primary suggestion was not to oppress them too much. In comments that remind one of Mao's *Guerrilla Warfare*, Sun Bin asserts that a general must "love the masses,'" and win their support in order to win.

He is fully aware that warfare is contrary to pure virtue, and agrees that a life of "accumulating benevolence and righteousness, practicing the rites and music, and wearing flowing robes and thereby preventing conflict and seizure" is a noble ideal. Nonetheless, in advice that recalls Machiavelli in *The Prince*, because "one could not attain [that ideal the leader must] mobilize the military and constrain evil."[166]

While Sun Bin never shies away from the harsh realities of power politics, war, and conquest, he is more insistent than his ancestor that war is a necessity, and thus attempts to cloak his advice and related policies in moral language whenever possible, so that it may approximate Confucian ideals. Due to his advice that Chinese leaders must mask their true power political intents and objectives in guise of principled and benign Confucian ideals, Sun Bin is perhaps the strategic thinker

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[166] Sun Bin, *The Art of Warfare*, Chapter 2.

who comes closest to capturing how the Chinese leadership actually behaves in international politics.

Whereas Sun Tzu indulged in some Daoist language, Sun Bin takes it much further, writing several chapters that practically reiterate sections of the *Tao Te Ching*. He is convinced that some setbacks may be due to "astrological factors" (Chapter 6); he directly references the yin and yang multiple times (unlike Sun Tzu); and he concludes his work with a treatise on the dense and the diffuse which is deeply rooted in Daoist thought. It is a bit curious, a little like Machiavelli ending *The Prince* with a lengthy discourse on importance of being a good Christian.

While Sun Tzu acknowledges the spiritual and philosophical traditions around him, Sun Bin readily jettisons them for a set of decidedly *Realpolitik* prescriptions. While Sun Bin perpetuates the legacy of his alleged ancestor in most of his tactical advice and view of warfare, he seems much more aware and respectful of the culture surrounding military affairs. The lack of familiarity with Sun Bin is regretful for those seeking to understand Chinese strategic thought and Chinese behavior in the realm of international politics.

IV. B. 3. The Importance of T'ai Kung

The next major work of importance and alone among the military classics, *The Six Secret Teachings*, was written on behalf of an effort to overthrow a ruling dynasty, as it was directed to the kings of Chou to help them overthrow the Shang occupiers,

who enjoyed immense martial and material superiority.[167]  Its author, T'ai Kung, is most likely a legendary figure, called one of the first general-scholars in Chinese history and attributed to a wide variety of great deeds.  True to his reputation, this is one of the first texts to combine considerations of both strategy and politics, expanding on the strictly martial considerations of Sun Tzu.  The advice he gives for balancing the civil and military will resurface time and again, from the Warring States period to the Ming dynasty.

Of all the military classics, *The Six Secret Teachings* may be the most comprehensive in scope.  On military tactics, T'ai Kung tries to detail a strategy for every eventuality of weather, terrain, and strength relative to the enemy.  Soldiers are broken down and classified by weaponry, economic status, and likely motivation for fighting.  Every possible moral quality of the general is dissected, with its possible impact on victory or defeat.  Every stratagem, from bribing the enemy with exotic animals or dressing up like his emissaries, is put forward as a possible battle tactic.  The entire organizational structure of an army, from the commanding general down through chief officers, signal officers and accountants, is elucidated.  T'ai Kung attempts a thoroughly scientific treatment of military arts, in which there is a remedy for every problem.

Nonetheless, as with Sun Tzu and Sun Bin, there is a great emphasis on deception.  "Show an appearance of hunger while actually being well fed.  Keep your sharp weapons within and show only dull and poor weapons outside…make secret

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[167] The T'ai Kung, *The Six Secret Teachings* text this study is using is from Ralph D. Sawyer, ed. ,*The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*, trans. Ralph D Sawyer (Boulder:  Westview Press, 1993).

plans, keep your intentions secret."[168]  Later, he writes:  "Support his dissolute

officials in order to confuse him.  Introduce beautiful women and licentious sounds

in order to befuddle him.  Send him outstanding dogs and horses in order to tire

him.  From time to time, allow him great power to order to entice him to greater

arrogance.  Then investigate Heaven's signs, and plot with the world against him."[169]

His advice on confronting a stronger opponent is to entice him to overextend.

"In order to attack the strong, you must nurture them to make them even stronger,

and increase them to make them even more extensive.  What is too strong will

indeed break; what is too extended must have deficiencies."[170]

Also as with Sun Tzu and Sun Bin, he stresses structuring the situation to

achieve victory without battle. "If you can attain complete victory without fighting,

you will have attained even the realm of ghosts and spirits.  How marvelous! How

subtle!"[171]

T'ai Kung focuses principally on the problems of military life, which he finds

more myriad, as his solution to civil problems is typically reduced to keeping the

people happy with material prosperity, and ensuring that officials are honest.  While

he does not ignore the happiness of the state, he does not regard it as a particularly

difficult goal, and the ruler is much wiser to focus on the uncertainties of combat

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[168] T'ai Kung, *The Six Secret Teachings* in *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*,
p. 52.
[169] T'ai Kung, *The Six Secret Teachings* in *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*,
p. 57.
[170] T'ai Kung, *The Six Secret Teachings* in *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*,
p. 58.
[171] T'ai Kung, *The Six Secret Teachings* in *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*,
p. 53.

and the discipline of the army, where the real health of the state lies as political power flows from military might.

IV. B. 4. The Importance of Wu Qi

One of the *Seven Military Classics* of ancient China, Wu Qi (440-381 B.C.) is much more established as a historical figure than Sun Tzu, and his writings, *Wu Zi Bing Fa*, have enjoyed a comparable reputation in China. He was both a successful military commander and respected civil reformer. This dual career shows itself in the text, which displays a much greater degree of concern with both the internal affairs of the state as well as the conduct of war. This text is a major part of Ralph Sawyer's edited *Seven Military Classics* of ancient China.

Wu Qi is often referred to as the most explicitly Confucian of the great military writers of ancient China, and early portions of the text seem to confirm this reputation. In an early chapter, he purposefully links the four main Confucian virtues (the Way, benevolence, propriety and righteousness) as the main qualities a general needs to win. He also indicates sympathy toward the anti-militarist tendencies of Confucianism, suggesting a hope that benevolent rulers can defuse conflict, insisting on just treatment for a conquered people and cautioning against excessive fighting, even if one wins all their battles. Internal strength, which derives primary from good government and happy people, is the first major topic of his consideration and certainly represents a broader portrait of the political landscape than previous texts.

After the first chapter, however, internal factors and Confucian influence fade considerably, and the text begins to resemble a strictly military treatise.  He suggests that a general select the most swift and ruthless killers in any unit, those who "charge with the fury of a barbarian horse" and put them in a position where others can learn from their example.[172]  While listing a long list of potential circumstances in which the enemy is rendered vulnerable, he insists a total of thirteen times, "You must attack."[173]

His military advice, rather than relying upon moral ideals, is famously pragmatic, as several chapters suggest flexibility in dealing with terrain, changes in fortune or the character of the enemy. Nothing is ever ruled out on principle, except perhaps massacring a conquered people.  As he makes clear in the book's opening section, the affairs of state are equally divided between domestic and foreign concerns, and foreign concerns are practically synonymous with warfare.  His departure from Confucian idealism from Chapter 2 of his work is an insistence on a balance between benevolent domestic rule on one hand and a disciplined, fearless army that can maintain that internal peace.  He likely thinks this apparent disparity in the state's character is solved with his formulation for "righteous war," in which an enemy is justly punished for unacceptable behavior, as distinguished from wars conducted solely for the glory of the ruler or acquisition of material goods.  The only unanswered question is just how plausibly a ruler can call his war "righteous" and the deeds of his enemy deserving of punishment.

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[172] Wu Qi, *Wu-Tzu*, in *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*, Chapter 2.
[173] Wu Qi, *Wu-Tzu*, in *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*, Chapter 2.

IV. B. 5. The Importance of Han Fei

Han Fei (280-233? B.C.) is the most significant of the Legalists, the most realist or *Machtpolitik* of the major schools. Han Fei, widely thought to be a member of the noble Han family, enjoyed his unique access to royal personages to propagate a political philosophy known for its appeal among the ruling class. Legalism would fall out of official favor as Confucianism became a *de facto* state religion among subsequent dynasties, but in his lifetime and shortly thereafter, Han Fei's teachings enjoyed tremendous influence with his own Han family and the Ch'in emperors who defeated them. Despite official sanction, like Machiavelli in Catholic Europe, his influence remained a steady thread throughout Chinese thought, and his legacy enjoyed an official revival of sorts under Communist rule.

Given the great deal of overlap that tends to occur between different writers, Han Fei stands alone among the major thinkers. Armed with a fiercely polemic style, he stands athwart the dominant Confucian strain, but also reserves plenty of contempt for the pragmatic, military writers. Although most of his writings are on political and military matters, tactical considerations are basically absent; his whole concern is the conduct of the ruler. In these remarks, he is incredibly thorough and candid. His treatment of sexuality and palace intrigue render silly the sermonizing of other writers on the righteous ruler.

His candidness is not limited to tawdry matters. He is not alone in his opposition to Confucian morality, but he is uniquely explicit and forceful in his condemnation of the scholars and writers who offer no value to the state. In his

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scheme, the civil and military are not only separate but also irrevocably hostile, and one cannot let the former gain too much influence over the latter. His ideal ruler is not a benevolent sage who rules by example, but a distant, godlike autocrat who applies maximum force, and compels total obedience, with the appearance of minimum effort. Self-reliance is the utmost virtue of the state, self-preservation the only policy. While his realism is not unique, his explicit, stark portrayal of a harsh moral universe is unique, and constitutes the most devastating rebuke to the idealism of his contemporaries. If Confucius is the Aristotle in Chinese thought, then Han Fei is its Machiavelli.

IV. B. 6. The Importance of Li Cheng

Of final relevance in the consideration of the most relevant Chinese works of strategy is a work attributed to Li Cheng (571-649), *Questions and Replies Between T'ang T'ai-tsung and Li Wei-Kung*.[174] This work is by far the latest of the military classics and was most likely compiled in the 7th century A.D. Li Cheng was a successful general who served under the Emperor Tang Tai-tsung and also wrote a biography of him. This work is written in the form of a dialogue occurring at a time when the collapse of the Han dynasty led to a renewed period of violence and disunion. The participants in the discussion rely heavily on their own exploits to illuminate their main arguments.

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[174] The text of Li Cheng, *Questions and Replies Between T'ang T'ai-tsung and Li Wei-Kung*, this study is using is from Sawyer, ed., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*.

The arguments of the book intersect Sun Tzu's five themes. Given the seriousness of the topic, Li Cheng would concur with Sun Tzu that warfare is the highest affairs of state. Second, there is a strong aversion to fixed or siege warfare, mobility and fluidity are prized over static forms of warfare. Third, deception is the key to victory. "If you show the enemy an insufficiency, then he will be sure to attack. If you show him a surplus, then they will certainly take up defensive positions...one must have techniques for attacking the enemies' mind."[175]

Fourth, there is a stress on the importance of espionage, so that knowledge about the opponent is gained to defeat him efficaciously and ideally without fighting. "An army which can cause me to submit without fighting is best; one that wins a hundred victories in a hundred battles is mediocre; and the one that uses deep moats and high fortifications for its own defense is the lowest."[176]

Fifth, Li Cheng, like Sun Tzu, counsels patience, "If our enemy does not make an error in judgment, how can our army conquer them? It may be compared with chess where the two enemies begin equal in strength. As soon as someone makes a mistake, no one can rescue him."[177] He continues, "When the enemy cannot yet be conquered, I must temporarily defend himself. When we have waited until the point when the enemy can be conquered, then we attack him."[178]

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[175] Li Cheng, *Questions and Replies Between T'ang T'ai-tsung and Li Wei-Kung*, in Sawyer, *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*, pp. 352-353.
[176] Li Cheng, *Questions and Replies Between T'ang T'ai-tsung and Li Wei-Kung*, in Sawyer, *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*, p. 360.
[177] Li Cheng, *Questions and Replies Between T'ang T'ai-tsung and Li Wei-Kung*, in Sawyer, *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*, p. 351.
[178] Li Cheng, *Questions and Replies Between T'ang T'ai-tsung and Li Wei-Kung*, in Sawyer, *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*, p. 352.

This work can be difficult to get through, as it is heavily loaded with references to kings and campaigns, along with a great deal of idiomatic terminology that puzzles the Western reader.  Although conducted in the form of a dialogue, it does not resolve disputes or offer contrary ideas.  Rather, the speakers typically reinforce one another, ask questions or praise the conclusions of another speaker.

Also, while written as much as a millennium after Sun Tzu, their discussion is guided by numerous citations of *The Art of War*, which in nearly every case they uphold as a flawless masterpiece of perpetual relevance to current campaigns.  In many cases, they attempt to expand upon Sun Tzu's maxims, particularly those concerning orthodox and unorthodox campaigns, and attempt to discern his true meaning and how such maxims apply to a wide variety of historical circumstances.  Since this is a relatively short text, there are long discussions on a few topics, and thus its scope is limited mostly to matters of formation, discipline, and orthodox versus unorthodox tactics.  The work is nonetheless valuable as the most historically conscious of the military classics and one that reinforces the themes of deception, espionage, and developing the situation so that the enemy is defeated before battle has commenced.

IV. C. François Jullien's Contributions for Understanding Chinese Strategic Thought

François Jullien's three major works are critically important for understanding Chinese strategic thought.[179]  Each is essential for understanding Chinese strategy,

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[179] François Jullien, *The Propensity of Things: Toward a History of Efficacy in China*, trans. by Janet Lloyd (New York: Zone Books, 1995); Jullien, *Detour and Access: Strategies of Meaning in China and Greece*, trans. by Sophie Hawkes (New York: Zone

and he is the master of identifying themes in and across the key works of Chinese

strategy especially Sun Tzu's, *The Art of War*.

In this section, I present ten of the most important themes for understanding

Chinese strategy as captured in Jullien's works.  His scholarship is eclectic, and the

topics vary in scope, but each fundamentally provides insights into Chinese strategy.

But his great value for the present study is, in essence, as a philosopher of Chinese

strategy.  Jullien's contributions are summarized in Table 4.

### IV. C. 1. The Practical over the Abstract

The first of his major contributions is that, in contrast to the Western model,

Chinese strategic thinking conceives of what is potential only related to the situation

at hand and the objective factors that derive from it.[180]  There is no abstract

theorizing that is then fit into particular scenarios.  This also deemphasizes the need

for personal virtue, since a situation will breed particular qualities rather than

personal edification. The supreme virtue is flexibility and the willingness to always

act in response to the situation at hand.  This is in tension with the Western mind,

which is programmed to conceive an ideal and put it into action, but we have always

been aware that the two, ideal and action, are often in tension.  Warfare presents a

remarkable case of this tension, since the unpredictability and sheer extremity of

war is bound to frustrate any attempts at theorizing.[181]

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Books, 2004); and Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy: Between Western and Chinese Thinking*, trans. by Janet Lloyd, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).
[180] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, ch. 3.
[181] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, pp. 10-11.

IV. C. 2. Efficacy:  Fighting Battles You Know You Have Already Won

The second vital insight is that Jullien notes how significant the development of ends

and means was for Western thought as twin criteria for determining efficacy, which

obviously factors heavily into thoughts on strategy and war.  Karl von Clausewitz

attempted to argue that economy of force with maximum effect as the best way to

balance means and ends, but concludes that means are difficult to conceive of in the

abstract.  The Chinese reject this dichotomy by restricting their consideration to the

objectively best way to solve the situation at hand.  Because of this, we view war as a

highly dangerous game of chance, since means and ends can never fully be resolved,

whereas the Chinese seek to fight only battles they know they have already won.

For the Chinese, the concept of strategy identified in ancient Chinese

treatises is based on the idea of the potential of a situation.  Jullien writes:  "The

Chinese consider the potential of a situation to be variable; it cannot be determined

in advance because it proceeds from continuous adaptation," the major consequence

of which is that "Chinese military strategy is not affected by the theory-practice

relationship," but rather the notion of the potential of the situation.[182]  Jullien notes

that the implication of this is that the Chinese do not identify Clausewitzian

"friction" as a salient concept.  It certainly does not occupy the central place it does

in Western military thought.  This is because whereas friction "is a threat to any plan

drawn up in advance, adventitious circumstances are themselves precisely what

make it possible for the implied potential to come about and deploy itself."[183]  The

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[182] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 23.
[183] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, pp. 23-24.

minimization of friction in plans and warfare is one of the major differences

between Chinese and Western strategic thought, and it is an issue to which we will

return due to its importance.

IV. C. 3. Transformation

The third insight relates to the concept of transformation, which is more significant

than action. In the West, we isolate the actor, the action and the result; and so we

have grandiose epics about personal struggle and treat politics as clay to be molded

by strenuous and wise effort. The Chinese emphasize a continuous and ever-

changing process in which one is immersed. As the Chinese say: "It becomes

manifest without ever having to show itself." While the Western general concocts a

brilliant plan and puts it in motion, the Chinese general takes advantage of

circumstances in such a way that victory is practically a natural phenomenon like

wind or the flowing of a river. As Jullien writes, in Western "warfare, the sole object

of an engagement is the destruction of the enemy forces…the ancient Chinese

treatise on warfare recommends the exact opposite."[184] For Clausewitz, "only the

engagement itself, in the heat of battle, is truly decisive…in the eyes of the Chinese

strategists the engagement is simply a result in that it is the consequence of a

transformation that began in some way upstream from the action itself."[185]

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[184] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 47.
[185] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 50.

**Table 4.**

**Jullien's Contributions to Understanding Chinese Strategic Thought**

| Chinese Concept | Importance |
|---|---|
| 1. The Practical over the Abstract | Chinese Strategic Thinking Conceives of what is Potential only as the Issue is Related to the Situation at Hand<br><br>There is no Abstract Theorizing to Fit a Particular Scenario<br><br>The Supreme Virtue is Flexibility and the Willingness to Always Act in Response to the Situation at Hand |
| 2. Efficacy | The Western Mind Sees War as a Dangerous Game of Chance Whereas the Chinese Do Not, Seeking Only Battles They Know They Have Already Won<br><br>Clausewitzian Friction Is Discounted |
| 3. Transformation | In the West, We Isolate the Actor, the Action and the Result; and so We Have Grandiose Epics about Personal Struggle and Treat Politics as Clay to be Molded by Strenuous and Wise Effort.  The Chinese Emphasize a Continuous and Ever-Changing Process in which One is Immersed<br><br>While the Western general concocts a brilliant plan and puts it in motion, the Chinese general takes advantage of circumstances in such a way that victory is practically a natural phenomenon like wind or the flow of a river |
| 4. Opportunity | Opportunity is a Moment of Ripeness that is Conceived at an Early Stage and Watched through its Entire Development |

**Table 4.**

**Jullien's Contributions to Understanding Chinese Strategic Thought**
**(Continued)**

| 5. Construction of a Strategy | Westerners Focus their Concept of Efficacy on Producing a Singular Effect Achieved by Deliberate Will and Concrete in its Results |
|---|---|
| | For the Chinese, an Effect is the Natural Progression of a Process that Began "Upstream," Far in Advance when Conditions, even Reality Itself, are Far more Malleable |
| | Upstream Reality is a Situation that is still Flexible and Fluid; One can Steer it Gently, and Slight Inflection will be Decisive |
| | The more Reality is Determined Concretely, the more Cumbersome it is to Manage |
| | Therefore, the Chinese prefer Oblique Attack to the Western Preference for Frontal Attack |
| | The Chinese Art of War was Crafted with the Intention of Depriving the Other of His Ability to Defend Himself and Undermining Him from within, even before the Confrontation Took Place, so that in the Moment of Confrontation the Enemy Collapsed of His own Accord |
| 6. The Logic of Manipulation | The General who can Properly Manipulate Others Fulfills the Chinese Proposal that Victory is always Attainable, a Boast no Western Thinker Dares to Make. The General who Shows His True Face First will Usually Lose because He has been Exposed by a Better Manipulator |

**Table 4.**

**Jullien's Contributions to Understanding Chinese Strategic Thought**
**(Continued)**

| 7. Western Persuasion versus Chinese Manipulation | In China, there is no Tradition of Persuasive Speech, but rather Manipulation.  That is, Tricking a Listener into Trusting the Speaker, and thereby Bending Him toward the Desired End.<br><br>The West and China have different Traditions; in Greece, Democracy Required Speakers that Appealed to the Collective Desires of the People, while in China, Political Speech is Confined to the Autocrat, who is by Virtue of His Position Suspicious of all Others<br><br>Therefore, the Appearance of Conformity with the Listener is more Soothing and Effective than a Strong Exertion of Persuasive Effort.  But for the Chinese, the Object is Simple:  You Conform with the Other but Purely in order to Dominate Him |
| :---: | :---: |
| 8. Water as a Metaphor for Conflict | As with Water, there is no Definitive Form to an Army, or War itself, and so Chinese Military Texts do not Construct a Form, but instead detail Logical Responses to Particular Situations<br><br>One Adapts to a Situation just as Water does to its Surroundings.  Nothing is Tangible, so there is Nothing to Provide the Enemy with the Chance and Support of an Opportunity that would at last Allow Him to Find His Feet and make a Stand.  He will be Defeated without having ever Joined Battle |
| 9. Western Exertion versus Chinese Potential | Whereas Machiavelli and Epic Heroes Insist that Great Deeds are Won by Valor and Great Effort, the Chinese Believe that Great Deeds, especially Great Battles, are more Praiseworthy the more Easily they are Achieved<br><br>"The Good General Wins where and when it is Easy and Attacks Only that which can be Vanquished" |

**Table 4.**

**Jullien's Contributions to Understanding Chinese Strategic Thought (Continued)**

| 10. *Shi* (*Shih*) | *Shi*, Broadly Defined as Energy or Spirit, is a Resource of Infinite Renewability, and is never Wasted in a Pitched Battle that Risks Everything |
| --- | --- |
| | Chinese Strategy Seeks to Avoid Direct Confrontation, and Determines the Value of a Situation from its Potentiality, rather than Simply an Opportunity to Exploit |
| | *Shi* Allows for No Risk, as everything is Predetermined before the Confrontation |
| | The Chinese will take Action that is in Accord with the Propensity of Trends at any given Moment. As the Trend is Going, so too does Chinese Strategy |
| | This is both Passive, following the Trend, but also Active, Identifying what Possibilities Exist in a Given Condition |
| | May be Thought of as Adaptability in Strategic Circumstances: Strategic Adaptability |

In fact, a "sage never takes action.  He transforms...transformation affects the concerned collection of elements at every point...it is impossible to localize; its deployment is always global;" and just as the sage acts in this manner, the best general "will have gotten the situation to evolve in the desired direction so skillfully, gradually intervening well in advance, that he will have made the victory seem easy."[186]  Once the engagement has taken place, people will say, "'Victory was a foregone conclusion,' thereby reducing the merit of the commander," and yet, without understanding it, "they have paid him the greatest of all compliments.  It is because his merit is so complete that the victory seems natural and therefore attracts no notice."[187]

IV. C. 4. Opportunity

Fourth, as with transformation, there is a significant dichotomy between the Western and Chinese conception of opportunity.  In his discussion in *A Treatise on Efficacy*, Jullien compares two notions of opportunity.   In the West, we commonly select an opportune moment and action from a list of rationally devised choices that will occur at a fixed moment in time.  While genius, particularly military genius as with Napoleon, is adept at choosing opportunity in this way, it is always a flirtation with chance and fortune.  For the Chinese, opportunity is a moment of ripeness that is conceived at an early stage and witnessed through its entire development. Chinese "military thought is concerned with spotting the potential of a situation at

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[186] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, pp. 55-58.
[187] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 58.

its embryonic, initial stage…the sooner he spots the initial appearance of the potential, the better he will be able to profit by it."[188]  There is no probability, and the general acts not because he is bold, virtuous, or understands strategy (as Machiavelli or Clausewitz would argue), but only because it works.  This suggests that the Chinese are true realists, more so than Machiavelli, focusing on the end and using whatever means are available.

An important corollary to the Chinese concept of opportunity is the idea of "Do Nothing (With Nothing Left Undone)" taken from a major theme in the *Laozi*.  It details the paradox in Chinese thought that non-action produces more results than action, by inserting one's self in an immanent process and cultivating results like a gardener feeding a plant.  This view is widely shared in Chinese thought, with the only division coming from the Confucians and Legalists (Realists) on the concept of rule:  Confucians believe that the ruler's non-action allows individuals to flourish and grow in virtue, while Legalists believe that it forces everyone into a mechanical operation entirely within the service of the state.

The paradox of inaction may be extended to the issue of effect.  Citing the *Laozi* extensively, Jullien submits that the Chinese mode of thought concludes that effects result from not pursuing them directly, that one simply works to set things in motion, since the best effects produce perpetual results rather than one singular moment of achievement.  This is achieved by attaining "emptiness," which is not quite nonexistence, but is creating a vacuum through which effects can be mature and the individual does not interfere.  In a political context, this means that the ruler

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[188] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 66.

who tries to do too much is bogged down by excessive regulation and offends others, rather than allowing events to develop and succeeding through minimal action.

### IV. C. 5. The Construction of a Strategy:  Direct versus Indirect, or Frontal versus Oblique

The fifth concerns the construction of a strategy.  Westerners focus their concept of efficacy on producing a singular effect achieved by deliberate will and concrete in its results.  For the Chinese, an effect is the natural progression (emphatically not an outcome) of a process that began "upstream," far in advance when conditions, even reality itself, were far more malleable.  "Upstream from actualization, however, reality is still flexible and fluid; one does not have to confront it head-on, since whatever one might need to pressurize has not yet come about...one can steer it gently, and the slight inflection will be decisive...the more reality is determined concretely, the more cumbersome it is to manage."[189] Accordingly, Sun Tzu's priorities for attacking the enemy correspond to early stages of planning, that is, it is best to win before fighting, worst to fight in a siege where material conditions are most evident.  This is not efficacy as such, but efficiency, streamlining a natural process and not taking any individual credit for performing an action.  In this way, the best results are practically invisible, and in a military context, indiscernible to enemy eyes.

In a related work, Jullien argues that there is a sharp contrast between China and the West, in both combat and rhetoric.  He cites the work of classical military

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[189] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 126.

historians John Keegan and Victor Davis Hanson, who describe the Greek warrior method as generally eschewing subtlety in favor of pitched, conclusive battles in close quarters.  Similarly, Greek rhetoric, while certainly subtle and layered, is best described as a clash of directly opposing arguments.   This is contrasted with the Chinese love of detour and indirect speech, which frees up room for maneuver and never exhausts one's potential for further action.

This is the contrast between the Western conception of frontal attack and the Chinese conception of oblique attack.  As Jullien writes, "Military strategy was much more than a specific technique in ancient China.  It reflected some of the most radical elements of Chinese thought and informed many other disciplines," but if there is one "basic principle on which all ancient Chinese treatises insist, it is that of avoiding direct confrontation with an armed enemy."[190]  Traditional forms of Western warfare are avoided.  "A frontal clash, in which two armies are engaged face-to-face, was always considered eminently risky and destructive."[191]

Indeed, Jullien argues that for the Chinese, "the whole art of war was crafted with the intention of depriving the other of his ability to defend himself and undermining him from within, even before the confrontation took place, so that at the moment of confrontation the enemy collapsed of his own accord."[192]  In addition, he captures two key elements of Chinese strategy:  "In the art of invective, therefore, are two characteristics central to Chinese military strategy.  The oblique approach gives the one who is criticizing, like the one who is fighting, a means not to expose

[190] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 35.
[191] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 35.
[192] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 35.

himself, a means to remain unfathomable, while rendering his power of attack inexhaustible."[193]

As Sun Tzu wrote, "To carry one hundred victories for every hundred battles is not an end in itself, whereas to subjugate the enemy without having engaged in combat is the height of excellence."[194]  Rather than glorifying the battle, the art of war taught how to triumph by avoiding battle altogether.

Equally important, strategy also consisted in attacking the enemy's plans, or ideas rather than his troops by physical force.  The best strategist was the one always able to anticipate the course of events and thereby thwart the enemy's plans. In contrast, the worst outcome was to end up in attritional warfare or immobilized warfare, such as a siege.  This is because attritional or immobilized warfare reduces the initiative and loses flexibility.  Accordingly, "Chinese theorists of military strategy advise not the destruction of the enemy," as this would waste resources, but striking at the enemy's "'brain' rather than at deployed forces, the good strategist inhibited his enemy; it was enough for him to deprive the enemy of his ability to react," and to paralyze the movements of the enemy.[195]  This is also why the general who "dexterously handles his troops…subjugates the enemy without combat and takes his positions without attack."[196]

The logic of this makes sense from a military standpoint as it promises victory with as little cost as possible.  But seen from an evolutionary point of view,

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[193] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 52.
[194] Sun Tzu quoted in Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 35.
[195] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 36.
[196] Sun Tzu, "Mou gong pian" *The Art of War*.  Also see, Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 36.

the logic also makes sense, as quick victory minimizes casualties when the combatants are part of a larger Chinese family.  Killing other Chinese is something to be minimized, just as siblings and cousins are far less likely to engage in bloodshed than individuals who are not related.

For Jullien, two pairs of concepts are centrally important to this discussion. The first of these is the distinction between the "direct" versus the "oblique" and the second is the difference between the "straight" versus the "circuitous."  The first distinction has a strategic function, whereas the second is more limited to discussions of tactical operations.  "But whatever the application, the resource exploited by Chinese military art always rests on the relationship of direct and indirect."[197]  As Sun Tzu notes, when maneuvering troops, it might be just as advisable to make the enemy's advances excessively long and tortuous, so as to exhaust him, by luring him with false bait as to make one's own progress circuitous and keep one's plans secret in order to surprise the enemy.[198]

Sun Tzu captures the difference between direct and oblique in *The Art of War*:  "an encounter takes place frontally, while victory is gained obliquely."[199] Jullien submits that, according to commentators on this difference, "frontally" signifies not only facing the enemy but doing so in a normal, ordinary, predictable way.  Likewise, "obliquely" means not only approaching from the side but doing so in an extraordinary way:  unexpected by the enemy, attacking him when he is least

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[197] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 36.
[198] Sun Tzu, "Jun zheng pian" and "Jiu di pian," *The Art of War*.
[199] Sun Tzu, "Shi pian," in *The Art of War*.

prepared.[200]  Confederate General "Stonewall" Jackson's Second Corps flanking attack on General Hooker's Union force at the battle of Chancellorsville in 1863 would be a classic example of this.  Another excellent example would be the surprise intervention in the Korean War in October and November 1950.

The distinction between the frontal and the oblique has been considered by other Chinese authors, and more concretely, may be applied to military operations: positioning one's own forces in response to the enemy's position would represent a frontal relationship.  In contrast, dominating the adversary's troops' position without taking it would represent an oblique relationship.  In other words, without positioning, I control the positioning of the enemy.  In a frontal relationship, there is a target.  In an oblique relationship, what has not yet occurred or taken concrete form means that there cannot be opposition.  The oblique relationship makes it possible to keep the initiative while remaining un-attackable.  The oblique relationship upsets the enemy's plans.  This is why it is a superior form of warfare.

The essence of this is:  "When the oblique relationship is in effect, not to respond [in kind] makes a victory possible."[201]  The Chinese place considerable importance on not responding, and not responding in an expected manner, in their strategic thought.  As a Tang emperor explained, the art of war "consists in creating a frontal relationship from an oblique relationship in such a way that the enemy, seeing it as a frontal relationship, allows me to surprise him obliquely and likewise

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[200] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, pp. 36-37.
[201] "Qizheng" in Sun Bin, *The Art of Warfare*, quoted in Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 38.

creating an oblique relationship from a frontal relationship in such a way that the enemy, seeing it as an oblique relationship, allows me to attack him frontally."[202]

This reasoning does seem to be a bit puzzling or confusing, but in actuality, the core ideas and similar military principles are present in Western thought. Concealing motives and surprising the enemy in a tactical or strategic manner are familiar to Western military audiences, as is the anticipation of the enemy's response to any action taken.

However, there are important differences as well. Western ideas about friction, mass, and concentration of force are absent. The Western archetype of warfare may be the Greek phalanx, an expertly trained, tight formation, maximizing firepower and seeking decisive battle. That essential idea has found many forms over the ages, including columns of infantry in the Napoleonic period or armor advances in the modern. As Jullien notes, "Greek military strategy offers a sharp contrast with Chinese military strategy: the Greeks would have resolutely ignored the infinite expedients of oblique confrontation, relying instead on the violent clash of a victorious or fatal encounter. On the one side, we have mass weight, on the others, the strategy of detour: physical pressure" favored by Westerners since the Greeks "is opposed to art of thwarting" the opponent as mastered by the Chinese.[203]

From the Chinese perspective, what is different is the belief that the strategist can shape or craft the situation, lulling the opponent, dodging and harassing to tire out an enemy, using circuitousness to dilute the rapidity and

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[202] The Tang emperor Tai Zong in "Shi pian" in Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*; quoted in Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 38.
[203] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 42.

decisiveness of a single assault, and, perhaps most importantly, having him make the first, and thus mistaken, move. The origins of this belief, in part, come from the fact that for most of Chinese history and for most of Chinese conflicts, the opponent has also been Chinese. Certainly this was the case when the main Chinese texts were written. Developing one's own strategy and thinking through the opponent's was a little bit like looking in the mirror. The enemy is of the same Chinese "family," and is of a similar strategic culture, outlook, even training. Military doctrine will be similar and objectives known, and leaders will have been equally well schooled in the classic Chinese strategic texts. Thus, the clever opponent, the one more successful at disguising motive, and the one who is more artful in the use of oblique strategies will be the victor.

This argument coincides with Jullien, as he writes, the frontal/oblique strategic dyad, "formulated quasi-definitively in the fifth and sixth centuries of Chinese antiquity, has ceaselessly been reformulated and commented on, to the point that it has become proverbial and seems no longer require justification."[204] But its importance remains relevant in modern China. "In the twentieth century, Mao referred to it once again in his military treatises (which remain, in my [Jullien's] opinion, the best part of his oeuvre and greatly illuminate his political conduct): to conquer the enemy, one must first disorient him, 'make noise in the east to attack in

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[204] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 40.

the west.'"[205]  For Jullien, the "whole of Chinese military strategy can be summed up in this oblique phrase."[206]

The strategy of indirection or oblique approach also applies to Chinese diplomacy.  The use of literary references or poetry may seem unusual in the West, but is a common feature in the Chinese practice of diplomacy.  Jullien discusses the tradition of Chinese diplomats conducting discussions and negotiations not through direct discourse, but an exchange of poetic quotations that test one's literary merit and subtle grasp of the matter at hand.  While accounts of these exchanges appear dry and ceremonial, they could have tremendous consequences, as the quietest turn of phrase could irrevocably alter state policy.  The actual or hidden meaning of the poems themselves is insignificant; they exist as a stalking horse for their allusions.[207]

This indirection is also a common theme in ancient Chinese strategic writing and prose, in which praise and blame is very quietly conveyed by the selective use and exclusion of facts, some of which appear innocuous by themselves but have great contextual value, such as the way a person's name is used, word order and use of certain adjectives.  Connected with this is the use of euphemism, in which even an enemy must be treated with verbal respect.  The most glaring example of this is the violent death of a sovereign, which constitutes such a shock against the social order (particularly Confucian filial piety) that it can barely be acknowledged.  Indirect discourse, in which poetic imagery evokes particular ideas without having to state

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[205] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 40.
[206] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 40.
[207] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, pp. 75-93.

them directly, is a common aspect of Chinese strategic thought and culture. Examples of poetry about nature are actually often loaded with political messages.[208]

Indirection also applies to Chinese philosophy. Confucian writings use indirect speech. For Confucius, the value of speech comes from the influence it exerts, through its force of impact, rather than through what is said.[209] Because of this German philosopher G.W. Hegel expressed his deep disappointment with Confucius' writings, stating that they did not live up to his grand reputation. Jullien sees this as fitting, since the "scope" of his words matter more than the words themselves, and he does not have the same focus on rhetoric that early Greek philosophers have. Some have attributed this to Confucius possibly being ironic, but Jullien ascribes it to the laconic and indirect tendencies of Chinese philosophy.

Confucius, unlike Western philosophers since the time of Socrates to John Rawls, does not speak of definitions or essential truths.[210] Part of the explanation is context, as immediate context shapes every answer Confucius gives; there is no fixed moral solution to a problem that applies to every individual. But it is also the case that one should not expect Confucius to be an analytical philosopher, with clearly defined definitions and precise arguments. Because the universe does not explain itself through words, he is skeptical that he can explain his philosophy verbally, since it is not a moral code outside and apart from the natural world, but a human extension of natural processes, which are better performed than explained.

[208] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, pp. 151-160.
[209] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 203.
[210] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 226.

In their writing, both Confucius and Mencius return to the ever-present image of water flowing, but not as a metaphor for conflict, as considered below. For them, water is a natural and eternal process that bends to every obstacle and change in circumstance. Mencius refused to engage in direct discourse, which implies his rejection of absolute truth. By always giving indirect and elusive answers, he fits the precise meaning of the particular question, without allowing his answer to extend into statements of truth beyond the immediate situation.[211]

The right understanding of the oblique strategy in Chinese strategic thought allows us to understand Deng Xiaoping's 24-character instruction to Chinese officials as an archetype: "Observe carefully; secure our position; cope with affairs; hide our capabilities and bide our time; be good at maintaining a low profile; and never claim leadership."[212] The strategic objective of dominance is firm and unalterable but packaged in such a manner to provoke the least resistance or effective counter-balancing coalition.

IV. C. 6. The Logic of Manipulation

Sixth is the logic of manipulation as developed by the Chinese strategic thought. Manipulation, and its components are centrally important to understand: "There can be no doubt that manipulation is a matter of dissembling and secrecy."[213] Manipulation is of paramount importance in Chinese strategic thought. It is the primary means by which the general overcomes the limitations imposed by material

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[211] Jullien, *Detour and Access*, p. 264.
[212] Deng's 24-character instruction is quoted in Kissinger, *On China*, p. 438.
[213] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 142.

conditions, the way to conform an enemy's will to one's own. "To manipulate your enemy to get him, 'of his own accord,' eagerly so as to have him do exactly what you want him to do, foreseeing that it will do harm to him, while he believes it will be to his advantage."[214]

Jullien also makes an important contrast with the attitude of the West, "We in Europe have often tended to psychologize the familiar figures of cunning and cleverness…on the Chinese side they are, on the contrary, considered to conceal an art that consists in conducting reality so gradually that one never has to clash head-on with it at all."[215]  When this is applied to military science, the outcome is significant.  The general who can properly manipulate others fulfills the Chinese proposal that victory is always attainable, a boast no Western thinker dares to make. This is again connected with the invisible-the general who shows his true face first will usually lose because he has been exposed by a better manipulator.

This also has political ramifications, as the best ruler manipulates his subjects, without their knowledge, and considers his subjects as objects.  "The enlightened sovereign, alone with his secret, treats all his subordinates as pure automatons, not as people…but as objects."[216]

IV. C. 7. Western Persuasion versus Chinese Manipulation

The seventh contribution addresses the distinction between Western rhetoric and Chinese manipulation.  In China, there is no tradition of persuasive speech, but

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[214] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 138.
[215] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 149.
[216] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 150.

rather manipulation—tricking a listener into trusting the speaker—and thereby bending him toward the desired end.  Again, the appearance of inaction and naturalness takes precedence over mighty efforts of speech.  Jullien suggests why the West and China have such traditions; in Greece, democracy required speakers that appealed to the collective desires of the people, while in China, political speech is confined to the autocrat, who is by virtue of his position suspicious of all others.  Therefore, the appearance of conformity with the listener is more soothing and effective than a strong exertion of persuasive effort.  But for the Chinese, the object is simple, "You conform with the other but purely in order to dominate him."[217]

IV. C. 8. Water as a Metaphor for Conflict

The eighth contribution is the widespread use of water as a metaphor for conflict.  Chinese military treatises are replete with the image of the army as water, and Jullien explores this omnipresent metaphor.   Water "is not fixed in any definite aspect, never immobilized in any particular place.  It is the least thing like of all things-the most alive, the most alert...it points to the inexhaustible fund of immanence."[218]  Its absolute flexibility makes it stronger than a rock, it conforms absolutely to its surroundings and refuses a fixed shape.

It begins upstream and accumulates power in a steady flow downward that appears infinite to the human observer.  "In combat, troops are used by the victor like accumulated water for which one opens up a breach in the precipice....true

217 Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 162.
218 Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 170.

strength is definitely characterized by the fact that it is not forced."[219]  There is no

definitive form to an army, or war itself, and so Chinese military texts do not

construct a form, but instead detail logical responses to particular situations and

thus one adapts to a situation just as water does to its surroundings.  "In short,

nothing is tangible, so there is nothing to provide the enemy with the chance and

support of an opportunity that would at last allow him to find his feet and make a

stand.  He will be defeated without having ever joined battle."[220]

IV. C. 9. Western Exertion versus Chinese Potential

Ninth, Jullien sharply contrasts the Western notion of will and exertion with the

Chinese emphasis on potential, where yin and yang are constantly driving the

contrary forces of the world and the wise man directs their course with minimal

effort.  He then goes on to contrast the Western praise of difficulty with the Chinese

praise of ease or facility.  He writes, "A clever man manages things and situations

with facility, whereas a man who is not clever manages with difficulty."[221]  Whereas

Machiavelli and epic heroes insist that great deeds are won by valor and great effort,

the Chinese believe that great deeds, especially great battles, are more praiseworthy

the more easily they are achieved.  "The good general wins where and when it is

easy and attacks only that which can be vanquished."[222]  Jullien also offers a critique

of Chinese thought, particularly its denial of individual effort and heroic exertion.

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[219] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 170.
[220] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 175.
[221] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 193.
[222] Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, p. 195.

IV. C. 10. The Concept of *Shi* (*Shih*)

Jullien emphasizes that the concept of *shi* (*shih*, pronounced "sure") is centrally important to understanding Chinese strategic thought.  It is strategic advantage as we in the West would understand it, but it is also more than our understanding of strategic advantage, with the emphasis on the potential of a situation.

This introduction to *shi* restates some of the basic tenets explained in Jullien's other work:  Chinese strategy seeks to avoid direct confrontation, and determines the value of a situation from its potentiality, rather than simply an opportunity to exploit.  This is ever at the mercy of circumstances, and so there are no fixed moral questions.  *Shi*, broadly defined as energy or spirit, is a resource of infinite utility renewability, and is never wasted in a pitched battle that risks everything.  *Shi* allows for no risk, as everything is predetermined before the confrontation.  The Chinese will take action that is in accord with the propensity of trends at any given moment.  As the trend is going, so too does Chinese strategy.  This is both passive, following the trend, but also active, identifying what possibilities exist in a given condition.

Jullien argues that *shi* is well represented by the flow of water.  If a wall retaining a large amount of water is breached, the water can only flow in one direction, and in its surge, it carries everything in front of it.

In the realm of strategy, "disposition" or the "propensity of things," is related to the configuration of the land.  A general must make the most of the character of the land, low-lying or elevated, accessible or not, but equally important is the moral disposition of the antagonists, whether they are enthusiastic or dispirited.  If the

general is correct in his application, the enemy will not be in a position to resist, and numerical advantage will give way to the superior application of *shi*.[223]

Properly understanding *shi* is like appreciating the mix of structural conditions and intentional policies in international politics.  The structure is the bipolarity of the Cold War or the hegemony of the United States at the present time.  That equates to the trend.  Within bipolarity or U.S. hegemony, states craft policies to permit them greater freedom of movement, such as France's "Third Way" in the context of the Cold War, or by developing policies to undermine U.S. hegemony now.  That is, for Jullien, identifying what possibilities exist in a given condition.  Trend and response are interconnected, but response, rightfully understood, allows the state to operate while developing policies that will lead to the fall of the hegemon.  It also suggests which of policies will be most effective:  for example, ones that are not noticed, dismissed, or do not provoke any reaction until the propensity of things is ripe for change will be effective.

The origin of this belief according to Jullien is found at the end of the Warring States period in 220 B.C., which marks the foundation of the modern Chinese state.  Legalists most forcefully advanced the importance of *shi*.  China's first Emperor, Qin Shi Huangdi, the founder of the Qin dynasty, used these classic precepts to consolidate his kingdom and conquer others, which is one of the reasons he is still venerated in China.  Emperor Qin used these teachings in his political and military affairs against his own people as well as in his foreign relations against other Chinese states.  The methods were the same, great emphasis on cooption through

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[223] Jullien, *The Propensity of Things*, p. 28.

bribery, targeting the psychology of rival leaders to defeat them before a direct confrontation in battle occurred.

As one would expect for such an important concept, *shi* also has an impact in the realm of art.  Chinese art rejects Western mimesis for a process of actualization, crafted by highly subtle allusions and a careful balance between what is portrayed and what remains silent or not visualized.  *Shi* gives artwork, whether a painting or book, its aesthetic resonance, and animates it beyond what appears on the page or canvas.  Continuing the discussion of art, the Chinese conception of nature rejects divisions between cause and effect, or composition of different elements that characterize Western thinking.  There is a complete totality in nature, even mountains, forests and rivers must be considered one complete picture rather than an amalgamation of separate pieces.  *Shi* animates the energy of this arrangement, which is rendered even more powerful by the use of distance and varying perspective.  "It is crucial to achieve *shi* because the reality of things only exists-and thus only manifests itself-in a totality, through the force of propensity that links its various elements as a whole."[224]

*Shi* connects to the omnipresent image of the dragon of Chinese culture.  The dragon is such an important symbol because it never exerts its potential and dynamism; it can be anywhere, do practically anything, its form is almost infinitely elastic and it is always moving.  The image of two dragons intertwined similarly suggests collaboration and not conflict.  It is, like *shi*, an infinite source of energy and strength that is both material and spiritual.

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[224] Jullien, *The Propensity of Things*, p. 99.

Like a work of art, *shi* underlies historical circumstances and gives them efficacy. Different circumstances always require different responses, so one must be careful with their respect for the past. History is mainly composed of gradually developing tendencies, which also have an opposite effect: if one state is rising, another must be declining. The wise statesman thus waits for such tendencies to reach their ripeness, but cannot personally take credit for their development. Also, while China has a tendency to view itself in isolation, it is also aware of how its relative fortunes compare to those of "barbarian states."[225]

## V. The Implications of *Shi* for United States Decision-Makers

In this subsection, I discuss the implications of the correct understanding of *shi* for United States decision-makers. I make three major arguments. First, understanding *shi* allows observers to understand why the Chinese place great weight on intelligence gathering and one of the fundamental strategic goals of intelligence operations—being able to identify and shape events before they become sources of confrontation or contention. That way the adversary can do nothing about the situation when he is confronted with it. Not only will the battle be won before it is fought, if the Chinese have done their homework, there will not be a

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[225] Sinologist Arthur Waldron echoes Jullien's interpretation of *shi.* He submits that *shi* means the configuration and the tendency of all factors (terrain, weather, forces, morale) that bear on victory. It does not mean "military power" as Johnston translates it; nor "energy" as Griffith does. Closer to the true meaning is "purchase, advantage" or "propensity" as Francois Jullien does. Waldron, "The Art of *Shi*," p. 39. Henry Kissinger notes that *shi* character combines the elements of "cultivate" and "strength." Kissinger, *On China* (New York: Penguin Books, 2011), p. 533n37. Kissinger argues that *shi* is "strategic position," and elsewhere in his work as "understanding matters in flux," *On China*, pp. 31, 235.

battle in the first place.  The Chinese seek to win without confrontation.  They rather

seek to win by placing the opponent in such a position that he withdraws or retreats

of his own accord.

Second, *shi* provides the Chinese with both a grounding for their policies and

a flexibility for them.  One core interest exists and it is one that does not permit

flexibility in intent:  to advance China's fundamental interest of dominance.  Once we

move beyond China's core interest, we understand that everything else is flexible.

The Chinese will change their policies as events develop.  The implication of this is

that China's policies will be hard to predict, and may border on what seems to be

impulsive, such as the dramatic intervention in the Korean War.

Third, *shi* allows us to understand how the Chinese will work to undermine

their adversaries in the expectation that they will be able to defeat their adversaries

without direct confrontation but rather to bring about their collapse from present

conditions.  Importantly, however, if conflict does occur, the Chinese will seek to

defeat their adversaries at the beginning of conflict with asymmetric strategies and

with surprise attacks.   As Henry Kissinger writes:

> the strategist mastering *shi* is akin to water flowing downhill, automatically
> finding the right swiftest and easiest course.  A successful commander waits
> before charging headlong into battle.  He shies away from an enemy's
> strength; he spends his time observing and cultivating changes in the
> strategic landscape.  He studies the enemy's preparations and his morale,
> husbands resources and defines them carefully, and plays on his opponent's
> psychological weaknesses—until at last he perceives the opportune moment
> to strike the enemy at the weakest point.  He then deploys his resources
> swiftly and suddenly, rushing "downhill" along the path of least resistance, in

an assertion of superiority that careful timing and preparation have rendered a fait accompli.[226]

Discerning *shi* properly allows U.S. policymakers to grasp why the Chinese will place great emphasis on a bold, strategically clever attack.  For the Chinese, *shi* in this context may be thought of as a "stratagem" intended to be a masterstroke, not just solid but brilliant.  It should be thought of as a strategy of strategic cleverness.[227]  The Chinese know that events will spoil surprise, but it did succeed against the U.S. in 1950, South Vietnam in 1974, Hanoi in 1988, and the Philippines in 1995, shortly after the United States left Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay.  In the Chinese tradition, the greatest hero is Zhuge Liang, of the Three Kingdoms, a leader best known for his ingenious and deceptive stratagems.  Chinese science and technology have advanced, emboldening the already powerful cultural conviction that China can get much more with less because it is cleverer and better than its adversaries, not only intellectually, but also materially.

The use of missile diplomacy against Taiwan in 1995 and 1996 captures this. The purpose was not to invade Taiwan but to demoralize and humiliate Taiwan, to create chaos, *luan*, on the island.  With economic disaster, Taiwan would have no choice but to make major concessions.[228]

In its military operations, China will seek to combine local superiority with diplomatic advantage and operational surprise.  China will seek to use force decisively, taking maximum advantage of its relative superiorities to create new

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[226] Kissinger, *On China*, p. 30.
[227] Waldron, "The Art of *Shi*," p. 39.
[228] Waldron, "The Art of *Shi*," p. 39.

realities.  The Chinese will ruthlessly exploit the openness of democratic societies. The expectation will be that, faced with a rapid, decisive, and quickly terminated operation, the United States and its allies will not be able to do anything and will accept the new status quo.

Such a conception is extremely dangerous, and many conflicts in history have been based on such profoundly misguided beliefs, as with the Japanese decision to attack Great Britain, the Netherlands, and the United States in December 1941.  The likelihood that the Chinese are guided along a similar path by their strategic worldview is high.

V. A. The Importance of Espionage

Discerning *shi* properly also allows U.S. policymakers to comprehend why the Chinese will place such considerable emphasis on knowing the situation and the situation's potential.  This is one reason the Chinese place such importance on intelligence gathering, as well as denying intelligence about themselves to the rest of the world.  This is for two major causes.  First, so that they will have as complete a comprehension as possible about a situation.  This would be true of any state, as more knowledge is almost always preferred, as well as denying knowledge about themselves to the rest of the world.  The object of such concealment is to have an asymmetric advantage in knowledge over rivals.  But also, and more importantly since this is unique to Chinese thought, the Chinese hope to be able to develop policies "far upstream," as a river starts with a trickle of water.  As difficult as this is

to do, the Chinese want to shape conditions which will lead to their objectives far in advance, so that events unfold as they anticipate.

V. B. Strategic Flexibility

Understanding *shi* allows U.S. decision-makers to understand that Chinese grand strategy is wedded to any policies or positions, but is strategically flexible. It seeks to understand the propensity of things, the trends in which events are moving and to adjust accordingly. Chinese interest is not the way the United States conceives of interests, as with its extended deterrence commitments. The Western conception is that interests should be declared and transparent so that deterrence can obtain. The Chinese approach is dissimilar. Interests are defined in any given situation. What was important yesterday, may not be today as events progress, and so may be abandoned.

The implication of this is "mirror imaging," used in many approaches to the study of strategy and international politics, that is, imagining what any rational individual would do in similar circumstances is less certain to work with the Chinese. Nuclear strategist Thomas Schelling captured the essence of mirror imaging, which is so important for rational deterrence theory, among other schools of thought, when he wrote: "you can sit in your armchair and try to predict how people will behave by asking how you would behave if you had your wits about you. You get, free of charge, a lot of vicarious, empirical behavior."[229] No doubt that is

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[229] Thomas Schelling quoted in Kathleen Archibald, ed., *Strategic Interaction and Conflict: Original Papers and Discussion* (Berkeley, Calif.: Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1966), p. 150.

true in many circumstances in life as well as international politics, for example, perhaps it is possible to mirror image in the relations of most states, or in some deterrent relationships. But it is far less certain to reveal Chinese behavior than Schelling, or other advocates of mirror imaging approaches would expect. The fundamental reason why this is so is because of the Chinese belief in changed circumstances or propensity requiring altered policies.

For China, beyond core interests like achieving dominance, other interests will be flexible and subject to change. China's allies or those who seek to make China a partner will never be able to reliably and consistently and with certainty, expect China to behave as its allies and partners expect. Thus, although economic and commercial interests are significant, China will never be a "responsible stakeholder," or behave with the predictability that its partners expect. This makes Chinese policies hard to predict. It also provides China with great flexibility in their strategic direction, and a willingness to make dramatic changes to their policies. This tendency might be made worse by the fact that the Chinese do not place the same emphasis on Clausewitzian friction as do Western militaries and strategists.


V. C. The Importance of the "Clever Strategy," Surprise Attack, and No Recognition of Clausewitzian "Friction"

Waldron advances another key insight. The Chinese, like the Japanese, think that their own brilliant stratagem will work, unlike anyone else's. They have not incorporated Clausewitz's concept of "friction" affecting every plan. That is a key danger. As Waldron writes: "the Chinese do put great stock in their ability to get

more with less, and they do aspire to play the diplomatic and military game with a skill that will assure maximum winnings at minimal cost. The problem is that China's reach regularly exceeds its grasp."[230]

Christopher Ford echoes Waldron's point concerning the absence of Clausewitz's conception of friction and the dangerous implications of this. He submits that a central tenet of Chinese strategic thought is that the Chinese are more clever than the rest of the world. China believes they should be able to outwit the barbarian, especially by using his own technology against him.[231]

Chinese love affair with clever strategies to take advantage of *shi* may be a key source of danger and instability in Beijing's relationship with the rest of the world. Lacking any traditional appreciation for Clausewitzian "friction" in warfare and therefore inordinately attracted to the idea that a brilliant stratagem will work in practice as on paper, China could miscalculate and overreach, striking out too soon or in a way that goes badly wrong.[232]

V. D. To Win Without Fighting

The Chinese will use asymmetric approaches to win without confrontation or fighting. The adversary will recognize that he is unable to defeat the Chinese, and so accept the Chinese victory. If confrontation is necessary, the adversary will be taken by surprise. When we consider when China uses force, we see that there is

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[230] Waldron, "Art of *Shi*," p. 39.
[231] Ford, *The Mind of Empire*, p. 272.
[232] Ford, *The Mind of Empire*, p. 272.

prodigious evidence to support the contention that *shi* is a key concept for explaining when and how China uses force.

The evidence is substantial in China's modern history since the victory of the Communists. In the realm of major events for China's foreign policy, we see China taking advantage of opportunities and constantly revising their goals. This is true from the outset of the PRC. Soviet support in the Chinese Civil War did not preclude Mao from negotiating with the British and the United States, before going to war with them in Korea. Favorable utterances toward Nehru did not preclude China from attacking Tibet, then courting Nehru at the Bandung Conference in 1955, and then shifting again to attack India during their border war of 1962. Assistance for China's nuclear weapons program did not prevent the Sino-Soviet split. Although the correlation of forces was against China, they were not deterred from attacking Zhenbao Island in 1969. Intense hostility toward the United States during the Taiwan Straits Crises and over the Vietnam War did not prevent China from a rapprochement with the United States in 1972, the normalization of relations, and cooperation in intelligence and foreign policies directed against the Soviet Union in the 1970s and 1980s, before becoming increasingly hostile to the interests of the United States in the 1990s.

A realist might argue that such state behavior is normal international politics, and that it was American or Soviet capabilities or the American or Soviet threat, respectively, that caused the changes in Chinese polices during this period, and that the actions of China, therefore, might be better explained through realism. There is much to that argument, but it is important to keep in mind that self-interest and

classic balance of power reasoning are not incompatible with the Chinese

application of *shi*.  Also in accord with realism, *shi* is the understanding that policies

may change abruptly, as new opportunities arise and interests change.

V. E. The Frequent Use of Force by China

Sinologist Alastair Iain Johnston has carefully documented the circumstances in

which China uses force.[233]  He submits that when the data are reviewed, China often

uses threats and force against its neighbors.  He rejects two common arguments.

The first of these is that the Chinese will use only minimal violence due to purported

roots in Confucian-Mencian emphasis on a leader's cultivation of virtue and good

government as the foundation for security and prosperity of the state.  When the use

of force becomes "unavoidable," according to this school of thought, the Chinese

prefer to wage defensive, limited aims campaigns.

Second, the Chinese are purported to have a preference for limited wars,

military action constrained by well-defined goals and spatial and temporal

constraints.[234]  According to adherents, the classic examples of this type of warfare

are the 1962 invasion of India and the 1979 invasion of Vietnam.  Again, according

to adherents, China has been relatively successful in using limited force, in

conjunction with diplomacy, in pursuing clearly defined, limited political aims.

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[233] Alastair Iain Johnston, "China's Militarized Interstate Dispute Behaviour 1949-1992:  A First-Cut at the Data," *The China Quarterly*, No. 153 (March 1998), pp. 1-30.
[234] Allen Whiting is the most significant scholar advancing this argument.  See Allen S. Whiting, *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence* (Ann Arbor:  University of Michigan Press, 1975).

These are curious arguments that treat China as a unique state in international politics.  As Johnston argues, they contain intensely ethno-racialist stereotyping of the Chinese approach to conflict.[235]  Nonetheless, many Chinese analysts treat these arguments as a mantra.  The core beliefs are, first, that the Chinese people are a uniquely peace-loving people; second, that China has rarely invaded other states, except when China was ruled by ethnically non-Chinese, such as the Mongol Yuan dynasty or the Manchu Qing dynasty; third, that China has never occupied "one inch" of another state's territory; fourth, that the PRC has never invaded another state, except to "teach it a lesson" as part of a just counterattack against prior aggression; and, fifth, that China prefers to use political means rather than military means to resolve disputes.

However, scholarly research undermines both of these schools of thought.  As Table 5 demonstrates, the Chinese use force and threats of force often in international politics, in the period considered, 1949-1992, when the data end for the study referenced.  The examination of the data reveals that China has often used force in international politics.

Since the 1990s, a greater number of primary research materials have been available, and these cast considerable doubt on the idealized view of Chinese aggression advanced by the Chinese.[236]  Using the criterion of Militarized Interstate

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[235] Johnston, "China's Militarized Interstate Dispute Behaviour 1949-1992," p. 8, n23.
[236] This new wave of scholarship started with Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries:  Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization and Sino-American Conflict 1947-1958* (Princeton:  Princeton University Press, 1996); and Chen Jian, *China's Road to the Korean War* (New York:  Columbia University Press, 1994).

Disputes (MID, defined as cases in which the threat, display or use of military forces short of war by one state is directed towards the government, official forces, property, or territory of another) data gathered by the University of Michigan's Correlates of War project, a widely respected and commonly used scholarly endeavor, Johnston demonstrates just how aggressive the Chinese are.

Johnston finds that China has been involved in an average of 2.74 new MIDs per year since the creation of the People's Republic.[237] This ranks the PRC as the second-most dispute prone great power behind the United States at 3.93, among the great powers. India ranks fourth behind the U.S., China, UK, at 1.87, and France is last at .94. If the length of study is elongated to include dispute proneness since the creation of the state, the PRC ranks second again, 2.74 for the period 1949-1992, but this time behind the Soviet Union at 3.22 for the period 1918-1992. India ranks third at 1.87 for the period 1947-1992.

When the data are considered by decade, China was the most dispute prone great power in the 1950s, and falls second in the remaining decades, behind the United States. China was involved in most of its MIDs (1969-1973) prior to the end of the Cultural Revolution, which lasted from 1966-1976. Johnston hypotheses that China is a status inconsistent state and, as such, believes that the reason for the lack of "respect" accorded to the Chinese is a result of their insufficient material power and their insufficient willingness to demonstrate this power. According to Johnston, it is known that Mao accepted the correlation between power and status, "in Maoist China status inconsistency was a major issue in the Sino-Soviet dispute. By the late

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[237] Johnston, "China's Militarized Interstate Dispute Behaviour 1949-1992," p. 9.

1950s, Mao was utterly disillusioned with the perceived lack of respect that China's interests were being accorded in Moscow."[238]  Based on the evidence, Johnston concludes that China was more dispute-prone than other great powers, except the United States; and, second, China tended to resort to higher levels of violence in disputes than did other major powers—once in a militarized dispute China will tend to escalate to a relatively high level of violence.[239]

In his major book on the topic of what motivates China to act as it does in international politics, Johnston argues that China has a strategic culture, and it is realism, a hard *Realpolitik* outlook on how international politics operates and what is necessary for a state to advance its interests.[240]  Johnston's examination of Chinese military behavior demonstrates that China has become more aggressive as its military power has grown, just as realists expect.  In a crisis, China has tended to act in a more conflictual manner as it grew stronger, which is, again, completely in accord with realist thought.

Johnston argues that there is a substantively consistent Chinese strategic culture.  Chinese strategic culture is defined by its offensive nature and expansionism despite its often weak military capability, what he calls a parabellum strategic culture.  Parabellum strategic culture is similar to *Realpolitik*, and argues the best way to deal with threats is through the use of force.

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[238] Johnston, "China's Militarized Interstate Dispute Behaviour 1949-1992," p. 26.
[239] Johnston, "China's Militarized Interstate Dispute Behaviour 1949-1992," p. 28.
[240] Alistair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995).

Throughout Chinese history, there has been tension between the parabellum strategic culture and the Confucian-Mencian paradigm. Johnston notes that when the Chinese speak of power or the use of power, they almost always do so from the Confucian-Mencian paradigm. This model emphasizes strategy, places importance on deception and manipulation of the opponent, leaves a significant role for accommodation, and employs diversified instruments of power. Brute force is not the most highly esteemed instrument of power in this genre of thinking. If force must be used, it should be defensive, static, and punitive.

After Johnston's analysis of *The Seven Military Classics* and an empirical test of his argument in the Ming period, he advances the argument that China's strategic culture is parabellum strategic culture, not Confucian-Mencian strategic culture.

Chinese rulers were happy to appeal to their supposed strategic culture during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) when it suited them. According to China's self-image, Chinese statecraft was inspired by a Confucian-Mencian skepticism about the utility of force, and was non-expansionist, non-aggressive, and preoccupied with internal order. Chinese rulers who pursued policies of conciliation and compromise often appealed to this supposed tradition, claiming that they were in turn with ancient wisdom. But they happily abandoned this when they saw opportunities to go on the offensive, which Ming rulers did frequently against the Vietnamese, Koreans, Uighers, Mongols, and Tibetans.

To justify a more aggressive posture, they could appeal to an alternative tradition, which is also found in their strategic texts. In this tradition, offensive force was desirable, to be mediated by sensitivity to the enemy's relative

capabilities.  Force could be used when the time was ripe.  Strategic traditions did matter, but often only so far as they accorded with the calculations of elites.  As should be expected, the same country can entertain multiple conflicting or overlapping strategic cultures, with rival interpretations of past experience.  But for Johnston, China is motivated by an aggressive strategic culture.

Johnston's arguments are seconded by the eminent Sinologist at the International Institute of Strategic Studies, Gerald Segal, who examined nine cases of the PRC's use of force between 1949 and 1985.[241]  In his impressive study, Segal argues that there were no obvious patterns to the use of force, unlike Johnston's findings, but like Johnston, he found that China demonstrated strategic and tactical flexibility and the willingness to use any level of force to achieve their objectives.

Also reinforcing Johnston and Segal's evidence on the propensity of China to use force is major Sinologist Arthur Waldron.  He argues that China frequently uses force.  He finds that China resorted to violence in eight out of eleven foreign policy crises up to 1985 (or 72 percent of cases), in contrast to the United States (18 percent), the Soviet Union (27 percent), or Great Britain (12 percent) from 1927 to 1985.[242]  Over the scope of their history, by one account, China was involved in 3,790 internal or external wars from 1,100 B.C. to 1911.[243]

There are many examples of abrupt changes in state policy brought about by changing interests or international conditions.  One of the most famous was Hitler and Stalin's decision to align in 1939.  This was a dramatic change for both states

[241] Gerald Segal, *Defending China* (London:  Oxford University Press, 1985).
[242] Arthur Waldron, "The Art of *Shi*," *The New Republic*, June 23, 1997, p. 38.
[243] Ford, *The Mind of Empire*, p. 235.

that caused domestic consternation in both states.  Equally significant was Roosevelt's decision soon after the launch of Barbarossa to align with the Soviet Union even before the United States entered World War II.  What the understanding of *shi* provides is that the Chinese leadership will be able to make equally abrupt changes, but will be able to do so without expending considerable resources to justify the action, and without major domestic consequences.  This is because the realism of the Chinese incorporates *shi* and with it the understanding that events may have to change dramatically, abruptly, and with little notice.

V. F. The Importance of *Unrestricted Warfare*

When we review the relatively few writings by the Chinese concerning how they are confronting the United States, we see the principles embodied in *shi* at work.  A key example of this is the now infamous study by Col. Liang Qiao and Col. Wang Xiangsui, *Unrestricted Warfare: China's Master Plan to Destroy America*.[244]  This work identifies how China will defeat the U.S. military in combat operations.  The work advocates a multitude of means, traditionally military ones and especially non-military means, to bring about the destruction of the United States.  The essence of the argument is that there are no rules in unrestricted warfare and that every tactic or means is permitted.  The authors pay particular attention to how the weak may defeat the strong.  This principally means conducting asymmetric, or multidimensional attacks on the stronger side's social, economic, and political

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[244] Col. Liang Qiao and Col. Wang Xiangsui, *Unrestricted Warfare: China's Master Plan to Destroy America*, Intro. by Al Santoli, (Panama City, Panama: Pan American Publishing, 2002).

**Table 5.**

**Major Military Actions by the People's Republic of China**

| LOCATION | DATE | USE/THREAT | RESULT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Islands off Chinese Coast | March-Aug. 1950 | Use of Force | Communist victory |
| 2. Tibet (invasion) | Oct. 1950 | Use of Force | Chinese occupation |
| 3. Korean Peninsula | Dec. 1951-53 | Use of Force | Stalemate |
| 4. Nanri Island | April 1952 | Use of Force | Nationalist victory |
| 5. Nanpeng (near Canton) | September 1952 | Use of Force | Communist victory |
| 6. Quemoy/Matsu | 1954-1955 | Threat | Settlement |
| 7. Yijiangshang Islands | Jan. 1955 | Use of Force | Communist victory |
| 8. Tibet (uprising) | 1956-1959 | Use of Force | Communist victory |
| 9. Quemoy/Matsu | 1958 | Threat | Settlement |
| 10. Ladakh | Oct. 1962 | Use of Force | Chinese victory |
| 11. Zhenbao Island | 1969 | Use of Force | Border dispute w/USSR |
| 12. Paracel Islands | Jan. 1974 | Use of Force | Chinese victory over S. Vietnam |
| 13. Vietnam | 1979 | Use of Force | Invasion |
| 14. Vietnam | 1986 | Limited use | Increased tensions |
| 15. Tiananmen Square | June 1989 | Use of Force | Suppression of protest |
| 16. Taiwan | 1995-1996 | Threat | Ceasefire, increased U.S. presence |

institutions.  In other words, it is a war on all azimuths against the enemy.

The authors submit that the United States military is obsessed with advanced technology weapons, and this has led them into a false sense of superiority.  In reality, the United States military is vulnerable.  Warfare is always a "cocktail," a combination of factors occurring simultaneously, not a linear procession as Americans usually conceive of it.  The United States' experience in Somalia and the al Qaeda attacks have demonstrated that America has many vulnerabilities that may be exploited by China.  Perhaps the most important of these is waging information operations to further identify and exploit U.S. vulnerabilities.

The authors identify seven types of warfare.  These are: financial warfare; smuggling warfare; cultural warfare; drug warfare; media and fabrication warfare (i.e., manipulating foreign media to advance your objectives); technological warfare; resource warfare; psychological warfare; network warfare; international law warfare; environmental warfare; economic aid warfare.   The authors advocate using all of these forms in unison—that is, creating their cocktail—to defeat the United States.  A 2009 DoD report by Kevin Freeman, *Economic Warfare:  Risks and Responses*, was reported by Bill Gertz in a March 2011 story as suggesting that the 2008 financial collapse was not a "normal downturn," but a "near collapse" of the United States economy initiated by "outside forces," presumably China, as part of a three-stage attack against the United States economy.[245]

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[245] Bill Gertz, "Financial Terrorism Suspect in '08 Crash," *The Washington Times*, March 1, 2011.  Accessed online at: http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/feb/28/financial-terrorism-suspected-in-08-economic-crash/.

Underpinning the work is an assumption that the United States is not cognizant of how great a threat China poses to its preponderant position in international politics. Most, if not all of these types of warfare, were an aspect of the confrontation with the Soviet Union. What is new at the present time is the lack of awareness of the size, scope, and motivation of the China threat. This is fully in keeping with the main argument of *Unrestricted Warfare* and in Chinese thought, which is to do nothing that will provoke a reaction from your adversary even as China has begun an undeclared Cold War against the United States.

The work and the approach it describes are fully in keeping with *shi*. The conditions are created where the adversary will be defeated because he does not realize that he is at war, ideally ever, but certainly until it is too late for an effective response to be made.

Of course, any argument about novel Chinese elements or aspects of warfare will meet with criticism. After all, human rationality is universal, and should dictate conditions or aspects of warfare. One of the most significant arguments is made by the distinguished military historian John Lynn of the University of Illinois. Lynn submits that there is no continuous Western or Eastern tradition of warfare.[246] Arguments that the Chinese favor indirect approaches are misleading, the Chinese have traditionally not shrunk from battle. He contends that China, in the Warring States period (463-222 B.C.), potentates mobilized and trained large conscript armies, equipped them on a scale comparable to Western states, and fought major

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[246] John A. Lynn, *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture: From Ancient Greece to Modern America* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2003).

battles in direct combat.  At the same time, the Chinese sought to win campaigns by carefully masking their intentions, by artfully maneuvering their forces, and by patiently wearing down foes.

Lynn argues against the idea that the Chinese military fights in a Sun Tzu inspired deceptive and indirect approach.  Sun Tzu may have stressed the value of intelligence and deception, praised the ideal of the bloodless victory, and stressed the economical logic of finding non-military ways to prevail, but so did Niccolò Machiavelli.  Like Sun Tzu in the "Warring States" period, Machiavelli lived in a fragile, multipolar and predatory political environment, of competing city-states, ever-shifting alliances, and meddling foreign powers.  It may be his similar environment that explains why he asserted in his *Discourses on Livy*:  "He who overcomes the enemy by fraud is as much to be praised as he who does so by force."[247]

Also, as this study has emphasized, the Chinese place great emphasis on *shi*, as Jullien and Waldron have identified it, as strategic advantage or strategic position, and the importance of the concept is not recognized by Lynn.

Lynn submits that how the Chinese fight wars is the same as how Westerners do.  Lynn is correct that there are important similarities.  But in his effort to establish the universal aspects of warfare, he neglects key differences between the Chinese and the West.  These differences have already been identified by this study, but deserve to be emphasized in response to Lynn's arguments.  First, the Chinese

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[247] Niccolò Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, trans. by Harvey C. Mansfield and Nathan Tarcov (Chicago:  University of Chicago Press, 1998), Bk.7:XL.

do place greater emphasis in their strategic thought on avoiding direct battle, and relying on espionage and deception. Lynn is right to note that the Chinese have not shrunk from direct battle, and that deception, deceit, and guile are known to Westerners. But the differences are in degree of emphasis in training, planning, and execution of strategy where the Chinese seek to inculcate these aspects of warfare into the students and practitioners of Chinese warfare.

Lynn is right to note important shared ingredients, just as Western cuisine and Chinese cuisine share many of the same ingredients, such as rice, and both share the same objective: to be appetizing. But one would never say that risotto was kung pao. Although both share some of the same ingredients and are appetizing, they are defined by their important differences. So it is with the Chinese art of war and Western concepts of warfare. Any Western strategist that expects the Chinese to act as he would, will be disappointed at critical times.

Second, Lynn is wrong to dismiss *shi* as the morale of the army. The concept has many meanings, as discussed above, but to limit *shi* conceptually to the morale of the army, ignores the important meaning it has for understanding Chinese strategy. Second, it denies analysts the opportunity to generate insights into how the Chinese conceive of strategy and translate strategic direction into plans. Lynn's understanding of *shi* is so limited, it is as if we were to use the term "strategy" to a narrow definition, such as how to maneuver forces within a theater of operations. It would not be wrong to define strategy in that way, but to do so would hinder understanding of how Westerners think of strategy and how they use the term in its many forms.

**Section Two**

**The Implications of China's Choice for Primacy**

This section considers the implications of China's drive to domination. Accordingly, it is based on the previous section and its central argument concerning the evolutionary impulses driving Chinese grand strategy. The central argument of this section is that China has made a choice to become the dominant state in international politics and so it has made a choice for confrontation with the United States. The Chinese have a saying from the *Book of Rites* (*Li Ji*): "Just as there are not two suns in the sky, so there cannot be two emperors on earth."

This topic has been carefully considered by important analysts of Chinese strategic behavior, including Paul Bracken, Bill Gertz, Martin Jacques, Joshua Kurlantzick, and Steven Mosher, and Michael Swaine and Ashley Tellis. After reviewing their salient arguments, this study explains why confrontation with the United States is the probable outcome due to power political and evolutionary considerations.

The strength of the evolutionary approach is to force the recognition that the Chinese will not be dissuaded or appeased from their decision to confront the United States. That is often hard to accept given the complete recognition of what the consequences of this decision will be for the United States, China, their respective allies, and international politics.

While the decision may be identified with precision, the exact policy mix that China will adopt to advance this objective cannot be identified with certainty, but it

is likely to be a tactical combination. That is, the Chinese will consistently adopt an amalgamation of cooperative policies and ones of confrontation, perhaps taking two steps toward their objective, and one step back as events require, or as a mechanism to reassure neighboring states and important communities in the United States that its intentions are benign to minimize the rapidity of any countervailing balancing coalition.

No matter the precise mix of confrontational and cooperative policies, the consequences of China's choice are, at a minimum, intense security competition with the United States. Chinese policies greatly increase the risk of war with the United States or other, regional, powers like India.

I. Bracken

Yale political scientist Paul Bracken has studied China's strategic direction for decades. He explores the military consequences of the decline of the West and the rise of China and India.[248] The rise of these "Pacific Basin" countries is facilitated by "disruptive technologies," ballistic and cruise missiles, and by weapons of mass destruction. These technologies, economic modernization, and changing grand strategic objectives are giving rise to an "Asian Industrial Complex" that has the ability to supply and wage modern warfare, and has resulted in the "Second Nuclear Age," defined by China's and, later, India's acquisition and maturation of strategic forces.

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[248] Paul Bracken, *Fire in the East: The Rise of Asian Military Power and the Second Nuclear Age* (New York: HarperCollins, 1999).

The significance of the work for the present study is Bracken's identification of an Eastern Way of Warfare defined by subtlety and measured action to manipulate an adversary without his knowledge.  The dividing line between war and peace is deliberately obscured, with low-level violence as a backdrop for a larger strategic campaign.  The unwitting adversary, focused on day-to-day events, does not realize what has happened until it is too late.  Indeed, the greatest surprises in American military history have come in Asia:  Pearl Harbor, Chinese intervention in the Korean War, the Tet Offensive.

For Bracken, the Eastern Way of War is embodied by the stealthy archer.  In contrast, the Westerner is a swordsman charging forward, seeking a decisive showdown, eager to administer the blow that will obliterate the enemy.  For the West, war proceeds along a fixed course and occupies a finite extent of time, like a play in three acts with a beginning, middle, and end.  This expectation leads to Western frustration when a Mao or Hu uses indirection and deception.

Finally, Bracken argues that a profound transformation is occurring.  The Eastern Way of Warfare is becoming more direct due to new technologies while the Western Way of Warfare resembles the stealth tactics of Asian warfare, avoiding direct clashes.

II. Gertz

*The Washington Times* senior national security journalist Bill Gertz submits that China targets the United States in an effort to undermine it in order to hasten the

time when China becomes dominant.[249]  In the short term, China is targeting the United States with the most extensive espionage campaign and labors to push U.S. military power and influence out of the Western Pacific.  Gertz documents a variety of Chinese tactics, explicitly noting the tactics of the *Unrestricted Warfare* study to wage war constantly and through new mechanisms like campaign financing, and covert control through economic contacts and corporate ownership of strategic assets or resources.  He identifies the great growth in the PRC's capabilities against Taiwan, and calls for a focus strategy against China to combat its heretofore successful strategy against the United States.

III. Jacques

Martin Jacques' insightful analysis begins with the recognition that according to conservative estimates, by 2027 China will overtake the United States as the world's largest economy and by 2050, will have an economy twice as large as the United States.[250]  Accompanying its economic growth will be matched political, cultural, and military strength.  China will not be like the West, nor will it seek to be.  Rather, it will remake the world in its own image.  One characteristic of the new international politics will be the rebirth of the traditional tributary system and China's sense of superiority.

Western assumptions that the world will remain much the same with China's growth are wrong.  Rising powers invariably use their new-found economic strength

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[249] Bill Gertz, *The China Threat: How the People's Republic Targets America* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 2000).
[250] Martin Jacques, *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order* (New York: Penguin Press, 2009).

for wider political, cultural and military ends.  Having been hegemonic for too long, the West is imprisoned within its own assumptions.  It is inconceivable that China will become a Western-style nation because China is the product of a history and culture, which has almost nothing in common with the West.  Only by discounting the effects of history and culture and reducing the world to economics and technology, is it possible to conclude that China will become Western.

Despite a hundred years of colonization and a half-century of American dominance, it is striking how little East Asia has been Westernized.  There are four major reasons why China is not the West, and never will be.  Each is rooted in Chinese history.  First, China should not be seen as a nation-state.  China has existed within its present borders for about two thousand years, and only in the last century has it begun to consider itself a nation-state.  The Chinese are aware that what defines them is not just a sense of nationhood, but a sense of their 5,000 year-old civilization.  China should not be seen as a nation-state, but a civilization-state.  The implications of this are profound:  it is not possible to regard China as like any other state.

Second, China has a different conception of race than that held by other states.  From the Chinese perspective, a country as vast as China, comprising a fifth of the world's population, the Chinese people, the Han, making up 92 percent of population, are one race.  Racial prejudice is common in China, and racist beliefs are considered normal, not abnormal.  There is no culture of anti-racism in China, unlike the West.  There is also an ideological component to the Chinese attitude towards race:  at the end of the nineteenth century, as the dynastic state came under

increasing pressure from colonial forces, the term "Han Chinese" acquired

popularity as part of a nationalist reaction against both the colonialists as the

Manchu character of the Qing dynasty.  Race shapes and defines how the Chinese

see the non-Chinese, and the Chinese attitude towards difference will be a powerful

factor in determining how China behaves as a global power.

Third, the Chinese have a long history of tributary relationships which

involved neighboring, smaller states acknowledging China's cultural superiority and

its overwhelming power by paying tribute to the Middle Kingdom in return for

benevolence and protection.  Jacques argues that, as Western power wanes, the

interstate system that now prevails will not remain Westphalian.  We should expect

the return of the tributary state system in modern guise.

Fourth, the single most important characteristic of China concerns its unity.

In the aftermath of Tiananmen Square, the West believed that China would fracture

in a manner similar to the Soviet Union.  This was based on a fundamental

misreading of China.  China has acquired a sense of unity over its history that is

unrivaled.  Its unity is a source of great power, and is seen as such by the Chinese.

Homogeneity, not diversity, is strength for China.

Jacques concludes with an analysis of what type of hegemonic power China

will be.  He believes that China will not be particularly aggressive, certainly not as

aggressive as European colonial powers.  Rather than being imperialistic, China will

have a strongly hierarchical view of the world, embodying the belief that it

represents a higher form of civilization than any other.  A combination of hierarchy

and superiority will govern China's attitude toward the rest of the world.  China

does not aspire to run the world because it already believes itself to be the center of the world, its natural role and position.  But this does not mean it will shrink from using force, or that it will be less assertive or less determined to impose its will and leave its imprint.  It will do so in a different way, due to its deeply held belief in its own inherent superiority and the hierarchy of relations that necessarily and naturally flow from this.

IV. Kurlantzick

Joshua Kurlantzick, a journalist for *The Economist* and *The New Republic*, argues that China's soft power and increasingly sophisticated diplomacy will transform international relations to the detriment of the interests of the United States.[251]  This will be accomplished by China using Joseph Nye's definition of soft power: the ability to shape the preferences of others, including leading by example and attracting others to do what you want.  This is executed through various means, including a country's popular and elite culture, its public diplomacy, its businesses' actions abroad, media, and the international perceptions of its government's policies.

 For China, Kurlantzick argues, soft power is much broader than it has been traditionally perceived.  The Chinese see soft power as everything outside of the military and security realm, including popular culture and public diplomacy, but also more coercive economic and diplomatic levers like aid and investment, and participation in multilateral organizations.  This has included as well a considerable

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[251] Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

effort at shaping how the rest of the world sees China. To assist that end the Chinese have created the image of peaceful rise (*heping jueqi*). This image is intended not to be threatening, China's rise will not come at a cost to any country, but at the same time call attention to the prodigious growth of China and its corresponding influence. China seeks to portray itself as benign, peaceful, and a constructive actor in international politics.

Kurlantzick submits that is an illusion, but it is a remarkably effective one. He sees China's message as being extraordinarily successful in Africa, Asia, and Latin America due to its economic strength, noninterventionist policies, and soft power. It is also the result of the absence of high-ranking American officials, who, Kurlantzick submits, remain too focused on the Middle East and terrorism, creating a void in the rest of the world that the Chinese are only too willing to fill. In addition, around the world, China has launched several measures to increase the teaching of Chinese, through Confucius Institutes and through bilateral agreements with countries like Thailand to integrate instruction in Mandarin in primary schools. China relies on its businesses and foreign investment strategies to export China's benign image and attractiveness.

To combat China's soft power, Kurlantzick argues the United States needs to better understand how China exerts its influence, and focus on combating it directly. Also, Washington should work on rebuilding its soft power.

<u>V. Mosher</u>

Sinologist Steven Mosher argues that the role of hegemon is a key aspect of Chinese philosophy and statecraft. [252] The idea and practice of hegemony are natural to the Chinese. The Chinese concept of hegemony begins with the *Ba* (hegemon or hegemonic order). This political order was invented by Chinese strategists 2,800 years ago. Under the *Ba* (hegemonic order), as it evolved over the next six centuries, included the total control of a states' population and resources, which were to be concentrated in the hands of the state's hegemon, or *Bawang* (hegemon-king), who would use it to control all the states in world. Mosher argues that Chinese strategists invented totalitarianism more than two millennia before Lenin introduced it to the West.

Mosher submits that nothing fundamental has changed with respect to China's grand strategy: it is hegemonic. For the Chinese, the existence of a hegemon is a natural, even desirable state of affairs. An essential Chinese belief is that periods of division are times of disorder and chaos, whereas periods of unity are times of stability and order. That unity equates to the hegemony of China.

Mosher sees the Chinese bid for hegemony as moving through three phases. The first is basic hegemony, which includes the recovery of Taiwan and control over the South China Sea. The second is regional hegemony, which is the expansion of the Chinese empire to the same extent as the Qing dynasty at its maximum,

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[252] Steven W. Mosher, *Hegemon: China's Plan to Dominate Asia and the World* (San Francisco: Encounter Books: 2000).

including Mongolia, Myanmar, and Korea.  The last is global hegemony, a worldwide

contest with the United States to replace the *Pax Americana* with the *Pax Sinica*.

As is true of other analyses considered in this subsection, the design of the

Chinese is to use American power to peacefully defeat American hegemony.  This

will be done over time.  China will seek to dilute American regional power to the

point that a diminished America will come to need a regionally dominant China as

its ally, and eventually even a globally powerful China as its partner.

Mosher sees the drive for hegemony, throughout China's history, but is a

particularly acute force in the post-Mao period.  The Chinese justification for

hegemony is rooted in the traditional Legalist (Realist) thought, and, second, in what

he terms Great Han Chauvinism (*Dazhonghuajuyi*):  a potent and peculiarly Chinese

combination of nationalism, ultrapatriotism, traditionalism, ethnocentrism, and

culturalism.

Importantly, Mosher is in accord with other authors considered below, who

do not use the term, Great Han Chauvinism, but who would agree with Mosher, that

the potent Chinese amalgamation of nationalism, patriotism, ethnocentrism, and

sense of cultural superiority over the rest of the world, serves as a source of

legitimacy for the Chinese leadership historically.  For the Communist Party in the

wake of Tiananmen and in the face of growing pressure for democratization, the

need to advance and be supported by Great Han Chauvinism has never been greater.

VI. Swaine and Tellis

An argument similar to Bracken and Mosher is made by Rand analysts Michael

Swaine and Ashley Tellis.[253]  China's stature in the international political power structure has been rising since the late 1970s, largely because of market reforms initiated by Deng Xiaoping.  If concluded successfully, China's ascent could cause a dramatic power transition within the international system, possibly challenging the U.S. role as the region's preeminent security provider. Therefore, managing the rise of China during the next few decades is critically important to U.S. interests. Developing successful policies toward China, however, requires an understanding of China's past and present approach to providing for its security.  Swaine and Tellis examine China's security strategy from historical, empirical, and theoretical perspectives; second, they identify the major features of the strategy and the major factors driving it; and, third, they assess how the strategy will likely evolve.

From the consolidation of China as a unified state under the Han Dynasty (in the 3rd century B.C.) through the emergence of the present Communist government, Chinese regimes have faced a common set of security problems.  First, China has an astonishingly long border—more than 10,000 miles in all—to defend against local and distant threats.  During the imperial era (from the 3rd century B.C. until the mid-19th century), raids by nomadic tribes threatened the Chinese periphery.  In the early modern era (from approximately 1850), the periphery was threatened by great imperialist powers, including Russia, Germany, Great Britain, and France. Since World War II, militarily strong, industrialized states—India, Russia, Japan, and the United States—have posed new security threats to the periphery.

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[253] Michael D. Swaine and Ashley J. Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy: Past, Present, and Future* (Washington, D.C.: Rand, 2000).

Second, China's domestic political system has always been marked by a personality-based pattern of rule, in which ultimate authority comes from the power and beliefs of individual leaders, not from legal and organizational norms and processes.  In such a system, policy content and behavior—including external security policy—often become tools in the domestic power struggle among senior leaders.  This tends to cause volatility within the government and internal political strife.

Third, no matter what its relative geopolitical strength at any time, China thinks of itself as a great power.  This self-image is based on China's historical role as a central political player in Asia and on its tradition of economic self-sufficiency.  During imperial times, Chinese regimes usually held a deep-seated belief in China's political, social, and cultural superiority over its neighbors.  In modern times, Chinese regimes have aspired to economic, technological, and military equality with, rather than superiority over, the other major powers.  These three key considerations have shaped China's basic approach to political and military security throughout its long history.

Viewed through the prism of time, the security strategies employed by various Chinese regimes converge into an overall "Grand Strategy" that strives for three interrelated objectives: first, to control the periphery and ward off threats to the ruling regime; second, to preserve domestic order and well-being in the face of different forms of social strife; and third, to attain or maintain geo-political influence as a major, or even primary, state.  Although the strategic approaches China employs to achieve these objectives have changed over time, certain general principles

applied throughout China's imperial era.

As a rule, imperial regimes were most likely to use military force to advance their security objectives when they were strongest, generally during the first one-third of the regimes' existence. As they matured, strong, stable regimes increasingly employed complex mixtures of force, diplomacy, and cultural norms. However, during the final one-third of their existence, waning regimes relied more on diplomatic maneuvers, defensive or passive military stances, and other non-coercive strategies to advance their security objectives. Thus, "strong" regimes ruled by assertive coercive and non-coercive means, and "weak" ones largely by non-coercive and passive ones.

Swaine and Tellis argue that although China's basic security objectives have not changed substantially during the modern era, the challenges posed by the industrialized world have spawned new security strategies. China's modern regimes have been neither purely weak (and therefore cooperative) nor wholly strong (and therefore assertive). Rather, in modern times China has adopted hybrid "weak-strong" strategies that use force and diplomacy selectively. In the last few decades, this hybrid strategy has coalesced into a "calculative" strategy—this is, a strategy calculated to protect China from external threats as it pursues its geopolitical ascent.

The purpose of the calculative strategy is to allow China to continue to reform its economy and thereby acquire comprehensive national power without having to deal with the impediments and distractions of security competition. If successful, the strategy will buy China the breathing room it needs to improve

domestic social conditions, increase the legitimacy of the governing regime, expand

the nation's economic and technological capabilities, strengthen its military, and

enhance its standing and influence in the international political order—all of which

are important elements in achieving its long-standing security objectives.  The

calculative strategy is designed to allow China to increase its power in a variety of

issue areas in as non-provocative a fashion as possible.

Taken together, these policies display the "calculating" aspect of the

calculative strategy.  They illustrate how the strategy has encouraged foreign

collaboration in underwriting China's rise to power, while temporarily removing

external threats that could distract Beijing from its uninterrupted ascent.  If the

calculative strategy is not knocked off course by some catastrophic event, it is likely

to remain China's guiding strategy for at least the next few decades, until Beijing has

completed its ascent into a position of economic, military, and political strength.

When this occurs—certainly not before 2015-2020—a more assertive China is likely

to emerge.

This conclusion comes from the analysis of China's past behavior and current

strategy, as well as a comprehensive historical analysis (from the Middle Ages to the

late 20th century) of the behavior of newly powerful nations.  This long historical

view suggests that rising states tend not to simply accept the prevailing global

political order and peacefully integrate themselves into it.  Nor, however, do they

rush out to topple that order.  Rather, by asserting their new power, rising nations

can precipitate a range of political, economic, and military tensions that draw the

other world powers into conflict. Like other rising nations throughout history, a

rising China is likely to assert its power.

VII. Evolution's Insights

Recalling the arguments of Section One compels considerable pessimism for the future of the Sino-American relationship. All theories of power politics identify considerable security competition with China. These outcomes range from balancing against China to intense security competition or war. When we add to these considerations the insights from evolution, we can expect that Jacques is closest to the truth in his assessment of a bolder, far more assertive China acting on its evolutionary impulses to bend international politics to its will and to advance its interests, which is the rightful condition of international politics from the Chinese perspective.

The detailed implications of China's choice for hegemony are profound for the United States Department of Defense but, unfortunately, are beyond the scope of this study. Nonetheless, it deserves to be noted that there is ample evidence that Chinese leaders prefer to use coercive responses where they are powerful enough to have this option. When Confucius is asked what he would do if barbarians did not behave after listening to his appeal, Confucius answers that it is acceptable to suppress them by force. Force is not the preferred tool, but the great Sage has no trouble using it when necessary, and Confucius is the least aggressive of Chinese philosophers.

In addition, there are abundant signs that the Chinese military is moving deliberately to acquire the abilities to confront and defeat the United States. The

People's Liberation Army preparations to carry out the new "historic mission" given

by the Chinese Communist Party in December 2004, which as preeminent

journalists Bill Sweetman and Richard Fisher of *Aviation Week and Space Technology*

note "includes a mandate to defend the Party's international interests, takes the

PLA's challenge beyond its increasing Anti-Access/Area Denial capabilities in Asia.

The beginning of distant activities is seen in the PLA's deployment of joint-force

packages for exercises in Russia (2008) and Kazakhstan (2010) and its participation

in counter-piracy patrols off Somalia since late 2009."[254]

Coupled with this growth in Chinese capabilities and determination to

confront the United States seems to be a troublesome pattern of intelligence failures

by the United States intelligence community.  According to Sweetman and Fisher, a

consistent trend in U.S. intelligence analysis of China's developments is to

underestimate the technological advances of the Chinese, the speed with which the

Chinese deploy systems and the numbers in which they deploy them.  For example,

they note the "emergence of the DF-21D anti-ship ballistic missile (ASBM) program

(around 2007) startled the U.S. Navy, triggering a crash program to retrieve SM-2

Block IV missiles from storage to establish an initial terminal ballistic missile

defense capability."[255]  In 2011, there were many reports that the prominent display

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[254] Bill Sweetman and Richard D. Fisher, Jr., "AirSea Battle Concept Is Focused on China," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, April 1, 2010, available online at: http://www.aviationweek.com/aw/generic/story_generic.jsp?channel=awst&id=ne ws/awst/2011/04/04/AW_04_04_2011_p62-299099.xml&headline=AirSea%20Battle%20Concept%20Is%20Focused%20On%20China&next=10.

[255] Sweetman and Fisher, "AirSea Battle Concept Is Focused on China," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, April 1, 2010.

of the J-20 aircraft while U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates was visiting China contained surprises as well.  Open source analyses consistently trail rather than lead Chinese military developments.

It appears that the Chinese have a consistent ability to develop their military technology faster and with greater sophistication than the United States intelligence community expects.  If this is the case, an implication is that China may challenge the U.S. presence in the Western Pacific, and then globally, sooner than most Western analysts expect.

However, this study fully anticipates this outcome.  The evolutionary impulses possessed by the Chinese leadership are the most profound motivator of its hegemonic challenge to the United States.  Equally, their power is easy to dismiss by Western analysts due to the inability to understand, in essence, how evolutionary adaptation affects behavior.  The implication of this is that Western analysts will continue to misunderstand the threat that China poses to the United States, and its determination to supplant the United States as the world's dominant state.

**Section Three**

**Can Evolutionary Motivations Be Offset by Ideology**

The fundamental argument of Section Two is that there will be increasing conflict with the United States.  This Section considers whether it can be offset by economic growth or the considerable problems China faces as it modernizes, including adverse demographic changes, improper resource allocation, or a change in the direction of the Communist Party of China towards liberalization.  This Section first considers optimistic assessments and, second, pessimistic considerations of whether China and the United States are on a path to increasing confrontation.  Third, it considers factors that have the potential to limit China's economic growth including its gender imbalance, structural economic problems, and abuse and misallocation of water resources.  Fourth, the study considers the problem that India poses for China as a potential check on Beijing's economic and military growth.  It concludes that China's choice for confrontation will not be offset by any of the factors considered, but its internal problems and external threats like India are likely to hinder China's spectacular growth.  In sum:  China is likely to still grow in the future, but not as rapidly.

It is certainly the case that China will not continue to grow economically as projected, and it does face significant barriers to its phenomenal economic performance since the 1980s.  At the same time, there is little reason to accept that China will make anything other than the choice for confrontation with the United States for the reasons identified in this study.

Confrontation in international politics is always regrettable. Confrontation between the two dominant states in international politics is even more so due to the profound consequences for all states and the order of international politics. Accordingly, it is important to consider whether there are countervailing pressures that might offset the Chinese motivation for confrontation, such as a change in China's ideology.

I. Positive Assessments of the Sino-American Relationship

The first positive assessment considered is made by Edward Steinfeld.[256] He argues that China is playing the West's game—it has embraced and supports modern capitalism, and, he submits, once that is understood, the likelihood of conflict with China will be greatly diminished. China's decision to embrace the Western economic system is the result of three factors. First, political and economic changes are linked, and political change has occurred almost as rapidly as China's prodigious economic growth.

Second, this linked political-economic transformation has been driven by globalization. The changes China experienced were driven by the country's linkage to the global economy. Moreover, that linkage took place when the worldwide economy was itself undergoing a profound transition through globalization. For Steinfeld, globalization is the creation of a new form of production that involves taking all the carefully orchestrated and highly regimented steps that had occurred

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[256] Edward S. Steinfeld, *Playing Our Game: Why China's Rise Doesn't Threaten the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

within and spreading them across multiple firms and multiple national borders.  The world is not "flat," but is rather deeply tilted toward hierarchy and control.

Third, understanding globalization correctly permits the recognition that China's economic emergence is not about rewriting the rules of global commerce.  It is not a revisionist great power seeking to remake the global system in its image.  China has decided to link itself to a particular kind of economic order.  This economic order involves a truly global organization of production.  This does not by definition force change on every country but it does force change on those who participate deeply.  None has chosen to do so in a deeper fashion than China, and none has undergone as dramatic internal change as a result.  China today is growing not by writing its own rules but instead by internalizing the rules of the advanced industrial West.

This will force political change on China, but in a unique way.  The Party, like the rule of the KMT on Taiwan, will govern in a manner far different in twenty years than it does now.  Political rule in China will undergo rapid change, and probably will not result in governmental collapse.  Political change will come because Party leaders accept and embrace new ways of governing which are necessary for continued economic success and legitimacy.  Steinfeld is optimistic about the future of the Sino-American relationship because China shares with the United States an increasingly common set of values, practices, and outlooks, and, fundamentally, shares with the U.S. an interest in sustaining the global system it has joined.

A related argument is advanced by Yong Deng, a professor of Political Science at the United States Naval Academy.[257]  Deng argues that China's rise will be peaceful and within the international structure developed by the United States. Deng sees China as a rising but fundamentally status quo country, seeking only greater status, defined as the concern of a state over its material wellbeing and treatment it receives in international politics, especially its authority.  China's leadership has structured policies to permit it to achieve an acceptable level of status without provoking violent security competition predicted by realist theorists of international politics.

There are three components to the Chinese strategy.  First, the Chinese are acutely aware that their rise fuels fear among regional states as well as the United States.  Second, while suspicious of the outside, the Chinese leadership has remained confident that the international environment is an important part of its rise. Positive relationships depend on the choices it makes, and so Beijing places emphasis on diplomacy and economic cooperation.  Third, China has carved out an alternative path for great power recognition.  China is pursing a strategy that will permit it to rise and achieve the greater status it wants with reassurance and acceptance of this change among other states, particularly those with whom it has formed strategic partnerships—Russia, the EU, and India—and multilateral diplomacy in Asia, the Six Party Talks with the DPRK, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and in Africa, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation.

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[257] Yong Deng, *China's Struggle for Status: The Realignment of International Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

For Deng, the PRC is deeply integrated into the international system, and it is within it that Beijing will be at the most advantageous position to change it to achieve its objective of status.

Major Sinologist Bates Gill argues that China has a "new security concept" dating from 1994-1995, which is motivated by China acting as a responsible great power and, most importantly, rising peacefully, what the Chinese term: *Zhongguo de heping jueqi* (China's peaceful rise).[258]  The objectives of China's peaceful rise are, first, to counter perceptions that the growth in Chinese power will upset the status quo, as the growth of Germany power in the early twentieth-century did.  Second, asserting a peaceful rise is intended to assure neighbors of China's benign intentions.  Third, China's peaceful rise also addresses the domestic audience and is intended to help ensure that China's economic and social development is smooth so that China's overall security strategy is successful.

Gill submits that the true objectives behind China's new security strategy are, first, to ensure a relatively stable international environment and to defuse instabilities on its borders.  Second, it is designed to augment China's wealth and influence.  Third, it is designed to counter, co-opt, or circumvent what Beijing sees as excessive American influence on China's periphery.  At the same time, China is playing a defensive role, and does not want the United States to perceive it as a foe.

He tests whether China has a fundamentally new approach in three of the most critical developments shaping global and regional security:  the changing role

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[258] Bates Gill, *Rising Star: China's New Security Diplomacy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2007).

of alliances and the expansion of regional security mechanisms and confident-building measures; the growing significance of nonproliferation and arms control; and more flexible approaches to sovereignty, intervention, and the use of forces. After analysis of each of these, Gill concludes that China does indeed have a new security strategy that reflects its fundamentally defensive motivations.

This provides the United States with new opportunities to give China a great stake in global and regional stability and defuse the potential for U.S.-China confrontation. These are: first, regarding alliance and regional security mechanisms, the United States should intensify bilateral discussions on mutual regional security concerns, increase bilateral military-to-military relations, deepen U.S. and U.S.-China interaction within regional security mechanisms, strengthen coordination with regional allies on issues related to China, and realize a long-term, nonmilitary resolution to the China and Taiwan problem.

Second, regarding nonproliferation and arms control, Washington should take opportunities to resolve persistent Chinese proliferation cases, work to improve China's own arms export control capability, establish a stable, long-term framework for bilateral strategic nuclear relations, improve cooperation on global arms control issues, and expand upon past nonproliferation successes with China.

Third, U.S. policy should leverage China's changing approach to questions of sovereignty and intervention by intensifying U.S.-China dialogue regarding objectionable and threatening regimes, and encouraging greater Chinese support and participation in peacekeeping and nation-building operations.

David Lampton is one of the United States' premiere Sinologists. His argument is in accord with Steinfeld, Deng, and Gill. The central question of his major book on the topic of China's grand strategy is to explore how China will use its great power in the future.[259] Lampton argues that China is moving away from coercive power and revolutionary appeals both at home and abroad to remunerative incentives and strategies relying on specific dimensions of ideational power. China is placing more emphasis on attracting support than seeking to compel it. Lampton argues that the first generation of China's leaders, Mao Zedong, paid more attention to military power; the second generation, Deng Xiaoping, placed more emphasis on comprehensive national strength, most importantly economic might; the third generation, Jiang Zemin, in the late 1990s began to pay more attention to soft power.

Of course, Lampton recognizes that China has used force many times in its history. There have been more than 6,000 battles in 4,000 plus years from the twenty-sixth century B.C. when Shen Nong Shi (the Holy Farmer) attacked the Fu Sui Tribe (Tribes of Axe and Flint) to the dramatic end of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). This figure is more than one-third of the total numbers of battles that have occurred worldwide in this period.

Thus, the key question is, as China's power increases, will the use of force and physical intimidation increasingly characterize its behavior? Lampton argues no. Military power is important for deterrence purposes, and Lampton sees China as

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[259] David M. Lampton, *The Three Faces of Chinese Power: Might, Money, and Minds* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

motivated by defensive goals.  But China will use its remunerative power increasingly frequently.  The power of the buyer, the power of the seller, the power of the investor, the power of the innovator, and the power of the donor, give China great leverage in international political economy.   Also, China will use its ideational power, or soft power, to advance its interests.  Lampton sees China possessing ever-greater ideological attractiveness based on its culture, economic might, and political values.

According to Lampton, there will be increasing competition in the Sino-American relationship, but this need not result in conflict between the countries.  He submits that China will be occupied with domestic concerns in the decades to come, and that its emphasis on economic and ideational power, at the expense of military power, means that there is a real possibility that, as China becomes more powerful, it will be socialized into the norms of the international system and economic interdependence.

II. Pessimistic Considerations for the Sino-American Relationship

The positive assessments of the growth of China leading to an improvement in the Sino-American relationship are valuable to consider, as are other considerations of China's future that are less optimistic.  The study will consider some of the most important.

In a thoughtful study of the Chinese economy in comparison with India's, Pranab Bardhan argues that the Chinese economy faces profound structural and

institutional challenges as it modernizes.[260]  Collectively, these challenges will

retard its continued modernization.  Bardhan identifies seven major problems that

the Chinese face.  When operating synergistically, Bardhan argues, they have the

strong possibility of derailing the fantastic economic growth analysts have come to

expect from China, and anticipate into the future.  Interestingly, Bardhan argues that

India shares all of China's problems, but in each case, they are far less severe for

New Delhi, and India has major advantages that China does not share, the most

important of which is democracy.  Thus, he expects India's spectacular economic

growth to continue while China declines in economic performance.

First, China's financial infrastructure is weak because it is not autonomous

and corporate governance is opaque.  In China the government, apart from directly

dominating much of the nonagricultural economy, provides private-sector firms

with limited access to finance or new markets, and private capital grows only under

the all-pervasive shadow of the Communist Party.

Second, China's future economic growth will hit a demographic barrier.  The

working-age proportion of the population will peak in the early 2010s.  A large part

of this population growth will be in the economically less successful rural areas and

is made worse by the high male to female ratio.

Third, the large pool of household savings, which has funded investment and

growth will decline in time as China urbanizes, since average saving rate for urban

households is lower than rural.

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[260] Pranab Bardhan, *Awakening Giants, Feet of Clay: Assessing the Economic Rise of China and India* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2010).

Fourth, severe environmental damage in China is a drag on effective economic growth and human welfare, and will decrease the quality of life in the PRC. Health costs associated with common lung ailments, for example, are already significant and will become increasingly important.

Fifth, urban-rural income inequality is increasingly leading to social unrest as the rise of mass communications allows poorer rural Chinese to view the lifestyles of richer and typically healthier urban dwellers.

Sixth, Bardhan challenges the argument that authoritarianism is good for economic development. He notes that the lack of democracy in China hinders economic growth for three reasons: first, democracies are better able to avoid catastrophic mistakes like the Great Leap Forward, and they have faster adjustment in economic hard times, and have a better ability to address conflicts. Faced with a public crisis or political shock, the Chinese leadership has a tendency to overreact, suppress information, and be heavy-handed; second, democracies in general experience more intense pressure to share the benefits of development among the people and to reduce the human costs of dislocation, thus making development more sustainable; third, democratic, open societies provide a better environment for nurturing the development of information and relative technologies, critical in a knowledge-driven economy.

Finally, China has failed to establish a comprehensive rule-based system with checks and balances, such as an independent judiciary. It has a low capacity for conflict management and this makes it more brittle in the face of crises. As the economy becomes more complex and social relations more convoluted and intense,

the absence of transparent and accountable processes and the attempts by a "control-freak" leadership to enforce conformity and lockstep discipline will generate acute tension and informational inefficiency. If China manages a soft landing into some form of quasi-democracy, it will be of the corrupt oligarchic kind under a predominant party like Mexico's PRI.

India's great strengths are that it is democracy and that it embraces, in its own way, private enterprise. India, like the United States and unlike China, has a large, entrepreneurial private sector that chafes under government control. Also like the United States, New Delhi has a commitment to entrepreneurship as the source of innovation and growth. This provides the United States with a continued stake in India's economic growth and prosperity for obvious commercial reasons and global economic expansion, but also for strategic reasons.

An economically successful India demonstrates the power of free market-based economic policies for growth at a time when the "Washington Consensus" free enterprise-based model for economic development is under attack as the right example for contemporary economic conditions and impediments to modernization. An entrepreneurial and successful India offers a direct contrast to the "Beijing Consensus" model of state capitalism for modernization, which has gained traction with countries that now seek to follow China's path to economic development.

Echoing many aspects of Bardham's analysis is the insightful review of China's economic prospects by James Kynge.[261] Kynge's major arguments contain a

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[261] James Kynge, *China Shakes the World: A Titan's Rise and Troubled Future—and the Challenge for America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006).

mixture of amazement at China's sustained economic boom since the launch of Deng's reforms in 1979, but with a healthy dose of skepticism concerning whether or not the Chinese will be able to sustain their prodigious economic might due not to economic, but rather social, challenges.

Kynge asserts that China will become an economic superpower, but that natural depredations, like growing resource scarcities, environmental destruction, and widespread pollution, as well as ubiquitous corruption, a collapse of trust in personal and commercial relationships, gross disparities in income and regional development, all mean that huge inefficiencies and incurring losses might result in a leveling off of China's economic might.  China will not stop growing, but it is conceivable that its growth plateaus as early as the next decade.

The Chinese leadership is acutely aware of these difficulties and is trying to prevent them but will be unable to do so due to structural reasons, in part, but also because the Communist Party is antiquated and inadequate for the social and economic conditions in China today.  Clearly, Kynge's assessment stands in contrast to the adaptive perception of the Communist Party advanced below most forcefully by Richard McGregor and David Shambaugh.

Although his argument is not deterministic, Kynge is pessimistic about the future of the Sino-American relationship.  He sees growing Chinese demands, largely economic, causing a reaction in Washington, which provokes a response from China, and the start of a spiral of tension and greater mutual suspicion.

One key work for understanding the strength of the Communist Party is that of journalist and the former China bureau chief of the *Financial Times*, Richard

McGregor.  In his book, McGregor explores why the Communist Party continues to

rule China without signs of reform.[262]  McGregor's argument has received

considerable attention, and to construct his argument he goes into considerable

detail concerning the Party's functions and structures, as well as how it exercises

power.  He argues that the Party's genius was to maintain China's political

institutions and authoritarian power of old-style communism, while eliminating the

ideological straightjacket that inspired them.  The Party's conscious retreat from the

private lives of Chinese citizens over the same period had a liberating effect on

society.  The dehumanization of everyday life that characterizes communist

societies was eliminated:  the Party hitches the power and legitimacy of Chinese

communism to the drive and productivity of an increasingly entrepreneurial

economy.  In essence, the Party gave the Chinese people a compact:  if you play by

the Party's rules, the most important of which is eschewing competitive politics,

they you and your family can get on with your lives and maybe get rich.

The Party refuses to draw one lesson from the success of the economy—the

public policy sector that has been most open to debate and competition has

produced the best outcomes.  For the Party, China's economic success has only

occurred because of authoritarian politics.  The Party's legitimacy depends on two

factors.  First, continued economic growth is key.  The second pillar is a resurgent

nationalism and patriotism.  The Party has been keen to nurture Chinese pride in

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[262] Richard McGregor, *The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers* (New York:  HarperCollins, 2010).

the country's revival, and to stoke resurgent patriotism and nationalism, which have become much sharper in recent years.

For McGregor, ultimately the Party will have a diminished role because society, with its rapidly evolving aspirations, demands, and cleavages, is infiltrating the Party, spreading liberalization slowly and over time, the result of which will be a transformed Party in time. But this liberalized Party will not be liberal. China is likely to remain authoritarian in its politics.

Renowned Sinologist David Shambaugh makes an argument in accord with McGregor's concerning the viability of the Chinese Communist party.[263] Shambaugh argues that the Chinese Communist Party is simultaneously atrophying and adapting. He submits that after a period of catharsis in the early 1990s, following the cataclysmic events of 1989 in China and the subsequent collapse of communist ruling parties in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the CCP undertook very systematic assessments of the causes of collapse of these other ruling parties, as well as analyzed the range of internal and external challenges to itself. This process of understanding the reasons and precipitating causes for the collapse of these other party-states was protracted (over a decade), but infused with a sense of immediacy. There was broad agreement that a range of factors contributed to the overthrow of communism in the Soviet Union and have led to a range of intraparty reforms, as well as reforms affecting other sectors of the state, society, and economy. While reacting to the events in Eastern Europe, the CCP has also been proactive in

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[263] David Shambaugh, *China's Communist Party: Atrophy and Adaptation* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2008).

instituting reforms within itself and within China.  The reforms have been sweeping in scope and have collectively been intended to strengthen the party's ruling capacity.

Shambaugh argues that there has been significant political reform in China and the Party is not an ossified Leninist structure.  Few pay attention to the real reforms because they are incremental and hard to track.  He also argues that the CCP has zero interest in transitioning to a Western or Asian democratic system of competitive parities.  The Party's goal is to strengthen its rule and remain in power as a single ruling party.

The Party has atrophied as an institution in that there has been progressive decline in terms of its control over various aspects of the intellectual, social, economic, and political life of the nation.  The traditional instruments of power, propaganda, coercion, and organization, have eroded over time.  But the Party has successfully adapted as well.  New tools of control have been introduced and strengthened, such as control over the internet.  Intellectually, the Party has been reborn, it has successfully adapted to the challenges of modern economic development.  The Party as an organization has been rebuilt, including its local structure and inner-party democracy.  Shambaugh sees the Party remain in power for at least the next generation and emphasizes that its adaptability and flexibility as the force governing China should not be underestimated.

A similar line of argument is advanced by preeminent journalist Mark Leonard.[264] China has undergone an intellectual awakening as radical as its economic growth. Leonard submits that China is seeking intellectual autonomy—emancipation from Western ideas on economics, politics, and global power—that will serve as the foundation for a new model of globalization. Chinese intellectuals have reconciled competing goals, to get access to global markets while protecting China from the forces of economic transformation they could unleash in the country. Second, the Chinese have challenged the flat world of American globalization with a "Walled World" of China's own creation.

The driving intellectual forces in China today are the "New Left" and the "New Right." Both schools support rapid economic growth, a high degree of provincial autonomy in economic affairs, and loose controls on banking and investment. The "New Left" argues for slower and more stable growth, great attention to social inequality and pollution, and an expansion of state support for education, medial care and social security. The "New Right" argues for great free-market policies and development without robbing the rich to help the poor. Leonard argues that there is a shift in China's intellectual current to the "New Left" and a rejection of the "flat world" philosophy of laissez-faire development popularized by *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman.

In the political realm, Leonard sees the rise of "inner party democracy." Before democracy will come to China, it must first come to the Party. Leonard sees the strengthening of the rights of ordinary party members to stand for elections,

[264] Mark Leonard, *What Does China Think?* (New York: Perseus, 2008).

vote for representations, and scrutinize Party officials as the start of the democratization of China.

Considering international politics, Leonard sees a Chinese obsession with comprehensive national power, which is a mechanism designed by the Chinese to rank countries by considering their weaknesses as well as strengths. In this analysis, cultural attraction or cultural power (soft power, or *ruan quanli*) is key. The Chinese have studied how the U.S. created its soft power, for example, symbolizing freedom, and have emulated these techniques. To start with, China is creating "Confucius Institutes" to teach Chinese and promote Chinese culture, as well as international television networks like CCTV 9 to rival CNN and Sky News. They have also launched "listening diplomacy," the term directly chosen to contrast with what is often seen by global opinion-makers as U.S. unilateralism. The objective of the soft power offensive is to win over most of the world, and decrease the interest and attractiveness of the United States.

In the military realm, the Chinese are developing new ideas, building on what is advanced in *Unrestricted Warfare*. This includes economic warfare, "super-terrorism," and lawfare.

Fundamentally, Leonard argues what the Chinese want is control—a "Walled World," where national governments are masters of their own destiny and insulated against market pressures, or the pressures from outside powers.

Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Susan Shirk submits that China's leadership sincerely wants China's rise to be peaceful, and to occur without

provoking war with the United States or other major actors like India or Japan.[265]

Shirk argues that this peaceful stance will be jeopardized by domestic changes in China. She notes that the Party's lessons of Tiananmen (avoid public splits, suppress popular movements, keep the PLA on the Party's side); increasing virulent nationalism, the spread of mass protests, and the availability of information through the internet and commercial media might destabilize China by provoking a reaction from the deeply insecure Chinese leadership.

Shirk sees two faces of Chinese foreign policy, one responsible; the other is not. The second is rooted in internal fragility, impetuous and emotional responses to Japan, Taiwan, and the United States. It 'is the result of the leadership's need to prove to the public, the military, the internal security and propaganda agencies, and to the leadership itself that they are staunch defenders of national pride and sovereignty. Thus, to back down in a crisis would be political suicide. Should internal destabilization occur or the second face of Chinese foreign policy triumph in a crisis, Shirk argues that the risk of war with the U.S. (and other powers) is greatly increased. Moreover, such a crisis always brings with it the increased possibility of misperception, as well as a heightened fear of domestic instability that foreigners may exploit to destabilize the country.

Sinologist Teresa Wright makes a similar argument.[266] Wright argues that political liberalization in China will not occur. Fundamentally, this is because the

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[265] Susan L. Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[266] Teresa Wright, *Accepting Authoritarianism: State-Society Relations in China's Reform Era* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2010).

Chinese people will not press for liberalization. Wright submits that the political attitudes and behavior of the Chinese public derive from the interaction of three factors.

First, the confluence of state-led economic development policy, market forces, and socialist legacies has led to upward socioeconomic mobility for large segments of the population. Citizens believe the Chinese government has facilitated the country's economic rise. Second, key sectors of the economy, particularly private enterprise owners and state-owned enterprise workers, have had privileged relationships with the Communist party. To this day, the Chinese state has retained control of key economic resources. Accordingly, groups in close association with the state have been rewarded with prosperity and security. Third, the great economic growth in China has led to a polarizing economic structure with a well-off minority and poor majority. Within this highly skewed hierarchy, those who are well-off have little incentive to push for political liberalization since that will give expression to the large number of poor, who still have clear socialist economic expectations and values.

At the same time, the farmers and rank-and-file factory workers also have incentive not to push for political liberalization. Farmers and private sector workers have had increasing standards of living, and credit the Party with making that possible. However, the legacy of socialism and its political values remain very strong with these groups, further reducing the desire for liberalization. In sum, the Chinese people largely accept authoritarian rule, and lack strong motivation to agitate for systemic political transformation.

Sinologist Ross Terrill argues that China's political system hinges on how it arose and grew.[267]  China's growth and state expansion was regional, and a difficult relationship between center and region is a hallmark of Chinese politics today. From the perspective of Chinese history, most dynasties tottered or collapsed when faced with the problems of *neiluan* (disorder within) and *weihuan* (external threat). Growing regional economic might and ethnic tensions, and brittle Leninist political rule present the risk of disorder within and threaten the new Chinese empire.  That is a major but not insurmountable problem for the Chinese leadership.

The salience of Terrill's work is defined by what is essentially Chinese.  He submits that the Chinese state is defined by its sense of destiny, didacticism (middle and periphery, fixed [China] and mobile [barbarians], defensiveness and superiority), distance from the people, and awkwardness in foreign policies.  In turn, the Chinese empire is characterized by three traits:  its driving force comes from the Party elite above; it sees itself as the guardian of truth; and any compromises it makes with other greats power are tactical in nature, not based on acceptance of moral comparability between China and the rest of the world.  Indeed, when China attacks a neighbor, it is seen as a favor to that lesser people.  Heaven, through the emperor, was reestablishing the proper order of things.

Stephan Halper, a Senior Fellow in the Department of Politics at the University of Cambridge and Distinguished Fellow at the Nixon Center, argues that

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[267] Ross Terrill, *The New Chinese Empire: and What It Means for the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2003).

the threat posed by China is far greater than has been recognized.[268]  The threat is not just a military or economic one, but also the rise of new model, the market-authoritarian one, which provides rapid growth, stability and the promise of better economic conditions and quality of life.  Absent are Western freedoms and political plurality or opposition.  China's modernization is the world's most compelling demonstration of how to liberalize economically without surrendering to liberal politics.

The advantages to China are significant.  First, China undermines American power and Western economic institutions.  Second, in an ideological struggle, China's success is seen as a rising economic and military power, in contrast to America's decline.  Third, it assists with alliance relationships, and gives developing countries and emerging markets the freedom to deny Western conditions of financial engagement.  For example, China also provides states in economic crisis, such as Angola, Cambodia, Chad, Iran, Myanmar, Sudan, Venezuela, and Uzbekistan with an alternative to following the dictates of Western institutions like the International Monetary Fund.  Also, they no longer must choose between emulating the Western model and rejecting capitalism.

Halper argues that China's model is more appealing to the developing world and middle-sized powers, like Iran, Indonesia, Nigeria, Turkey, and Vietnam, than is America's market-democratic model captured in the Washington Consensus. China's model gives rise to a strategic challenge for the United States, accelerates the

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[268] Stefan Halper, *The Beijing Consensus:  How China's Authoritarian Model Will Dominate the Twenty-First Century* (New York:  Basic Books, 2010).

"power shift" from the U.S. to China, and raises the possibility that the world will be increasingly unsympathetic to the democratic principles and values of the West and to U.S. leadership. Accordingly for Halper, hopes in the West that China will be a "responsible stakeholder" are misguided.

III. China's Demographic, Economic, and Water Resource Problems

This section of the study examines actual and potential problems for Chinese growth. Demographic, economic, and water resource issues are discussed. The intention is to illuminate these impediments to China's rise. The scope of this project prevents their analysis in detail, and each is richly deserving of additional study. These factors pose serious problems for China, individually and collectively, and while they are not so significant as to prevent China's rise, they may hinder it, hobbling its economic performance.

III. A. Demography

China's demography offers the possibility that its economic growth will be checked, specifically the imbalance in sex ratios found in China. The "One Child" policy aimed to limit China's population to 700 million. Now China's population is almost double that and the ratio of males to females is the highest it has ever been. According to one of the world's experts on imbalanced sex ratios in China, Valerie Hudson, Professor of political science at Brigham Young University, based on data collected in 2007 and 2009, the overall imbalance is about 122, whereas a typical ratio would be slightly more males to females, perhaps 101 or 102 males born for every 100

females.[269]  In contrast, India has about a ratio of about 100 girls born to every 114

boys, although there is wide variation across the Indian states, with states in the

north and northwest having the worst imbalances.[270]  In addition, there is the

problem of China's ageing population.  China faces a "triple whammy" of ageing.  The

number of children under 14 will fall by 53 million by 2050, the workforce will

contract by 100 million, and those over-60 will rise by 234 million, from twelve

percent to thirty-one percent of the population.[271]

Each of these elements alone or in combination may be significant

impediments to Chinese growth in the years to come.  In addition to these problems,

there is no doubt that Chinese economic growth will suffer from market fluctuations

and the rise and decline of commodities and key natural resources.  The centrally

important export markets for China also pose risks to the continued growth of the

Chinese economy.  Worldwide recession or depression, other elements that cause

significant restrictions in trade or stymie globalization are obvious candidates for

limiting the degree and scope of China's growth.  At the same time, it is likely that

any downturn would affect the United States just as much, or perhaps more.  Since

power is relative, it is not clear that China would be worse off in relation to the

United States.

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[269] Personal email communication with Prof. Valerie Hudson, February 3, 2011.
[270] Personal email communication with Prof. Valerie Hudson, February 5, 2011.
[271] Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, "Will 'Chindia' Rule the World in 2050, or America After All," *The Daily Telegraph*, February 28, 2011.  Accessed online at: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/comment/ambroseevans_pritchard/8350548/Will-Chindia-rule-the-world-in-2050-or-America-after-all.html.

Unfortunately, Chinese motivations must be examined realistically. The

strength of the Communist Party is considerable and in all aspects of Chinese

political and social life, and the drive to be dominant is powerful for the Chinese

leadership and a key source of the Party's legitimacy, despite genuine risks faced by

China and real potential for economic setbacks.

III. B. Economic Problems: Center-Local Friction and Corruption

The Party's emphasis for many years on "growth at any cost" has caused local

officials to ignore and contradict central government law, especially in the areas of

environmental health and intellectual property rights.[272]  China's bureaucratic

structure and institutional weakness have contributed to a significant gap between

central policies and local implementation.[273]  For example, "growth and land policies

are vulnerable to corruption because of the profits local officials can make, as they

control both land and building projects.  Local officials often seize collectively

owned farmland, providing little or no compensation to the displaced, and sell the

land at a significant profit.  This system gives local officials a powerful incentive to

ignore central land management directives."[274]  Corruption within center-local

relations affects four key policies:

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[272] C. Fred Bergstein, Charles Freeman, Nicholas R. Lardy, and Derek J. Mitchell,
*China's Rise: Challenges and Opportunities* (Washington, D.C.: Peterson Institute for
International Economics, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2008), p. 78.
[273] Bergstein, et al., *China's Rise*, p. 78.
[274] Bergstein, et al., *China's Rise*, p. 78.

1. Environmental Policies—Environmental regulation is undermined at the local level, and "clearly, environmental degradation is upping the ante on China's economic development and social stability considerations."[275]

2. Intellectual Property Policies—Counterfeit and trademark infringement remains high at the local level.

3. Consumer/Product Safety Policies—Failure to implement safety policies at the local level threaten "China's export juggernaut," and domestic consumers themselves are increasingly restive about the issue.

4. Labor and Trade Law—At the local level, abuse of workers and corrupt land transactions remain high.

Corruption is endemic to China and has been for millennia, and maybe thought of as a hidden tax on economic exchange. But corruption is also figured in to Chinese economic exchanges as a cost of doing business. Thus, while it is a burden on exchange, it will not significantly retard Chinese economic growth.

III. C. Economic Sustainability

China faces major barriers to continued economic growth. These include, first, a significant economic setback, such as a burst real estate bubble similar to what the United States experienced in 2008.

Second, overreaching or overexpansion in certain industries like steel and cement, might be a significant drain on Chinese growth. China's steel industry is critical and drives the global market. In 2008, China accounted for just under 40

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[275] Bergstein, et al., *China's Rise*, p. 78.

percent of world crude steel production (about 500 million tons), up from 5 percent in the early 1980s.  China's capacity is now estimated at about 600 million tons, contributing to substantial levels of excess capacity in this industry worldwide. While China's domestic demand is growing, roughly at 10 percent a year, global economic conditions may retard growth in the steel industry.

Third, there may be a huge misallocation of investments or conspicuous consumption that draws away from more significant or productive investments. Fourth, the limitations imposed by natural resources pose major problems for China.  The restrictions or shortages in energy production and transmission are well known, and the Chinese are working assiduously to remedy this situation.  Indeed, one of the most insightful observers of the health of the Chinese economy and the expectation of its continued growth argues that energy use is an Achilles' Heel of the Chinese economy:  "Chinese currency has depreciated rather than appreciated over the past three years, adding to China's external imbalance. And, increased government intervention has resulted in a growing subsidy of energy use, likely undermining the goal of reducing the energy intensity of economic growth."[276] Furthermore, "limited supplies of raw materials and rising prices for petroleum, metal ores, coal, and other commodities may slow the country's growth.  Energy shortages are common in many areas, and China is now a major oil importer."[277]

Equally problematic is the appreciation of its currency:  "Given the importance of China to world trade, a substantial appreciation of the yuan would

[276] Bergstein, et al., *China's Rise*, p. 79.
[277] Mathew Shane and Fred Gale, *China: A Study of Dynamic Growth* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, October 2004), p. 11.

have large impacts. Appreciation would raise prices for China's exports and erode

its dominant position in markets for textiles, electronics, and other manufactured

goods."[278]  As a result, since 2004, economic growth has been unbalanced, and China

has become increasingly dependent on a growing trade surplus to sustain high

growth. "Net exports jumped from 2.5 percent of GDP in 2004 to 8.9 percent of GDP

in 2007 and accounted for one-fifth of China's economic growth in 2005-07. Over

the same period household and government consumption as a share of GDP

declined by 5.3 percentage points of GDP."[279]  Such unbalanced growth can also be

seen between the urban and service sectors, in which "investment in urban areas

allocated to manufacturing continues to rise, reaching 30 percent by 2007, while the

share devoted to investment in the service sector continues to fall . . . China's

undervalued exchange rate boosts profitability in manufacturing, a trend that is

reinforced by low or even negative real interest rates on loans and the more recent

underpricing of energy."[280]

In addition, two major social issues threatening sustainable development.[281]

The first of these is in the realm of public health and the significant impact that

infectious disease, such as SARS, HIV/AIDS, H5N1, will have on China.  The second is

the environment.  China faces overall degradation of its urban air quality, and also

potable water resources to supply the population and industry, which I consider in

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[278] Shane and Gale, *China*, p. 12.
[279] Bergstein, et al., *China's Rise*, 129.
[280] Bergstein, et al., *China's Rise*, p. 129.
[281] See Minxin Pei, *China's Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); and Charles Wolf, Jr., K.C. Yeh, Benjamin Zycher, Nicholas Eberstadt, and Lee Sung-Ho, *Fault Lines in China's Economic Terrain* (Santa Monica: Rand, 2003).

more detail below. There is significant variation in regional access to potable water, which drives its price up, contributing to inflationary pressures in the aggregate economy.

III. D. Structural Imbalances

China's economic growth has happened unequally. As a major analyst of China's industrial growth, Henry Wai-Chung Yeung, argues: "While China's industrial sector is clearly very dynamic and forward-looking, the impact of its development on the everyday life of the Chinese people remains highly uneven in socio-spatial terms . . . the geographical manifestation of uneven development in China's dynamic industrial sector can be starkly troubling."[282] Yeung submits that China's economic growth has simply redistributed the problems of inequality associated with lopsided growth: "Instead of reducing uneven spatial development, [China] has simply replaced one form of uneven development in the pre-reform era—concentration of production in inland regions—with another form of uneven development favoring the coastal regions."[283]

        While inequality is a significant imbalance, this study will consider four others that are just as important but typically receive less attention. The first of these is increased income inequality and high unemployment. There is no question

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[282] Henry Wai-Chung Yeung, "Observations on China's Dynamic Industrial Sector," *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, Vol. 49, No. 5 (2008), pp. 509-522, 515. Also, see Jane Golley, *The Dynamics of Chinese Regional Development: Market Nature, State Nature* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2007).
[283] Yeung, "Observations on China's Dynamic Industrial Sector," p. 515.

that today, "Overall inequality has unambiguously risen in China."[284]  The inequality

is stark between rural and urban areas.  In rural areas—"This increase is tied to the

disequalizing role of some forms of nonagricultural income, and laggard growth of

farming income, especially beginning in the mid-1990s."[285]  However, in urban

areas—"a decline in the role of subsidies and entitlements, increasing wage

inequality related to labor market and enterprise reform, and the effect of

restructuring [state-owned enterprises] SOEs on some cohorts and households

through layoffs have all played a part in widening the income distribution."[286]

However, urban disparity remains lower than rural largely because "of the severe

urban bias in Chinese policy and fairly egalitarian distribution of incomes in the

cities.  Yet urban development has been concentrated in a few major coastal areas,

with much less growth in the rural, central, and western regions.  As Shane and Gale

summarize:

> This unbalance has contributed to high unemployment rates in both urban
> and rural areas. The relatively rapid expansion of China's labor force has left
> China's economy with an unusual combination of extremely rapid growth
> and chronic unemployment problems . . . More seriously, it is widely
> recognized that much of China's rural labor force is underemployed, engaged
> only in seasonal agricultural work with paltry earnings. China has about 2.5
> agricultural laborers for every hectare of arable land. China's Ministry of
> Agriculture estimates that rural China has 150 million surplus workers.[287]

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[284] Dwayne Benjamin, Loren Brandt, John Giles, and Sangui Wang, "Income
Inequality During China's Economic Transition," in Loren Brandt and Thomas G.
Rawski, eds., *China's Great Economic Transformation* (New York:  Cambridge
University Press, 2008), p. 729.
[285] Benjamin, et al., "Income Inequality During China's Economic Transition," p. 773.
[286] Benjamin, et al., "Income Inequality During China's Economic Transition," p. 773.
[287] Shane and Gale, *China*, p. 15.

The second structural imbalance is the troubled banking system. As Mathew

Shane and Fred Gale argue: "Nonperforming loans in the Chinese banking system

are one of the most important structural problems. China's major banks are state-

owned and have historically made loans under government direction to

unprofitable state-owned industries, with little regard for repayment or risk," but

the fact of the matter is that "many of these loans were never paid back. The official

estimates are that nonperforming loans total around 25 percent of GDP, or $300

billion. However, it is widely believed that the official number greatly understates

the extent of the problem. Nonperforming loans could exceed 50 percent of GDP, or

more than $600 billion."[288]

The third are increasing fiscal deficits and the possibility of inflation. "More

troubling are potential liabilities, including nonperforming loans held by state banks

and unfunded pension liabilities. Fiscal deficits could eventually lead to inflation if

the government prints money to pay pensioners or bail out banks, state-owned

enterprises, and local governments."[289]

Fourth, there is concern about lagging domestic innovation for certain

significant industries. The first of these is automotive.[290] The second is the

internet.[291] Such socio-spatial inequality mentioned earlier could easily impede

China's economic growth and industrial development. "Both the automobile and

[288] Shane and Gale, *China*, p. 13.
[289] Shane and Gale, *China*, p. 15.
[290] Tilman Altenburg, Hubert Schmitz, and Andreas Stamm, "Breakthroughs? China's and India's Transition from Production to Innovation," *World Development*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (2008), pp. 325-344.
[291] Jun Zhang, "China's Dynamic Industrial Sector: The Internet Industry," *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, Vol. 49, No. 5 (2008), pp. 549-568.

Internet sectors, for example, are highly dependent on domestic market penetration of passenger cars and IT products (e.g., PCs and mobile devices) that apparently require certain income thresholds for them to "work."[292]  As growth falls away or stagnates elsewhere in the economy, innovation in these industries may suffer.

III. E. Water Scarcity and Economic Development

Of the many obstacles threatening the continued growth and development of China's economy, none is more pressing than regional water scarcity and access to potable water for supporting both a large urbanizing population and the demands of irrigation and crop production.  As Elizabeth Economy writes:  "China's environment problems are mounting.  Water pollution and water scarcity are burdening the economy . . . much of the country's land is rapidly turning into desert."[293]

While water pollution due to the country's poorly planned, and, in some regions, unbalanced, urbanization/industrialization projects is a leading cause of increased water scarcity, there are additional, and equally problematic, factors. These include: spatio-temporal distributions of water inconsistent with socio-economic needs of water; decreased access to fresh water due to overuse, inefficiencies, and unequal distribution to the urban areas (as opposed to the rural areas); and continued water transfer failures, which have hurt the local incomes of farmers as well as slowed the industrialization of some cities.

[292] Yeung, "Observations on China's Dynamic Industrial Sector," p. 518.
[293] Elizabeth C. Economy, "The Great Leap Backward? The Costs of China's Environmental Crisis," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 4 (September-October 2007), pp. 38-59, 38.

According to water analyst Yong Jiang, while many factors contribute to China's water scarcity, "the spatio-temporal distribution of water resources is inconsistent with socio-economic needs for water. This inconsistency could cause a conflict between water supply and demand, and this conflict is intensified by economic development, population growth, and urbanization. To make the situation worse, water resource management has been poor, increasing China's vulnerability with serious social and environmental consequences."[294] For Jiang, the two central factors causing the lack of water are, first, rapid industrialization and urbanization associated with Chinese economic growth and large population and flawed water management at local and national levels.[295]

An associated problem is the lack of potable water for the Chinese citizenry. "Although China holds the fourth-largest freshwater resources in the world (after Brazil, Russia, and Canada), skyrocketing demand, overuse, inefficiencies, pollution, and unequal distribution have produced a situation in which two-thirds of China's approximately 660 cities have less water than they need and 110 of them suffer severe shortages."[296]

Furthermore, environmental degradation (in the form of water pollution and resource depletion) coupled with the inefficiencies of the Chinese bureaucracy, particularly the rampant corruption at the local level, has already begun to take a toll on the industrialization and overall economic development of the country. The

[294] Yong Jiang, "China's Water Scarcity," *Journal of Environmental Management*, Vol. 90, No. 7 (May 2009), pp. 3185-3196, 3189.
[295] Jiang, "China's Water Scarcity," pp. 3189-3193.
[296] Economy, "The Great Leap Backward," p. 42.

most obvious threat to the Chinese economy is the unsustainable economic and political initiatives implemented by China's policymakers in the pursuit of "growth at any cost." In the case of environmental damage, "environmental degradation and pollution cost the Chinese economy between 8 percent and 12 percent of GDP annually . . . water pollution costs of $35.8 billion one year, air pollution costs of $27.5 billion another, and on and on with weather disasters ($26.5 billion), acid rain ($13.3 billion), desertification ($6 billion), or crop damage from soil pollution ($2.5 billion)."[297]

Clearly, the costs of industrialization in China will impede the "extraordinary trajectory" of economic growth the country has been experiencing in that the cost to remedy environmental degradation requires a substantial share of annual GDP. With fewer and fewer resources at its disposal, the most crucial being fresh water, the Chinese economy will quickly become reliant upon the importation of natural resources to sustain growth.

Another significant cost concerns social stability in areas that are water stressed. Water stress is characterized by: "major, inefficient irrigation water use and rapidly growing non-agricultural water demands, as well as limited water quantity and declining water quality."[298] According to analyst Ximing Cai, "Water stress in northern China has intensified water use conflicts between upstream and downstream areas and also between agriculture, which is still the largest water consumer, and the Municipal and Industrial sectors (M&I), which have been

[297] Economy, "The Great Leap Backward," p. 46.
[298] Economy, "The Great Leap Backward," p. 43.

growing fast.  Water stress has also caused deterioration of fresh water resources in terms of quantity (aquifer over-exploitation and dry rivers, etc.) and quality (eutrophication, organic matter pollution, saline intrusion, etc.)."[299]  Cai summarizes the costs of water stress in northern China:  "part of the economic loss and environmental damage" in that region may be considered "a consequence of water transfer failures, including the current transfers which hurt farmers' livelihood and income, and the needed transfers, which industry and cities have been waiting for but have not received."[300]

In addition, the water stress associated with the issues of scarcity and inefficiency mentioned above can be clearly seen in the hindered development of the local economies of northern China.  Limited water availability in the north, due to low rainfall and runoff combined with inefficient irrigation water use and rapidly growing non-agricultural water demands, has produced a pronounced water stress that has significantly weakened crop production and trade.  "Water shortages have occurred in many areas, particularly in the north.  It is reported that in some northern cities, water supply can meet barely 70% of the demand during the dry season.  Water shortage has caused hardships to household livelihoods and losses in the overall economy, including grain output.  The increasing water scarcity and the competition from other sectors have put irrigation under great pressure in many

[299] Ximing, Cai, "Water Stress, Water Transfer and Social Equity in Northern China—Implications for Policy Reforms" *Journal of Environmental Management*, Vol. 87, No. 1 (April 2008), pp. 14-25, 14.
[300] Cai, "Water Stress, Water Transfer and Social Equity in Northern China—Implications for Policy Reforms" p. 23.

northern regions.  Grain production, a sector heavily dependent on irrigation, is facing unprecedented challenge."[301]

The conclusion of this overview is that water is another Achilles' Heel of the Chinese economy, which will retard its growth unless the leadership takes environmental concerns more broadly, and water resources, specifically, far more seriously.  "In order to continue on its extraordinary trajectory, China needs leaders with the vision to introduce a new set of economic and political initiatives that will transform the way the country does business.  Without such measures, China will not return to global preeminence in the twenty-first century.  Instead, it will suffer stagnation or regression—and all because leader who recognize the challenge before them were unwilling to do what was necessary to surmount it."[302]

IV.  The Problem of India

A final factor influencing China's rise is not internal, but external:  its multiple front war problem.  China's geographical position is in many ways the opposite of the United States.  Whereas the U.S. is isolated by two large oceans and weak neighbors, China is surrounded by potential foes, including three great powers, India, Japan, and Russia, and lesser but significant powers:  South Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam.  As a consequence, the many prospective external foes China faces have the possibility to retard its rise through of cost of great power rivalry, intense security competition, or war.

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[301] Hong Yang and Alexander Zehnder, "China's Regional Water Scarcity and Implications for Grain Supply and Trade," *Environment and Planning A*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (2001), pp. 79-95, 79.
[302] Economy, "The Great Leap Backward," p. 59.

If we suspend the rivalry with the United States for the purpose of analysis, the most important of these potential foes is India, due to its rising power and ambition. Absent the United States, each is a significant threat to the other, and so we should expect intense security competition between them. From the standpoint of geopolitics, China and India are mirror images of each other. They are rising great powers with large populations, rapidly growing economies and military power, and both represent impressive civilizations and seek to expand their influence in international politics. Not surprisingly, they have a history of conflict and rivalry. Indeed, because they live in the same geographic neighborhood, India is in many respects China's most realistic strategic adversary.

Geopolitical analysis expects increasing security competition between the two great powers. A central question that can only be touched on in this analysis is: Will the rivalry with India retard China's rise? Succinctly, and in broad gauge, the answer is yes, if it results in major conventional or nuclear conflict. Clearly, such conflict between the two would weaken both, and would serve the interests of other powers not directly involved in the conflict.

If major conflict does not result, the answer is harder to discern for three reasons. First, this is because the increase in China's power is to some degree a fungible good for Beijing. Strategic or nuclear power may be used to deter and coerce any of its neighbors without reducing the amount available to address other threats. However, its conventional power is not. Use of force against Taiwan or Vietnam, or in other contingencies, does reduce the amount available to address other threats like India. Were China to use force against Vietnam, its conventional

power would weaken to India's benefit.  While that is certainly true in the near term,

the lessons learned in such a conflict might make China a more formidable military

power.  Thus, such conflict may be to China's benefit in the long-term if it advances

Beijing's military effectiveness.

Second, it may be the case that India is more likely to engage in conflict than

China.  For example, a war with Pakistan would result in a severely weakened India,

to China's great benefit.  Thus, the rise of India as a rival to China assumes

stability—that is, that New Delhi will not wage war against any of the threats it faces

beyond China.  If this assumption fails, then New Delhi cannot be expected to offset

Chinese power.  Seen from this perspective, it is critical that the United States keeps

New Delhi from crisis or war with Pakistan, or from another misadventure like the

intervention in Sri Lanka in the 1980s.

Third, it is reasonable to expect that India and China will increasingly clash

not only along their 2,500-mile border, but also in strategic territories like the

Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Strait of Malacca, and Myanmar.[303]  They will also

clash in the Third World, and especially Africa, as each strives to gain allies, secure

resources, in particular energy, and to offset the influence of the other.[304]  Each will

have to devote more resources to that struggle, weakening the relative power of the

loser.  At this point, the winner and loser in such a struggle cannot be identified,

although China does have a significant lead in the penetration of the Third World.  It

[303] James R. Holmes and Toshi Yoshiara, "China and the United States in the Indian Ocean:  An Emerging Strategic Triangle?" *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 61, No. 3 (Summer 2008), pp. 41-60.

[304] On competition in Africa see Robert D. Kaplan, *Monsoon:  The Indian Ocean and the Future of American Power* (New York:  Random House, 2010), pp. 124-130.

must be mentioned that the United States should be expected to be a part of this struggle for influence, and it cannot be assumed that the interests of New Delhi and Washington will always coincide.

The fact that China faces a multiple front war problem is beneficial from the standpoint of the United States, as it keeps Beijing from concentrating its power solely against Washington. Policy planning may be reasonably made on such an expectation. There is no doubt that the growing power of India does complicate the strategic situation for China as it must devote more resources to combat Indian influence and power in Southeast Asia and elsewhere. But the rise of India may be aborted or greatly limited by its own demographic and economic problems, as well as the possibly of war with Pakistan. Further analysis is needed to answer this important issue with greater granularity and nuance to reveal nontrivial but thus far, hidden, opportunities for the United States.

**Section Four**

**Will the Chinese Choice for Confrontation Change**

Building on the arguments of Section Three, it is clear that the Chinese choice for confrontation with the United States is not likely to change. This is the case for two major reasons: evolution and history. In Section Four, I succinctly explore the lessons evolution and history provide for comprehending why the Chinese choice for confrontation is unlikely to change. United States decision-makers should plan for an increasingly assertive China.

I. Evolution's Lesson

Evolution's lesson is that once power is increased the individual or the state wants more power to provide better for the family, in the case of the individual, or extended family group, in the case of the state. To abandon power equals abandoning resources from an evolutionary perspective. While some humans have done so, their limited numbers underscores the powerful drive humans possess to prefer more power and resources to fewer.

The evolutionary logic was fully described in Section One, in the discussion of the evolutionary origins of offensive realism. The essence of the argument bears emphasizing here. More power and resources equal the ability to provide for one's own needs, egoism, as well as making one better for one's family, inclusive fitness, whether one's family is one's genetic relatives, or one's family members who are more distantly related, the extended Chinese "family," which serves as the origin of the powerful ethnocentrism witnessed in China.

II. What History Teaches

Evolution's powerful insight is reinforced by what history teaches. History's lesson is that swift rises in power are especially dangerous for stability in international politics because the increase in power encourages the leadership to seek more, and to push to change, with rapidity, the international system. The history of great power relations provides many examples of this. Germany in the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Soviet Union in its history, Italy under Mussolini, and militaristic Japan are cases of ambition that was thwarted by the opposition of a stronger combination. A concern with China is that it will be the stronger force, as it will be more powerful economically than the United States. Given the imbalance of power, and provided the trend in international politics—China will be seen as rising, while the United States is seen as declining—means that it will be difficult for the United States to provide a counterbalancing coalition.

Additionally, the United States is limited by its ideology of liberalism, whereas in previous cases the dominant state was not constrained by the stabilizing influence of liberalism. The United States does not wage preventive war because of liberalism. Preventive war is fundamentally at odds with the political principles and history of the United States. In contrast, China is an unfettered state. It will act, and do anything to rise. Evolution is the right theory to understand the fierceness and focus of China's determination to become hegemonic.

Evolution and world political history suggest it will be very difficult to dissuade China from its choice for confrontation.

Even if there were a change in China's ideology, it is unlikely that a new regime would be substantially different than the present regime. This is because the Chinese self-identification of China as the exalted place apart from the rest of the world, as the Middle Kingdom between heaven and earth, is explained by evolution and has been one of the consistent and major themes in Chinese history.

To change the Chinese worldview is an exceedingly difficult task, by any standard. The essence of why this is so is because China has no desire to change for two reasons. First, the Communist Party, for all of its problems, has delivered to the Chinese a spectacular period of growth and stability that has returned China to its "rightful" place. Not to recognize the power of that realization is idealism. Second, to change China would require changing China's political DNA and the Chinese people's literal DNA. Absent any institutional pressure through media or the educational system, the Chinese are going to continue to be as egoistic, domineering, ethnocentric, xenophobic, and racist as they have been throughout their history.

The only realistic chance of changing China's choice for confrontation comes from weakening China, so that the ability to confront the United States will be postponed. It is unlikely ever to be abated for the reasons discussed in this study: the combination of drive due to evolutionary impulses, increasing military and diplomatic power due to its prodigious economic growth, and the Chinese ethnocentric, xenophobic, and racist perception of their place in the world.

As the present study has emphasized, there are many reasons to be pessimistic about the possibilities of harmonious relations between the United

States and China.  If not weakened, China will continue to be increasingly belligerent in its relations with the United States.

As the preeminent journalists Bill Sweetman and Richard Fisher of *Aviation Week and Space Technology* recognize, "China historically has demonstrated little to no interest in negotiations or agreements that would limit its military power or options.  Since the late-1980s Washington has failed to thwart China's goal of creating loosely controlled nuclear proxies in North Korea, Pakistan and Iran by diplomatic means.  China's refusal to consider useful dialog on its nuclear weapons and space weapons indicates that the country's broad military buildup will continue without diplomatic or other external restraint."[305]

Although not Sinologists, Sweetman and Fisher succinctly capture a consequence of China's rise.  A more powerful country has no incentive to compromise or to accommodate.  It has increasing incentive to confront other states to advance its interests because confrontation is necessary as the dominant state and the international community are unlikely to cede power and their control over international values, norms, and practices in any other manner.  This is due in large part to the radically different Chinese conception of what those values, norms, and practices are.

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[305] Bill Sweetman and Richard D. Fisher, Jr., "AirSea Battle Concept Is Focused on China," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, April 1, 2010, available online at: http://www.aviationweek.com/aw/generic/story_generic.jsp?channel=awst&id=news/awst/2011/04/04/AW_04_04_2011_p62-299099.xml&headline=AirSea%20Battle%20Concept%20Is%20Focused%20On%20China&next=10.

**Section Five**

**The Domestic Consequences of Failure for China**

The argument of Section Five is that the domestic consequences for failure in the Chinese bid to supplant the United States as the world's dominant state will be severe for the Communist regime. It would be a disaster that could only be paralleled in Chinese history by the Mongol conquest or the trauma of colonization in the nineteenth century. Accordingly, we should expect that the Chinese will be careful in their challenge to the United States to ensure that such a challenge is successful. That is, they win primacy and by so doing solidify domestic support and further legitimacy for the Communist Party. The fact that China increasingly challenges the United States should be taken as evidence that the Communist Party is indeed secure in its dominant position with popular legitimacy and support.

I. Evolution's Lessons

As this study has shown, human evolution has had a defining impact on human behaviors. The consequence of a failed bid for hegemony is no exception. While the precise form of such a failure, should it occur, will be shaped by many events including how it occurs, its rapidity, and United States and U.S. allies' reactions, evolution yields insights into the consequences of such a failure.

Human evolution's lesson is that dominance hierarchies often break down in the face of catastrophic failure like an unsuccessful bid for primacy. As was discussed in Section One, a species that lives communally has two choices. It can either accept organization with some centralization of power, or engage in

perpetual conflict over scarce resources, which may result in serious injury and deprive itself of the benefits of a communal existence, such as more efficient resource harvesting. Ethological studies have confirmed that a hierarchical dominance system within a primate group minimizes overt aggression and that it increases when the alpha male is challenged. What holds the dominance hierarchy together is, first, the reward members receive from being in it, as was discussed above, including protection in return for loyalty. Second, the fear male members in particular have in challenging it. As primatologists have noted in studies of chimpanzees, a failed challenge results in a beating at a minimum and may result in death or expulsion, which would be the equivalent of death for a chimpanzee on its own.[306]

A failed bid for primacy is a danger for both reasons. It relaxes the "contract" established by the dominance hierarchy, the elites have lost legitimacy, and it will also provide subordinate males with their chance to challenge ruling elites. Such failure causes profound humiliation, loss of face, and the undermining of confidence in leadership to the point where the legitimacy of the leadership is questioned and their continued rule is threatened by rival elites and the population. In such a situation, the present elites may crack down but the success of such repressive efforts where the government has lost legitimacy is open to doubt.

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[306] For example, see John Alcock, *The Triumph of Sociobiology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); and Frans B.M. de Waal, ed., *Tree of Origin: What Primate Behavior Can Tell Us about Human Social Evolution* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2001).

II. History's Lessons

Not surprisingly, history's lesson is that failed bids for primacy lead to rivals challenging ruling elites, great political unrest among the population, and even to revolution.

When the hegemonic challenges throughout history are considered, one fact is clear: if the challenger fails, the results are disastrous for it. As Table 6 shows, there have been eleven historical cases of major hegemonic challenges. In these eleven cases, in each case where the challenger initiated conflict and lost, the challenger incurred disastrous consequences. Athens lost its democracy and was occupied by Sparta, who left allies in charge. Famously, Carthage was destroyed and the earth salted. Venice was greatly weakened and remained a shadow of its former power. Napoleonic France was occupied after Napoleon's final defeat and the Bourbon regime restored to power. Germany's challenges were defeated twice with a radical regime change occurring after both defeats. Japan's challenge also resulted in disaster and an equally dramatic regime change for that country. The Soviet Union's struggle yielded its utter defeat and extinction.

The lessons of history for the challenger are: first, challenges can be successful; and second, if you challenge, you had better win, because if defeated, the result will be regime change. United States decision-makers should expect that the Chinese leadership understands this and will heed history's lesson.

**Table 6.**

**Hegemonic Challengers in History**

| HEGEMON | RISING POWER | RISING POWER'S ACTION |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Sparta | Athens | Sparta declares war, invades Attica |
| 2. Rome | Carthage | Carthage challenges Roman expansion in Sicily, Spain, Italy, North Africa |
| 3. Byzantium | Seljuk/Ottoman Turks | Repeated incursions into Byzantine territory |
| 4. Venice | Spain, France | Spain and France fight over Italy |
| 5. Portugal | Spain | Spain absorbs Portugal and attacks the United Provinces |
| 6. Netherlands | France, Great Britain | France attacks the United Provinces, Germany and Spain |
| 7. Sweden | Russia | Russia initiates attack on Sweden's Baltic holdings |
| 8. Great Britain (1714-1815) | France | Napoleon launches wars against Britain and Europe |
| 9. Great Britain (1815-1918) | Germany | Germany seeks dominion over Europe |
| 10. Great Britain (1918-1945) | Germany, Japan, U.S., USSR | Germany and Japan seek empire in Europe and the Pacific |
| 11. United States (1945-1992) | USSR | Soviet Union seeks global domination |
| 12. United States (1992-?) | China | China seeks to undermine U.S. |

**Table 6.**

**Hegemonic Challengers in History Continued**

| OPPOSITION TO RISING POWER | OUTCOME | STRUCTURAL CONSEQUENCE |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Delian League | Peloponnesian War (431-404 B.C.) | End of Athenian empire, exhaustion of Sparta |
| 2. Epirus, mercenary factions, Rome | Three Punic Wars (264-261 B.C., 218-201 B.C., 149-146 B.C.) | Eventual collapse and destruction of Carthage |
| 3. Byzantium, Russia, Venice | Byzantine-Ottoman Wars (1265-1453) | Ottomans win, end of Byzantine Empire |
| 4. England, Ottoman empire, Italian city-states, France | Italian Wars (1494-1517) | Spanish victory, decline of Venice, rise of Portugal |
| 5. England, France | Spanish Wars (1585-1608) | Demise of France, rise of Netherlands |
| 6. Great Britain | Wars of Louis XIV (1689-1713) | Demise of France, rise of Great Britain |
| 7. Russian Empire | Great Northern War (1700-1721) | End of Swedish empire, rise of Russia |
| 8. Britain, Austria, Prussia, Russia | Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815) | End of French challenge, rise of Britain |
| 9. United States, Britain, France, Russia | World War I (1914-1918) | German defeat, continued British hegemony |
| 10. U.S., USSR, Britain | World War II (1939-1945) | End of German and Japanese challenge, exhaustion of British power, rise of U.S. and USSR |
| 11. U.S., Western Europe, Japan, China (1960-1992) | Cold War (1945-1992) | End of Soviet empire and rise of U.S. as sole global hegemon |
| 12. U.S. | Not Determined | Not Determined |

III. Chinese History's Lessons

When we specifically consider Chinese history, we discern the same result. Chinese history's lesson is that failure leads to revolt. If the revolt is not suppressed successfully, it leads to regime change. However, at present, there is modest evidence of attacks on the legitimacy of the Communist Party. The work *Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party* is scathing in its denunciation of the history and present rule of the Party, as well as Communism.[307] It received considerable attention, but its effect has been modest.

The Chinese leadership watches revolts carefully. Recent unrest in the authoritarian governments in the Middle East is seen as a precursor to what could happen in China. NATO-led military action in Libya is interpreted in China as the United States and European powers attempting to re-colonize that country, which is fully in keeping with the strong nationalist and anti-Western attitudes common in Chinese media and blogs. For example, *Xinhua* reports on 28 March 2011 that Libya demonstrates: "Western hegemony, colonialism, and military intervention in others' internal affairs have not changed; only their means and methods of intervention have changed."[308] The article highlights "warnings" to China as evinced by NATO action in Libya, including: the Western hegemons' continued use of "gangster logic;" second, the coalition's air-strikes are the latest trend in colonialism; and third, the West is still obsessed with the use of force.

[307] The Epoch Times, *Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party* (Mountain View, Calif.: Broad Press, 2004).
[308] "Xinhua: Five Warnings from the Chaos in Libya," *Chinascope.org*, 7 April 2011, available at: http://chinascope.org/main/content/view/3461/106/.

Thus, there are four great risks for the Communist Party of China should it fail. First, the Party will have botched its mission to restore China to its historical, "rightful" place and the center of world civilization. Second, this will result in a loss of legitimacy for the Communist Party of China. Third, it is likely that there will be significant domestic unrest far exceeding the 1989 Tiananmen revolt. Fourth, this would place the Communist Party at great risk of falling from power. It would be the greatest crisis the Communist party has ever faced.

Given the consequences of failure, we should expect that China will be willing to take considerable risks to ensure that it wins in a clash with the United States. In sum, the balance of resolve lies with it. This is not unusual. The balance of resolve typically lies with the challenger, who is able to devote more energy and focus on its strategy to supplant the hegemon than the hegemon is able to devote to guarding against the rising challenger. This advantage is further strengthened by the willpower of the Chinese leadership and the themes of Chinese strategy, including *shi*.

Thus, the balance of resolve will favor China over the United States. The pessimistic result is that the dominance of the United States will end, and probably far sooner than U.S. leadership expects. To avoid such an outcome, the U.S. must devote more effort to understand the motivations of the Chinese, the strength of their will to defeat the United States, and to begin mobilizing the American people so that they may understand the size and scope of the challenge the United States faces. Chinese dominance is not the Eleventh Commandment. There are many steps the United States can take to defeat China. But to do so requires recognizing what is

unpalatable for many in U.S. leadership:  the Chinese are a threat.  The Chinese do seek to overthrow the position of the United States in international politics, and much of the world order that the United States created.

The lessons of evolution are to know your environment, recognize that it is fiercely competitive, know who the predators are and the strength of their motivation since the human brain is still the one suited for our evolutionary past, and be more adaptive than they are.

The lessons of power politics are to recognize that competition is the fabric of international politics, great powers rise and fall, and leaders of states must recognize hard choices and possess the willpower to act to maintain their position in world politics, or see it lost to someone who wants it more.

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