

The Rise of a Dualistic Dragon:

*The Contrastive Strategic Mentality of the People's
Republic of China under American Hegemonism*

By

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B.A., University of Victoria, 2004

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Abstract

This report is an investigation of the strategic mentality of the Chinese government during the current U.S.-led unipolar world. It aims to determine whether this mentality is prone to challenge American predominance and reject the dominant rules, values, and structure of the interstate system or is willing to cooperate and accept the U.S. hegemony and the current status-quo of the global community. To understand the Chinese strategic mindset, this report examines China's strategic culture, political reliance on nationalism, and unique perceptions of the threats and opportunities in the international environment. These three factors each possess contrastive motivations that encourage the Chinese leadership to adopt policies that both accept and reject the current unipolar world. Such dualistic factors mould a contrastive strategic mentality amongst the Chinese leadership that, while overly antagonistic towards the structure and certain values of the current interstate system, is willing to adopt both revisionist and status-quo foreign policies.

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASAT	Anti-Satellite
ASCM	Anti-ship cruise missile
CASS	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
C4ISR	Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
CNP	Comprehensive National Power
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treat
EAC	East Asian Community
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NSC	New Security Concept
PRC	People's Republic of China
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PPP	Purchasing power parity
SCS	South China Sea
SDF	Self-Defence Forces (Japan)
SOE	State-owned enterprises
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WTO	World Trade Organization

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my loving mother, father, sister, and the rest of my family. You mean everything to me, and I will always love you.

I

INTRODUCTION

In 1993, *New York Times* reporter Nicholas Kristof predicted that China's re-emergence on the global stage "[would] be the most important trend in the world for the next century."¹ Under the guidance of the Chinese Communist Party, the People's Republic of China (PRC) is increasingly persuading the international community to accept this once-lofty prediction. China is no longer a nation routinely victimized by foreign powers or forced to pursue disastrous, counterproductive, ideological policies under the leadership of Mao Zedong. Instead, it has transformed into a powerful, calculating state bent on reclaiming its former status as a major - if not predominant - power in the Asian region and abroad. Since 1979, when Mao's successor Deng Xiaoping implemented intense economic reforms, the nation has become a definitive actor in the international community and many pundits agree that it is destined to become the world's newest superpower.

Such forecasts are derived from China's exceptional and growing sources of national power. With over 1.3 billion citizens, China remains the most populous country on earth, with one fifth of the entire human population residing in the world's third-largest country.² Its increasingly modern military outnumbers any other nation, with 1.64 million troops, and controls the third-largest nuclear arsenal in the world.³ Diplomatically, the PRC possesses veto power as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and has membership in nearly all of the multilateral regional and

¹ Lei Guang, "Realpolitik Nationalism: International Sources of Chinese Nationalism," *Modern China* 31.4 (Oct. 2005): 488.

² Max Boot, "Beijing Plans for National Greatness," *Weekly Standard* 10 Oct. 2005, 07 Feb. 2007 <<http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/006/149ugqci.asp?pg=2>>; "China warns of population growth," *BBC News* 7 May 2007, 20 Aug. 2007 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6631471.stm><http://www.worldbook.com/wb/Article?id=ar111400>>

³ John J. Tkacik Jr., "China's Quest for a Superpower Military," *The Heritage Foundation* 17 May 2007: 14, 16 Feb. 2008 <http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/upload/bg_2036.pdf>; and Samuel S. Kim, "China's Path to Great Power Status in the Globalization Era," *Asian Perspective* 27.1 (2003): 52.

international organizations and associations, including the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). However, China's most significant source of influence comes from its considerable economic strength. While its gross domestic product (GDP) per capita remains at a third-world level, China's real GDP has grown from 1979 to 2005 at an average annual rate of 9.7%, according to a 2006 report for the United States Congress.⁴ Recent statistics also indicate that the PRC's economy expanded by 11.4% in 2007, which Chinese officials announce is the fastest growth rate in 13 years.⁵ Such a tremendous pace has turned the PRC into the second-largest economy in the world and could make China "the world's largest exporter within the next few years and the largest economy within a few decades."⁶ The need to fuel this tremendous economic development with energy resources has already made the PRC the world's largest consumer of oil and coal.⁷ The emission of carbon dioxide and waste from these energy resources, as well as China's vigorous global pursuit for remaining energy supplies, is having a profound ecological, political, and security impact on the international community. These sources of influence enable China to become highly influential in regional and international affairs. As Samuel Kim states, "The combined weight of these malleable and non-malleable factors virtually guarantees that China will be acknowledged inescapably as part of both the problem and the solution, regionally and globally."⁸

Questioning China's Acceptance of the American Unipolar World

China's rise to the status of a great power will undoubtedly alter the existing world order, and nations must either acknowledge and appropriately adjust to the new realities of the emerging international community or deal with the ramifications of their own

⁴ Wayne Morrison, "China's Economic Conditions," Congressional Research Service (12 July 2006) :1. 05 March 2007 < <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33534.pdf>>

⁵ "China growth reaches 13-year high," BBC News 24 Jan. 2008.,2 Feb. 2008 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7206174.stm>>

⁶ "China's economic muscle shrinks," BBC News, 17 Dec. 2007, 22 Dec. 2007 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7148695.stm>> ; and Morrison 1.

⁷ "Country Profile: China," BBC News 14 Dec. 2006, 10 April 2007 < http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/country_profiles/1287798.stm>

⁸ Kim "China's Path" 52.

nescience. The rapidly expanding power of China and other Asian nations is causing a global power shift from the traditional Western base to the East Asian region, as Mr. Hoge Jr. explains in *Foreign Affairs*:

Major shifts of power between states, not to mention regions, occur infrequently and are rarely peaceful. In the early twentieth century, the imperial order and the aspiring states of Germany and Japan failed to adjust to each other. The conflict that resulted devastated large parts of the globe. Today, the transformation of the international system will be even bigger and will require the assimilation of markedly different political and cultural traditions...the stakes in Asia are huge and will challenge the West's adaptability.⁹

The international relations theory of power transition provides an apt illustration of the potential risks inherent in such shifts of power when applied to Sino-U.S. relations. According to the theory, the international state system is a hierarchy dominated by a single power, the United States. Its predominance over the global community following the end of the Cold War allows Washington to set the "international status-quo...[which is] the set of formal and informal rules governing international interactions in economics, politics, and military spheres."¹⁰ As the dominant hegemon, America establishes these rules to benefit its interests and, ideally, to continue its superior position and leadership within the world order. Revisionist nations are states that oppose this U.S.-led international order and the status-quo rules that it enforces upon the world. Their intent is to develop the power required to transform the state system into a structure with a set of rules that benefits their own national interests rather than those of the ruling nation.

The ability of a hegemon to identify other nations' levels of satisfaction with the prevailing status-quo is therefore essential within the power transition theory. For example, if a state begins to rise in power relative to the dominant nation, but is generally satisfied with the status-quo under the hegemon's rule, then the pre-eminent power is less inclined to prevent its rise. Such an emerging nation does not pose a significant threat to the hegemon because it supports the existing international rules and will not aggressively

⁹ James F. Hoge Jr., "A Global Power Shift in the Making," *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2004). 15 May 2007 < <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20040701facomment83401/james-f-hoge-jr/a-global-power-shift-in-the-making.html> >

¹⁰ Douglas Lemke, "Great Powers in the Post-Cold War World: A Power Transition Perspective," *Balance of power: Theory and Practice in the 21st Century* ed. T.V. Paul. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004) 55-56.

challenge the global influence of the incumbent state. However, if that nation is dissatisfied with the status-quo under the hegemon's leadership and achieves the power necessary to threaten the existing international order, then the dominant power is inclined to act, perhaps forcefully, to impede the rising power's ascent. Any hesitation by the hegemon to react to the emerging challenge would result in a direct conflict of interests between itself and the revisionist nation. This strife would force the pre-eminent country to either accept an inferior global position of power or directly confront the challenger. As Douglas Lemke explains: "This leads to the main hypothesis of power transition theory, that when a dissatisfied great-power state achieves parity with the dominant power, the probability of international war rises dramatically."¹¹ With China's dramatic growth in power, the obvious question posed by American strategists is whether the PRC is satisfied with the existing U.S.-led international order or intent on altering it to better suit Chinese interests.

Many policy-circles, especially within the United States, view China as a threat to international stability and predict that Beijing will belligerently use its power to counter American hegemony. John J. Mearsheimer, for example, believes that China and the U.S. are likely "to engage in an intense security competition with considerable potential for war" as Beijing seeks regional dominance in Asia.¹² Such "China-threat theorists", who adhere to the realist school of thought, view the PRC as a dissatisfied, aggressive revisionist power willing to use its vast resources to alter the international status-quo.¹³ From this perspective, America and its allies should adopt confrontational policies towards China to thwart the PRC's growth and to ensure the maintenance of its weak status, thus prolonging U.S. global dominance.

Other theorists see China as a positive force in ensuring the stability of the existing global community and expect its leaders to act within peaceful international norms. According to the theory of liberalism, globalization pacifies the dynamics of interstate relations by creating mutual economic interests between nations that their leaders can only protect and strengthen through the preservation of peaceful foreign

¹¹ Lemke 57.

¹² John Mearsheimer, "The Rise of China Will Not Be Peaceful at All," *The Australian* (18 Nov. 2006). 28 Nov. 2007 < <http://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/P0014.pdf> >

¹³ Emma V. Broomfield, "Perceptions of Danger: the China-threat theory", *Journal of Contemporary China* 12.35 (2003): 269.

affairs. This economic interdependence “lowers the likelihood of war by increasing the value of trading over the alternative of aggression.”¹⁴ Interdependence also constrains nations by enticing them to avoid the opportunity costs inherent in unilateral behaviour. “A country can choose to ‘go it alone’...but it is in effect choosing to forego the opportunities of international trade and thus is weakening itself.”¹⁵ In addition, globalization forces nations to cooperate with one another in order to solve international challenges - such as terrorism and global warming - that a single nation is unable to address on its own. This cooperation helps facilitate status-quo values amongst the participating nations, according to liberalists, by enhancing interactions between those states in support of the current world order and those that may be against it. Liberalists therefore view China’s growing economic interdependence as encouraging the rising power to adopt peaceful foreign policies, and they view its involvement in multilateral organizations as promoting status-quo values amongst the PRC leadership. According to liberalism, the international community should adopt a strategy of engagement, not confrontation, with China to deepen its interconnectedness with the interstate system, which will in turn promote peaceful and cooperative Chinese behaviour.

It is paramount for the United States to accurately decipher which, if either, of the above possibilities best reflects the strategic intentions of the PRC. Wars are routinely the result of miscalculations, inaccurate inferences, and misjudgements by one nation over the policies of another, according to Dr. Robert Jervis in his article *War and Misperception*.¹⁶ Reaching the wrong conclusion about China’s future objectives can therefore cause America to either unnecessarily confront an otherwise peaceful Chinese state, or it could provide a future revisionist power with the time to build the required capabilities to challenge the U.S. world order.

This report aims to investigate the strategic mentality of the PRC government to analyze whether the rising state is determined to challenge American predominance and

¹⁴ Dale C. Copeland, “Economic Interdependence and War: A Theory of Trade Expectations,” *International Security* 20.4 (Spring 1996): 5.

¹⁵ Brantly Womack, “How Size matters: the United States, China, and asymmetry,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 24.4 (1 Dec. 2001): 123-124.

¹⁶ Thomas Skypek, “Comparative Strategic Cultures: Literature Review (Part 2),” *Science Application International Corporation* (21 November 2006), 20 June 2007.
<[http://www.dtra.mil/documents/asco/publications/comparitive_strategic_cultures_curriculum/course%20materials/Skypek%20Lit%20Review%20\(final%20rev%2021%20Nov\).pdf](http://www.dtra.mil/documents/asco/publications/comparitive_strategic_cultures_curriculum/course%20materials/Skypek%20Lit%20Review%20(final%20rev%2021%20Nov).pdf)>

reject the dominant rules and values of the interstate system or is willing to cooperate and accept U.S. hegemony and the current status-quo. Such an investigation requires an understanding of the factors that shape the strategic goals and motivations of the Chinese leadership. If these factors shape national objectives that are antithetical to peaceful interstate relations, U.S. predominance, and the present status-quo, then the PRC will adopt an aggressive and antagonistic strategic mentality that favours pugnacious foreign policies. On the other hand, if these factors influence the Chinese leadership to maintain amicable relations with the U.S. and accept present international norms and rules, then China will develop a cordial mindset prone to behave in a cooperative and peaceful manner. This report argues that three contrasting variables mould a dualistic Chinese strategic mentality that, while overly antagonistic towards U.S. pre-eminence, encourages the PRC leadership to adopt both revisionist and status-quo foreign policies in the post-Cold War era.

To determine the nature of China's strategic mentality towards the U.S. unipolar world order, this report relies on the publications of various Chinese and non-Chinese scholars, reporters, and government officials. Its conclusion is derived from exhaustive research of academic journals, government publications, websites, periodicals, and newspapers for primary and secondary sources. Statements and writings from PRC scholars within Chinese government think tanks are of particular importance to this paper's findings, especially in terms of understanding the perceptions of the PRC leadership. China remains an authoritarian state with a highly opaque decision-making apparatus, with nine members of the Politburo Standing Committee - paramount of whom is President Hu Jintao - making the ultimate decisions in all Chinese affairs. These leaders increasingly depend on the advice of numerous experts, analysts, and scholars within PRC-affiliated research institutes and think tanks to address a highly complex interstate system. The overt promulgation of ideas and viewpoints from these Chinese individuals offer Western observers, and this report, a glimpse into the traditionally veiled perceptions and strategic calculations of the PRC government.

China's unique strategic culture is the first factor discussed in this investigation, as it represents a fundamental and subconscious influence behind the strategic mentality of senior Chinese leaders, analysts, advisors, and scholars, hereafter referred to as

Chinese elites. An observation of China's culturally established strategic mentality for solving national security challenges reveals two opposing strands of ideology: cultural moralism and realpolitik. The first strand represents China's fictitious self-image as a benign culture with leaders beholden to the moral principles of Confucianism. Through this strand, Chinese leaders are morally committed to seek peaceful and virtuous relations with neighbouring states. The second strand, however, represents China's actual strategic culture, with Chinese leaders eager to adopt aggressive, realpolitik solutions to their foreign-policy challenges. A realpolitik mindset may encourage leaders to actually adopt accommodating and passive foreign policies when the nation is relatively weak; however, it encourages militant, expansionistic behaviour once the nation has acquired an appropriate amount of strength. Through this second strand, Chinese leaders could sincerely believe in cultural moralism, but, due to a unique interpretation of the ideology, could still be prone to realpolitik behaviour. Alternatively, they may use cultural moralism as merely a façade to disguise their realpolitik intentions. Regardless of whether Chinese leaders are aware of this realpolitik aspect of their strategic mentality, this dualistic strategic culture traditionally causes China to promote itself as a benevolent and peaceful power, while in reality it is eager to implement aggressive, expansionistic, and revisionist foreign policies.

Chinese nationalism is the second factor analyzed in this report. Since implementing economic reforms in 1979, communism has waned as a cohesive ideology for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to utilize in rallying support behind their leadership. This is highly significant since the preservation of the CCP's political dominance is the primary goal of the nation. As a result, the PRC leadership sought to confirm their continued survival through the promotion of the only remaining ideology capable of unifying the country behind CCP rule, nationalism. This substitution of communism with nationalism requires a vigorous government effort to remind Chinese citizens of their nation's tragic loss of great power status and subsequent victimization by foreign powers during the so-called "century of humiliation." By creatively enflaming specific patriotic sentiments, the CCP hopes to intertwine nationalism with loyalty towards the authoritarian government. Such a union allows the Chinese leadership to maintain its political preservation by appeasing nationalists' demands for the rejuvenation

of the Chinese state. Achieving China's former glory, however, requires the use of "pragmatic nationalism" – explained in greater detail in Chapter 3. This concept views economic growth as the most essential requirement for Chinese leaders in order to preserve their authority. Only through the adoption of peaceful, pragmatic, and status-quo policies will China be able to continue the economic development it requires to rejuvenate the nation and thus satisfy nationalists' ambitions. Leaders adhering to pragmatic nationalism, therefore, seek amicable and friendly foreign policies that are conducive to economic trade. Unfortunately, a strand of nationalism outside the control of the government is challenging this pragmatic and cooperative approach to achieving national rejuvenation. This growing movement, referred to as "popular nationalism," pressures Chinese elites to adhere to the aggressive and emotive wishes of domestic patriots in the conduct of foreign policies, regardless of the economic consequences. This requires PRC officials to balance between adopting status-quo policies for the sake of economic growth and revisionist and antagonistic policies for the sake of domestic stability. Such a balancing act further enforces a contradictory strategic mentality amongst the Chinese leadership.

The third factor lies in the contrasting perceptions of the PRC government towards their interstate system. On one hand, Chinese elites are antagonistic towards the current world order as they regard the continued dominance of the U.S. over the interstate system as the gravest challenge to China's great power ascension. American hegemony exacerbates Chinese political, cultural, and especially realpolitik fears, and encourages PRC analysts to suspect Washington of adopting a strategy designed to both solidify its global pre-eminence and prevent China from emerging as a strategic rival. America's aggressive behaviour from the 1990s to the present seemingly validates these suspicions in the eyes of Chinese policy advisors. From its growing protectorate role over Taiwan to its recent promulgation of the China-threat theory, the U.S. has proven to Beijing that it is an aggressive, hegemonic interventionist antithetical to Chinese interests. Washington's attempts to create anti-Chinese sentiment and alliances in Asia to contain the rise of the PRC only further CCP elites' anxiety and realization that the traditional power politics of realism - where one nation threatens another through military and political means to achieve greater power and protect strategic interests - continues to exist in the new

millennium. Such ominous views of the interstate system create a desire amongst Chinese elites to revise the unipolar world into an alternative more conducive to the PRC's national rejuvenation.

On the other hand, China recognizes a strategic opportunity in the current dynamics of the world order that offers the Chinese leadership the ability to address the revisionist concerns of the previous factors while abiding by the global status-quo. This opportunity derives from the mitigation of traditional power politics by globalization and its emphasis on economic interdependence and multilateralism. By promoting peaceful international relations, these liberalist values transform the definition of a state's national strength to include non-military factors, which China refers to as its "comprehensive national power" (CNP). The PRC's perception of a strategic opportunity lies in Chinese elites deciding to wage a "war of comprehensive national power" where it uses peaceful and status-quo practices to challenge the U.S. hegemony, improve China's relative power, and alter the American-inspired global status-quo while continuing to appear as a benign and cooperative state. This allows China to adopt the anti-hegemonic, confrontational policies encouraged by its strategic culture, popular nationalists, and threat perceptions. At the same time, it allows the PRC to preserve its status-quo image, which helps to bolster the claim of China's traditional benevolence, improve its economic relations, and undermine the China-threat theory. However, this war of CNP does not guarantee that China will behave as a cooperative power. Chinese elites view globalization as a double-edged sword capable of violating their sovereignty and undermining its national security. The PRC is therefore hesitant to fully adopt all status-quo behaviour, even if it does advance its war of CNP. This is especially true considering that such cooperative and responsible behaviour is unable to address all of the ominous, strategic threats that China identifies within the unipolar world.

This paper concludes with an investigation of the effect of China's dualistic mentality on the PRC's international, regional, and military policies. The amalgamation of the above factors encourages Chinese officials to adopt both cooperative and antagonistic foreign policies towards the U.S. unipolar world order. These cultural, nationalistic, and perceptual motivations encourage the PRC to behave peacefully and accommodatingly with the U.S. and its international order for the sake of fulfilling self-

strengthening reforms, furthering economic growth, and implementing CNP warfare. These same factors, however, also encourage aggressive and revisionist behaviour in order for China to alter the international balance-of-power in China's favour, to satisfy domestic nationalists, and to address realpolitik strategic concerns. Such contrasting motivations result in a strategic mindset that pragmatically weighs the benefits of status-quo and cooperative behaviour with the costs to China's realpolitik and nationalistic objectives. The result is a dualistic Chinese strategic approach to foreign affairs, which sometimes demonstrates a desire on the part of the PRC to accept the U.S. unipolar order, while at other times portrays a desire to challenge the American hegemony and status-quo rules.

Internationally, the PRC has proactively fostered a self-image as a cooperative and status-quo power through its participation in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). However, China's support and protection of tyrannical regimes in Myanmar, Iran, and Sudan belie its image as a nation in support of U.S.-inspired values. This two-faced approach to foreign relations is further evident in the regional diplomatic manoeuvring of the PRC. Through its "good neighbourliness" policy, China has striven to win the favour of regional states and to articulate to the Asian community its intent to become a helpful and responsible power. It has attempted to achieve this objective through its supportive response to the Asian financial crisis, mitigation of the North Korean nuclear crisis, and cooperative engagement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). However, the PRC's adoption of revisionist and aggressive behaviour in Asia has undermined these efforts to project a status-quo image. From the Chinese promulgation of a "new security concept," which challenged America's alliance system, to its bellicose behaviour through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the PRC has developed an image as a confrontational power willing to challenge both the U.S. and the international status-quo. Finally, China's military behaviour demonstrates an obvious revisionist posture on the part of the PRC, albeit with some minor examples of cooperative and status-quo behaviour. These latter examples include China's improved nuclear proliferation record, acceptance of non-armament agreements, military diplomacy, and relatively moderate military expenditures. Despite these signs of benevolence and cooperation, actions by

the Chinese military, known as the People's Liberation Army (PLA), demonstrate clear examples of irresponsible, aggressive, and revisionist policies. This report identifies such concerning behaviour with China's transfer of conventional weapons, lack of transparency over military expenditures, provocative actions by PLA naval vessels, military preparations to retake Taiwan and wage war against the U.S., and the PLA's perceived intentions to project its military power beyond a Taiwanese contingency. By identifying the above motivating factors behind China's strategic mentality, this report aspires to contribute to the discourse surrounding the foreign policy behaviour of the PRC.

II

THE DUALISTIC NATURE OF THE CHINESE STRATEGIC CULTURE

Introduction

The traditional and cultural strategic beliefs and philosophies of China form the foundation for the PRC leadership's strategic mentality towards the current American unipolar world. According to the constructivist school of international relations theory, interstate relationships are shaped "to a considerable degree by subjective factors, by beliefs and ideas that people carry around in their heads and that cause them to interpret events and data in particular ways."¹⁷ These constructivists believe that one of the most important subjective factors influencing interstate behaviour lies within a nation's "strategic culture."¹⁸ Specifically, a strategic culture represents the:

*Shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behaviour, derived from common experiences and accepted narratives (both oral and written), that shape collective identity and relationships to other groups, and which determine appropriate ends and means for achieving security objectives.*¹⁹

In other words, a strategic culture "pertains to a people's distinctive style of dealing with and thinking about the problems of national security [and war]."²⁰ All nations, according to Glen Fisher, devise unique solutions to national security challenges because of their culturally-established mindsets.²¹ These mentalities represent a prism through which a

¹⁷ Aaron L. Friedberg, "The Future of U.S.-China Relations: Is Conflict Inevitable?," International Security 30.2 (Fall 2005): 34.

¹⁸ Friedberg 34.

¹⁹ Christopher Twomey, "Chinese Strategic Cultures: Survey and Critique," Science Application International Corporation (31 Oct. 2006): 4, 15 May 2007. <[http://www.dtra.mil/documents/asco/publications/comparitive_strategic_cultures_curriculum/case%20studies/China%20\(Twomey\)%20final%20%20Nov%202006.pdf](http://www.dtra.mil/documents/asco/publications/comparitive_strategic_cultures_curriculum/case%20studies/China%20(Twomey)%20final%20%20Nov%202006.pdf)>

²⁰ Rosita Dellios, "Chinese Strategic Culture: Part 1 – The Heritage from the Past," Bond University (April 1994), 11 Nov. 2006 <<http://www.international-relations.com/rp/RP1WB.HTM>>

²¹ Kimberly A. Crider, "Strategic Implications of Culture," Air Command and Staff College Air University (Sept. 1999): 1, 22 April 2007 <<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/wright/wf08.pdf>>

state's leadership evaluates its international security requirements and foreign policy objectives. As Charles Kupchan notes in *The Vulnerability of Empire*, a nation's strategic culture consists of:

*...images and symbols that shape how a polity understands its relationship between metropolitan security and empire, conceives of its position in the international hierarchy, and perceives the nature and scope of the nation's external ambition. These images and symbols at once **mould public attitudes and become institutionalized and routinized in the structure and process of decision making**...Inasmuch as strategic culture shapes the boundaries of politically legitimate behaviour in the realm of foreign policy and affects how elites conceive of the national interest and set strategic priorities, it plays a **crucial role in shaping grand strategy**.*²²

Such pundits regard a country's particular assortment of historical experiences and cultural beliefs as a key determinant in its adoption of benevolent or malevolent international relations.²³ Chinese elites, including civilian intellectuals and government officials, are themselves agreeing with the ubiquitous and subconscious force of China's strategic culture on the formation of PRC strategic policies. In 1997, Lieutenant General Li Jijun, a former vice president of the *Chinese Academy of Military Sciences* stated:

*Culture is the root and foundation of strategy. Strategic thinking, in the process of its evolutionary history, flows into the mainstream of a country or a nation's culture. Each country or nation's strategic culture cannot but bear the imprint of cultural traditions, which in a subconscious and complex way, prescribes and defines strategy making.*²⁴

The following section provides an analysis of China's strategic culture. While Communism has certainly left a profound impact on the Chinese modern society, it is a relatively new ideology to China, since Mao Zedong only recently introduced the concept to the PRC in the early twentieth century. This chapter therefore aims to investigate the prevailing ideologies that have shaped the Chinese strategic mentality during the majority of its 5,000 year history. Such an analysis reveals the existence of two opposing strands of ideology - one being China's idealistic self-image, residing only within the minds of Chinese elites and the other being the actual strategic culture affecting Chinese

²² James R. Holmes, "China Fashions a Maritime Identity," *Issues & Studies* 42.3 (Sept. 2006): 95.

²³ Crider 1.

²⁴ Andrew Scobell, "China and Strategic Culture," *Strategic Studies Institute* (May 2002): 1, 04 March 2007 <<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/files/pub60.pdf>>

behaviour. The idealistic strand consists solely of cultural moralism, which commits Chinese rulers to uphold Confucian moral principles when conducting domestic and strategic policies. Following this dogma, the Chinese people assess the legitimacy of leaders' right to govern through their benevolence and virtue and are encouraged to rebel against those rulers who govern through violence and coercion. This moralism has imprinted itself on the teachings of famous strategists, including the legendary Sun-tzu, and has resonated throughout the strategic thinking of Chinese elites for thousands of years. Modern CCP officials and certain Western scholars are very keen on promoting this strand of China's strategic culture and contrasting it with the strategic culture of the West. While they regard cultural moralism as an inherent, unique trait that continues to force China to adopt only peaceful foreign policies, they perceive its Western counterpart as advocating the use of violent, expansionistic, and confrontational external relations.

The second actual strand of the Chinese strategic culture is based on a violent realpolitik ideology. Stemming from the international relations theory of realism, realpolitik views nation-states as the primary actors in international affairs and existing within a hostile, highly competitive, anarchic system devoid of any central authority.²⁵ Such an ominous international context creates foreign policy behaviour that centres not on moral principles, but rather on the desire to ensure a state's survival through pragmatic calculations and the maximization of one's power relative to other states.²⁶ The achievement of superior capabilities and dominance over other states is essential in such an anarchic system, since only the strongest powers can ensure their survival and protect themselves against the preferred coercive behaviour of their rivals.²⁷ The fact that all nations strive to maximize their relative power leads realists to emphasize the endemic nature of violence, coercion and competition in world politics.²⁸ China's traditional strategic culture has violently adhered to this dogma, in what Alastair Iain Johnston refers to as "parabellum, or hard realpolitik" paradigm.²⁹ According to this paradigm, Chinese rulers have viewed military force as highly effective and necessary when implementing

²⁵ Solomon Hussein, "In Defence of Realism: Confessions of a Fallen Idealist," *African Security Review* 5.2 (1996) 02 Nov. 2007 <<http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/ASR/5No2/5No2/InDefence.html>>.

²⁶ George H. Quester, "The Bush Foreign Policy and The Good Society," *The Good Society* 14.3 (2005): 21.

²⁷ Yuan-Kang Wang, "Offensive Realism and the Rise of China," *Issues & Studies* 40.1 (March 2004): 4.

²⁸ Hussein.

²⁹ Johnston "Cultural Realism" 61.

foreign policies, and viewed offensive warfare as essential in advancing China's national interests.

There are two possible explanations when observing this second, violent strand of China's strategic culture. The first suggests that Chinese elites truly do adhere to cultural moralism but are unwittingly predisposed to acts of realpolitik violence due to a confused interpretation of Confucian principles. In this case, the moralistic ideology justifies coercive behaviour and attempts to dominant the international community by defining such actions as being ethically defensible. The second interpretation suggests that Chinese strategic calculations derive from a realpolitik mentality that is highly sensitive to the international balance-of-power and uses cultural moralism merely as a façade to justify aggressive foreign policies. Through this option, China utilizes a realist and militant outlook on the international community that violently strives to address national security concerns and maximize its relative power against rivals. However, it also adheres to a *quan bian* decisions axiom, where it adopts accomodationist and passive foreign policies when relatively weak but implements aggressive foreign policies when possessing superior relative strength to other states. Regardless of which interpretation is correct, the result is a Chinese strategic culture that while rhetorically benign, is actually highly inclined to confront dominant nations, but only after it has surreptitiously developed the necessary material strength to do so. This cultural behaviour represents the foundation of China's dualistic strategic mentality and is essential when understanding the foreign policy approach of the Chinese leadership to the U.S. unipolar world.

The Chinese Cultural Pursuit of Confucian Peace, Order, and Virtue

It is true that almost all nations rhetorically tout their strategic culture as adhering to a strictly peaceful dogma. China, however, is unique in the extreme degree to which it stresses its traditional passivity as inimitable from other strategic cultures around the world.³⁰ This distinct benevolence, according to Chinese elites and foreign experts, is the result of China's extraordinary cultural longevity and historical experiences.

³⁰ Scobell 5.

Historians widely consider China to have the oldest continuous civilization in the world, spanning over 5,000 years.³¹ For the majority of this period, "...the central goal of China's security strategy had been defending the economic, political, social, and cultural heartland of China" from invasion from nomadic populations and kingdoms residing along China's periphery (See Map 1).³² According to most PRC elites, the ancient Chinese Dynasties that ruled for millenniums over China placed great emphasis on eliminating these nomadic, "barbarian" threats - not through violent military action, but rather through peaceful diplomatic means. Lieutenant General Li Jijun commented on the influence of this historic benevolence by stating, "Over thousands of years the pursuit of peace has been thoroughly absorbed into the Chinese national psyche."³³ In 1998, the PRC government also published an official articulation of this traditional belief in its Defence White Paper:

*The defensive nature of China's national defence policy...springs from the country's historical and cultural traditions. China is a country with 5,000 years of civilization, and a peace-loving tradition. Ancient Chinese thinkers advocated "associating with benevolent gentlemen and befriending good neighbours," which shows that throughout history the Chinese people have longed for peace in the world and for relations of friendship with the people of other countries.*³⁴

General Xing Shizhong, Commandant of the National Defence University, further states that the people of China "have always dearly loved peace...[and that] this historical tradition and national psychology have a profound influence on the national defence objectives and strategic policies of the new socialist China."³⁵

As this section will demonstrate, Chinese officials, as well as some Western observers, believe that China's historic passivity stems from China's traditional emphasis on both Confucian morality and the preservation of a *Tianxia* moral world, the latter of which being institutionally reflected through the Chinese tributary system. In conjunction

³¹ Nancy Jarvis, "What is Culture," The University of the State of New York (2006): 3, 11 June 2007 <<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/socst/grade3/anthropology.pdf>>

³² Tiejun Zhang, "Chinese Strategic Culture: Traditional and Present Feature," Comparative Strategy 21.2 (2002): 74.

³³ Li Jijun, "Traditional Military Thinking and the Defensive Strategy of China," United States War College, Carlisle. 29 August 1997. 2. 23 Nov. 2007 <<http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/china/doctrine/china-li.pdf>>

³⁴ Scobell 5.

³⁵ Scobell 6.

with its impact on renowned Chinese strategists, such as Sun-tzu, this cultural inclination to abide by Confucian values has created a benevolent Chinese strategic culture that strongly contrasts with its aggressive Western counterpart.

Achieving International Security and Order through Cultural Moralism

The Chinese strategic culture's commitment to peace derives from the traditional strength of Confucian philosophy in China, according to various pundits. Deriving from the moralistic teachings of the Chinese philosopher Confucius, Confucianism represented a philosophical and ethical system of thought describing how individuals should behave and how rulers should govern. It dominated Chinese political ideology from the Han Dynasty in 206 BC to the end of the Imperial Era in the nineteenth century.³⁶ An excerpt from Xinzhong Yao's *An Introduction to Confucianism* aptly illustrates the importance of Confucianism in Chinese cultural thought:

*If we were to characterize in one word the Chinese way of life for the last two thousand years, the word could be 'Confucian'. No other individual in Chinese history has so deeply influenced the life and thought of his people, as a transmitter, teacher and creative interpreter of the ancient culture and literature and as a moulder of the Chinese mind and character.*³⁷

Confucianism's prevalence and cultural impact inevitably affected China's strategic culture through the shaping of Chinese leaders perspectives on foreign policies and stratagem. Tiejun Zhang refers to this effect on the Chinese strategic culture as "cultural moralism," which stands for the:

*habit and practice of constant moralizing and a persistent emphasis on morality, characterized by Confucian norms of Virtue, Benevolence and Righteousness for judging the domestic and foreign policies of rulers, and distinguishing legitimate kings/emperors from illegitimate ones.*³⁸

Within traditional Confucian belief, the public judged the legitimacy of a ruler on his ability to rule by morality (*yi de wei zheng*).³⁹ He must not only provide food and stability in society, but also maintain "moral law" through educating and moulding his population

³⁶ Zhang "Chinese Strategic Culture" 75.

³⁷ Xinzhong Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 1.

³⁸ Zhang "Chinese Strategic Culture" 73.

³⁹ Gustaaf Geeraerts, "International Relations Theory in China," *Global Society* 15.3 (2001): 260.

into moral subjects.⁴⁰ This moral law dictated that in order to establish authority, “people should be educated through morality rather than being punished by torture.”⁴¹ Through the guidance of their leader, Chinese subjects must internalize the moral value in social order and hierarchy (rules, status, and authorities). Only through the acceptance of this moral concept did Confucius believe in the achievement of harmonious relationships with others, which was the precondition for maintaining peace, harmony, and order (values that represent the core principles in Confucianism).⁴²

Confucius and Mencius - the “Second Sage” of Confucianism - also believed that rightful rulers must adhere to the principle of *wang dao*.⁴³ This concept views political loyalty and support of a leader resting on his use of benevolent governance, rather than on *ba dao*, or the annexation of others through force, which illegitimate rulers rely on.⁴⁴ Only through a leader’s exemplary and benevolent conduct, which originates from his personal virtue (*de*), would he draw the necessary political support to earn a “mandate to rule” over China.⁴⁵ By holding this belief, the two philosophers encouraged a king or emperor to “...accentuate the role of ethics and downplay the role of force in domestic and interstate politics.”⁴⁶ Thus, the central idea of the philosophy of Confucius and Mencius was to assess the righteousness of a ruler based on his morality and virtue.

These Confucian philosophies greatly influenced the Chinese perspective of and interaction with peripheral kingdoms, as demonstrated through the development of the *Tianxia* worldview and the establishment of the tributary system. *Tianxia*, which literally means “all under heaven”, was more than just a geographically defined area to the Chinese. Rather, it combined the natural, super-natural, and moral world to represent the universe’s “system of morality, or the way of the heaven.”⁴⁷ The highest ideal of this philosophy was the achievement of *Datong*, an ideal world of harmony and order based

⁴⁰ Rosita, Dellios, “Chinese Strategic Culture: Part 2 – Virtue and Power,” *Bond University* (Nov. 1994), 12 Nov. 2006 < <http://www.international-relations.com/rp/ChineseStrategicCulture2.htm> >

⁴¹ Geeraerts 260.

⁴² Yan Bing Zhang, “Harmony, Hierarchy and Conservatism: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Confucian Values in China, Korea, Japan, and Taiwan,” *Communication Research Reports* 22.1-4 (December 2005): 110.

⁴³ J.Y. Tan, “Mencius (MENGZI),” *New Catholic Encyclopaedia* 2nd ed. 9 (2003): 486.

⁴⁴ Geeraerts 260.

⁴⁵ Zhang “Chinese Strategic Culture” 76.

⁴⁶ Geeraerts 260.

⁴⁷ Qin Yaqing, “Why is there no Chinese international relations theory?” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol.7, (2007), p.329.

upon morality and selflessness.⁴⁸ Responsibility for achieving and maintaining *Datong* rested with the Chinese emperor, who represented the “son of the Heaven” (*t’ien-tzu*) and supreme ruler over *Tianxia*.⁴⁹ In this international perspective, China believed herself to be “the Middle Kingdom” (*Chung-kuo*), or the central country, in the universe, with total supremacy over the known world.⁵⁰ With this Sinocentric perspective, China subsequently viewed the rest of the international community as living in “descending states of barbarism the farther away they were from China’s political and cultural frontiers.”⁵¹ This vertical, hierarchical perspective, which began during the Han Dynasties in 206 BC, remained the dominant Chinese worldview for over two millennia until the beginning of the “century of humiliation” in the late nineteenth century (see chapter 3). The longevity and prominence of this *Tianxia* ideology resulted from China’s sense of primacy in a geographically “self-contained East Asian world” where China was clearly the traditional dominant power amongst neighbouring, accessible states.⁵²

China created the tributary system to institutionalize Chinese cultural supremacy and this *Tianxia* world order over the East Asian region. Within this international governing concept, the Chinese emperor forced neighbouring barbarian populations to pay tribute to him and accept his supreme authority before trading with China or benefiting from its political support.⁵³ According to some records during the Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907), China had as many as 72 tributaries in the aligning regions.⁵⁴ Chinese rulers saw the tributary system primarily as a tool to maintain control over peripheral nations and deter invasion, rather than as an institution for economic gain. As Qing Cao of Liverpool John Moore University explains, tribute-paying itself was “more a ritualized affirmation of China’s claimed cultural superiority than an activity of economic

⁴⁸ Yaqing 330.

⁴⁹ Mark Mancall, “The Persistence of Tradition in Chinese Foreign Policy,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 349 (Sept.1963): 16.

⁵⁰ Fang Weigui, “Yi, Yang, Wai, And Other Terms: The Transition From ‘Barbarian’ To ‘Foreigner’ In Nineteenth-Century China,” *New Terms for New Ideas: Western Knowledge and Lexical Change in Late Imperial China*. ed. Iwo Amelung. (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2001) 96.

⁵¹ Mancall 17.

⁵² Mancall 16.

⁵³ Mancall 17.

⁵⁴ Yongjin Zhang, “System, empire and state in Chinese international relations,” *Review of International Studies* 27 (2001): 52.

significance.”⁵⁵ In fact, China often provided more material gains to its tribute-payers than it received from peripheral states.

This external governing system was merely an enlargement of the Chinese domestic system, and the traditional Chinese mind saw them as being synonymous with one another.⁵⁶ This was a result of China’s inability to comprehend a world of sovereign, equal states. Instead, it viewed the universe as inherently being under its control and influence. According to Pankaj Mohan:

*Confucian historiography emphasized the significance of China as a moral exemplar and political overlord of the constellation of barbarian states on its border. No matter how nominal and tenuous the tributary ties between China and its contigal kingdoms in history, the Chinese reckoned those lands as parts of the Chinese Cultural world and under the moral guardianship of the ‘Son of Heaven.’*⁵⁷

Such a worldview caused the tributary system to adopt a hierarchical and inegalitarian structure modeled on the Confucian notion of the ‘state,’ which was in turn modeled on the Confucian concept of the ‘family.’⁵⁸ As in China’s Confucian domestic society, the most important principle in tributary relations was establishing and maintaining order through an adherence to hierarchy. Of course, this hierarchy utilized unequal relationships between China and its barbarian vassals, but this inequality was likened to “that between father and sons in the Confucian family, unequal but benign.”⁵⁹

China utilized the tributary system as “an extension of the *wang dao* in the domestic ruling of the heartland to the hierarchical relations between the heartland and the periphery...”⁶⁰ Rather than use military action to eliminate and control barbarian threats and deter invasion, the tributary system “emphasized the sufficiency of the emperor’s ‘virtue’ to win the peaceful submission of ‘men from afar’ without the

⁵⁵ Qing Cao, “Selling culture: ancient Chinese conceptions of ‘the other’ in legends,” The Zen of International Relations: IR Theories from East to West, ed. S. Chan. (Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave, 2001) 8.

⁵⁶ Yaqing, 323.

⁵⁷ Pankaj N. Mohan, “China’s Nationalist Historiography of the ‘Northeast Project’ and the Australian Response to Its Challenges,” Journal of Inner and East Asian Studies 3.1 (June 2006): 31-32.

⁵⁸ Yaqing 323.

⁵⁹ Yaqing 330.

⁶⁰ Zhang “Chinese Strategic Culture” 76.

employment of force or threats.”⁶¹ Confucius saw the preservation of “peace and harmony”, both internationally and domestically, as a measure of an emperor’s virtue.⁶² Any failure in its stability, which would occur with a barbarian invasion or with the utilization of *ba dao*, reflected flaws in the Chinese ruler that, in extreme causes, could warrant rebellion from Chinese subjects.⁶³

Confucius also encouraged emperor’s to maintain a *Tianxia* “mandate to rule” through the rule by morality (*yi de wei zheng*) concept. Since China considered barbarians “uncivilized”, an important goal of a ruler, and another test of his virtue, was to use moral education and suasion, not violence, to civilize neighbouring populations and bring them into the “Confucian cultural orbit.”⁶⁴ As Confucius stated:

*If remote people are rebellious, our civil culture is to be cultivated to attract them to our virtues; and when they have been attracted, they must be made contented and tranquil...He who exercises the government by means of virtues may be compared to the north polar star, which keeps its place and all the stars turn towards it.*⁶⁵

Such considerations, through cultural moralism, convinced rulers to adopt strategies around the theory that “it is better to win hearts and minds than to attack towns and cities” (*gongxin weishang, gongcheng weixia*).⁶⁶ Q. Edward Wang further articulates this point by stating: “for some Confucian scholars, to cultivate moral principles and promote culture among non-Hans [non-Chinese] was more important than to subdue them with military victory...[and achieve] territorial gains.”⁶⁷

Periodic declines in Chinese strength did cause the tributary system to fail. Such instances occurred during the Yuan (1279-1368) and the Qing (1644-1911) dynasties when Mongolians and Manchus invaded and ruled the nation respectively.⁶⁸ The Chinese Han population, however, continued to remain secure in their sense of superiority, as alien-occupying forces inevitably assimilated to the Chinese culture and never the less

⁶¹ Albert Feuerwerker. “Relating to the International Community.” Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science 31.1(March 1973): 44.

⁶² Zhang “Chinese Strategic Culture” 76 and Mancall 18.

⁶³ Dellios “Part 2” 2.

⁶⁴ Cao 8.

⁶⁵ Cao 10.

⁶⁶ Cao 8.

⁶⁷ Edward Q. Wang, “History, Space, and Ethnicity: The Chinese Worldview,” Journal of World History 10.2 (1999): 296.

⁶⁸ Tiejun Zhang, “Self-Identity Construction of the Present China,” Comparative Strategy 23.3 (2004): 284.

ended up within the “Confucian cultural orbit.”⁶⁹ Such occurrences solidified China’s belief in its own cultural superiority, despite illustrating its weak military power. As Rosita Dellios explains:

*...the key strategic application of both the Daoist and Confucian traditions is the endeavour to excel through strength of character rather than force of arms. Right is might, and not the other way round.*⁷⁰

Therefore, traditional politics in China revolved around morality, where virtue, rather than physical strength, measured a leader’s power and legitimacy.⁷¹

A narrow retrospection of the views held by the ancient and highly influential Chinese military theorist, Sun-Wu, known honorifically as “Sun-tzu” or “Master Sun,” provides further reinforcement to the belief that China possesses a purely defensive, non-violent strategic culture based on ethics and principles.⁷² Sun-tzu’s famous book, *The Art Of War* “is firmly in the Taoist tradition on the use of violence,” which, according to the fundamental text on classical Taoism, states that, “Weapons are the tools of fear. A decent man will avoid them, except in the direst necessity.”⁷³ The Chinese strategist’s adherence to Taoism reflects Confucius principles due to the similarities between both ideologies, including their dual opposition to violence and their preference for rulers to excel through strength of character rather than force of arms.⁷⁴ Within his works, Sun-tzu wrote that the use of armed force was an ignoble endeavour: “For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue without fighting is the acme of skill.”⁷⁵ In his view, military victories were the same as defeat since they required immense expenditures of state manpower and resources.⁷⁶ Furthermore, while wars can advance a state’s interest, he recognized that they can also bring a state disaster, and must only be pursued after the exhaustion of all other alternatives. His solution to

⁶⁹ Cao 8.

⁷⁰ Dellios “Part 2” 2.

⁷¹ Dellios “Part 2” 4.

⁷² Collen K. Holmes, “What the Chinese Learned from Sun-tzu,” *U.S. Army War College* (April 2000): 1, 03 March 2007 < http://www.iwar.org.uk/military/resources/sun-tzu/Holmes_S_L_01.pdf >

⁷³ Chester Richards, *A Swift, Elusive Sword: What If Sun Tzu And John Boyd Did A National Defense Review?* (Washington: Center for Defense Information, 2003) 26.

⁷⁴ Dellios “Part 2” 2.

⁷⁵ G.K. Cunningham, “Land Power In Traditional Theory And Contemporary Application,” *U.S. Army War College: Guide To National Security Policy And Strategy*, ed. J. Boone Bartholomees Jr. (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College, 2006) 159.

⁷⁶ Holmes “What the Chinese Learned from Sun-tzu” 3.

advancing state power without resorting to violence was to place a heavy emphasis on developing stratagems aimed at mitigating threats before they arise. These stratagems utilized:

*...the psychological employment of force, social transformation (hearts and minds campaigns), factors of economy, geography and diplomacy, [as well as the promotion] of ethics and morality....*⁷⁷

Instead of seeking war, Sun-zu advocated the use of the above factors to guilefully “attack the mind of his opponent” in order to weaken and/or deter enemies before they become a threat.⁷⁸ His teachings placed the spirit of the enemy as the primary focus for successful military strategists, who must direct their energy towards destroying an enemy mentally and morally before engaging in physical combat.⁷⁹ Sun-tzu would utilize offensive military measures if non-violent stratagems proved ineffective; however, he still opposed “unadulterated offensive warfare, for to destroy the enemy means to ‘deprive him of the power to resist’ rather than to ‘destroy every member of his forces physically.’”⁸⁰ Chinese elites often cite this stance as resulting from Sun-tzu’s deep ethical moorings. The significance of this ancient philosopher’s teachings is that they adhere to a defensive, principled and ethical outlook on strategy and warfare based on an aversion to violence.

Chinese Benevolence vs. Western Aggression

To strengthen their convictions in China’s inherent benevolent and peaceful nature, Chinese elites, as well as some Western scholars, often compare the Chinese strategic culture to that of the West. These pundits regard Western military thought as devoid of ethical principles and purely “expansionist and realist in direct contrast to China’s own pacific and principled tradition.”⁸¹ Contrasting with China’s customary military emphasis on ethical thinking, Chinese intellectuals see Western strategic culture as solely revolving around the attainment of material benefits.⁸² In Confucian thought,

⁷⁷ Dellios “Part 1”6.

⁷⁸ Dellios “Part 1” 6.

⁷⁹ Richards 79.

⁸⁰ Dellios “Part 1” 6.

⁸¹ Scobell 17.

⁸² Scobell 17.

such pursuits of material power are signs of moral decay and thus strongly opposed.⁸³ Furthermore, Western societies are believed to readily utilize war in the pursuit of these materialistic goals as they view combat “with an adventurous and ‘romantic attitude’”.⁸⁴ Chinese Confucian culture, on the other hand, sees war as an inglorious affair that depicts failure in the virtuousness of a leader, and should therefore never occur.⁸⁵ It is for this reason that Major General Yao Youzhi, Director of the Department of Strategic Studies at the Academy of Military Sciences, asserts that China’s military tradition places “complete stress on a defensive stance” while the West emphasizes offensive military behaviour.⁸⁶

China’s holistic approach to international relations, seen in the *Tianxia* perspective, opposes the use of violence since there are no regions on earth that are “opposite, intolerant, and needed conquering” to the Middle Kingdom.⁸⁷ As Qin Yaqing explains, “this holist worldview is different from the Western dualistic view of the two opposites, where an inevitable conflict is implied.”⁸⁸ David Kang also compares the peacekeeping qualities of the *Tianxia* and tributary system with the conflict-prone international system of the West. In his article, “Hierarchy and Stability in Asian International Relations,” he states:

*...Asian international relations emphasized formal hierarchy among nations, while allowing considerable informal equality. Consisting of China as the central state, and the peripheral states as lesser states or “vassals,” as long as hierarchy was observed there was little need for interstate war. This contrasts sharply with the western tradition of international relations that consisted of formal equality between nation-states, informal hierarchy, and almost constant interstate conflict.*⁸⁹

As demonstrated during Lieutenant General Li Jijun’s speech to the U.S. War College, Chinese elites often cite the legendary voyages of Admiral Zheng He as an example of the above differentiation between Chinese and Western international intentions. Approximately 87 years before Christopher Columbus discovered America,

⁸³ Dellios “Part 2” 6.

⁸⁴ Scobell 17.

⁸⁵ Dellios “Part 1” 4.

⁸⁶ Scobell 9.

⁸⁷ Yaqing 330.

⁸⁸ Yaqing 330.

⁸⁹ Twomey 9.

Admiral Zheng He, “perhaps China’s greatest adventurer”, set sail with over 300 vessels and a crew of nearly 30,000 men.⁹⁰ Over the span of 28 years, beginning in 1405, Zheng He’s armada made seven voyages to 30 countries and regions, spanning from Southeast Asia to the Eastern coasts of Africa.⁹¹ As Li Jijun states, “unlike later Western explorers who conquered the land they discovered, this fleet did not subdue the newly-discovered lands by force. This was not a voyage to plunder the local populace for treasure nor was it one to establish overseas colonies.”⁹² His task, as decreed by the Emperor Yongle, was simply “to convey friendship and goodwill and to promote economic and cultural exchanges between China and other Asian as well as African nations.”⁹³ Li Jijun concludes his point by stating, “there are few, if any, [Western] voyages that had intentions as benign as that of this Chinese voyage.”⁹⁴

Government publications frequently mention Zheng He as exemplifying China’s peaceful culture, as seen with a 2005 white paper entitled “China’s Peaceful Development Road.” Published by the State Council Information Office, this document states:

*What [Zheng He] took to the places he visited were tea, chinaware, silk and technology, but did not occupy an inch of any other’s land. What he brought to the outside world was peace and civilization, which fully reflects the good faith of the ancient Chinese people in strengthening exchanges with relevant countries and their peoples.*⁹⁵

The PRC deems the pacific aspects of Zheng He’s cruises to be so influential that it has now become a mainstay of Chinese regional diplomacy to calm fears over its rapid rise and to remind neighbours of China’s historic benign supremacy.⁹⁶ During the 600th anniversary of Zheng’s first expedition, in July 2005, the *China Daily* stated that the explorer’s benevolent mission of peace remains consistent with the current policies of the

⁹⁰ “The Asian Voyage: In the Wake of the Admiral,” TIME-Asia.com 2001, 3 Nov. 2007
<<http://www.time.com/time/asia/features/journey2001/intro.html>>.

⁹¹ “Why do we commemorate Zheng He?” People’s Daily Online 12 July 2005, 3 Nov. 2007
<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200507/12/eng20050712_195660.html>

⁹² Li Jijun

⁹³ Li Jijun.

⁹⁴ Li Jijun.

⁹⁵ People’s Republic of China. State Council Information Office. White Paper on China’s Peaceful Development Road. Beijing : People’s Republic of China, 22 Dec. 2005. 19 March 2007
<<http://www.china.org.cn/english/2005/Dec/152669.htm>>

⁹⁶ Holmes “China Fashions a Maritime Identity” 101-102.

PRC. According to its opinion piece, “Six hundred years after Zheng, China cherishes a similar desire to befriend the world. But regrettably its goodwill is demonized because established powers fear a resurgent China.”⁹⁷ This benevolent image of Zheng He and his voyages provides Chinese elites with a useful tool in reinforcing the perceived dichotomy between China’s cultural inclination towards defence and benevolence and the West’s cultural aptitude for aggressive expansion.

Another common assumption is that the Western approach to warfare emphasizes violence more than its Chinese counterpart. From ancient Greek hoplites to U.S. forces today, Chinese analysts view Western culture as placing a heavy emphasis on the direct application of force upon an enemy within a limited, geographically defined battlefield.⁹⁸

According to one observer:

*The Greeks developed what has been called the Western way of war – a collision of soldiers on an open plain in an magnificent display of courage, skill, physical prowess, honour, and fair play, and a concomitant repugnance for decoy, ambush, sneak attacks, and the involvement of noncombatants.*⁹⁹

This drastically differs from the Chinese approach to warfare. On a battlefield level, combat did not predominantly focus on soldiers clashing with one another in hand-to-hand engagements with swords and other close-quarter weapons. Instead, as Laurent Murawiec explains, Chinese armies mostly engaged in long-range battles with stationary armies using bows to launch repeated arrow volleys at one another.¹⁰⁰ Unlike the Western approach, this form of combat was more a contest of mental resilience than physical power, as soldiers had to endure the physical torment of remaining in their positions while receiving incoming volleys.¹⁰¹ Victory came when one side was mentally broken and forced to flee the battlefield, upon which time the victorious army would give chase and cut down the remaining enemy forces.

⁹⁷ Susan L. Craig, “Chinese Perceptions of Traditional and Nontraditional Security Threats,” *Strategic Studies Institute* (March 2007): 8, 25 Aug. 2007. <<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/Pubs/Display.Cfm?pubID=765>>.

⁹⁸ David Lai, “Learning From The Stones: A Go Approach To Mastering China’s Strategic Concept, Shi,” *Strategic Studies Institute* (May 2004): 5. 4 June 2007 <<http://www.fas.org/man/eprint/lai.pdf>>.

⁹⁹ Lai 5.

¹⁰⁰ Laurent Murawiec, “Chinese Grand Strategy and the Chinese Way of War,” U.S.-China Economic & Security Review Commission, Washington, 15 Sept. 2005. 4. 12 April 2007. <http://www.uscc.gov/hearings/2005hearings/written_testimonies/05_09_15wrts/murawiec.pdf>.

¹⁰¹ Murawiec 4.

This battlefield emphasis on mental warfare melds into Chinese strategic thought and forms a strategic outlook that is foreign to the Western military tradition. As Sun-tzu stated, Chinese generals must attack opponents mentally and morally before engaging in actual physical combat. The intent of such actions is to deter, disintegrate, or prevail over the opposing army before the battle begins.¹⁰² Doing so requires the implementation of stratagem, which is “loosely defined as [the] brilliant use of wisdom,” that utilizes a wide range of options, most notably the use of deception and diplomacy.¹⁰³ In fact, according to Sun-tzu, “All warfare is based on deception...A military leader of wisdom and ability lays deep plans for what other people do not figure on.”¹⁰⁴ As another Chinese theorist comments, “If one does not have a cunning character, he is unable to use stratagem; and if he is unable to use stratagem, he can by no means subdue his enemy.”¹⁰⁵ Chinese culture views diplomacy as an effective disseminator of this stratagem and as an appropriate tool of warfare. Bruce Elleman aptly phrased this fact by stating, “To the Chinese, war is not just a continuation of diplomacy, war is diplomacy.”¹⁰⁶ Sun-tzu, himself, regarded the art of war as being, in essence, the process of diplomacy.¹⁰⁷

Contrastingly, Western strategic culture opposes the use of stratagem, and does not see the primary means of warfare stepping outside of the battleground in the form of non-military strategies.¹⁰⁸ Within this military mindset, there is a “tendency to be dismissive of deceptive methods as ‘Machiavellian’...”.¹⁰⁹ This results in the use of guileful, strategic diplomacy and deception as being “alien to Western intellectual and cultural traditions”, and unfit for consideration by honourable soldiers.¹¹⁰ Alexander the Great articulated this Western revulsion to the use of deception upon hearing an advisor advocating the launch of a surprise night attack against an opposing Persian army:

The policy which you are suggesting is one of bandits and thieves, the only purpose of which is deception. I cannot allow my glory always to be

¹⁰² Richards 19.

¹⁰³ Junbo Zhang, “Differences Between Traditional Chinese and Western Military Thinking and Their Philosophical Roots,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 5.12 (1996): 218.

¹⁰⁴ Douglas McCready, “Learning from Sun Tzu,” *Military Review* (May-June 2003), 3 Nov. 2007 <<http://usacac.leavenworth.army.mil/CAC/milreview/English/MayJun03/MayJun03/bob.pdf>>.

¹⁰⁵ Zhang “Differences Between Traditional Chinese and Western Military Thinking” 218.

¹⁰⁶ Murawiec 7.

¹⁰⁷ Lai 3.

¹⁰⁸ Lai 5.

¹⁰⁹ Dellios “Part 2” 3.

¹¹⁰ McCready

*diminished by Darius' absence or by narrow terrain, or by tricks of night. I am resolved to attack openly and by daylight. I choose to regret my good fortune rather than be ashamed of my victory.*¹¹¹

Instead of using stratagems to avoid fighting altogether, the West honours the philosophies of strategists like Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) who placed primacy on drawing the enemy into a “decisive battle” to be physically destroyed. This is not to say that the Western militaries did not use deception in their conduct of warfare. The Greeks infamous use of the Trojan Horse and the Allies massive disinformation efforts prior to the D-Day landings in World War II are just two of many examples that contradict such an assumption. However, “the fundamental difference between the Western and the Chinese way of war is that ruse, cunning and deception are adjuncts to the Western way, and central to the Chinese way.”¹¹² These facts illustrate that according to the ancient Chinese point of view, war represented more a confrontation of wisdom than a physical contest of arms between two opposing forces.¹¹³

The articulation and enforcement of this benevolent image is essential for the PRC as it attempts to protect and advance its national interests. Global fears of China representing a threat to the existing interstate system could result in foreign powers implementing detrimental policies against the PRC. Reminding the international community of China’s historic adherence to cultural moralism therefore helps to ameliorate these regional concerns; more importantly, it helps to reduce counterbalancing initiatives from intimidated powers. “Accordingly,” asserts James Holmes, “Beijing is attempting to use the past to realign the nation’s identity and ‘strategic culture’ with today’s exigencies, portraying China as an intrinsically peaceful maritime [and regional] power.”¹¹⁴ As the next section will demonstrate, however, the actual strategic behaviour of China bares a similar resemblance to the violent aspects of Western strategic culture that China continuously criticizes as being abhorrent.

¹¹¹ Lai 5.

¹¹² Murawiec 7.

¹¹³ Zhang “Differences Between Traditional Chinese and Western Military Thinking” 218

¹¹⁴ Holmes “China Fashions a Maritime Identity” 91.

The Violent Underbelly of the Chinese Strategic Culture

Despite the benevolent and ethical qualities often cited by Chinese elites and intellectuals, China's past behaviour demonstrates a strong tendency towards the use of violence and military aggression. In fact, as Michael Swaine and Ashley Tellis comment, "one could argue that the use of force has been endemic in Chinese history."¹¹⁵ According to one expert, China has engaged in 3,790 external and internal historical wars from the Western Zhou Dynasty in 1100 BC to the end of the Qing Dynasty in 1911.¹¹⁶ While the majority of these battles were civil wars or wars to unify the country, a sizable amount were directed at non-Chinese states.¹¹⁷ During the Ming Dynasty alone, China engaged in an average of 1.12 external wars per year during a 276-year period.¹¹⁸ Additionally, these battles fielded an average of 100,000 soldiers per engagement and in some cases fielded armies in excess of a million men; in comparison, feudal Europe rarely exceeded 50,000 men per battle.¹¹⁹ Such examples clearly challenge the prevailing views of PRC elites in their nation's strategic culture adhering to peaceful cultural moralism. Further analysis proves that this pacifistic belief merely represents an idealized, unrealistic self-image by Chinese elites.

The true operative strand of China's strategic culture consists of a malignant combination of cultural moralism, with its supposed emphasis on peace and benevolent rule; and realpolitik ideology, which emphasizes the use of power politics, achieving maximum gains in relative power over rival states, and offensive military operations when faced with external challenges.¹²⁰ Lei Guang aptly phrases this behaviour as realpolitik in a 2005 article in the *Modern China* journal:

Here, I define "realpolitik" broadly as a nation-state's engagement in power politics in the international arena; its practices range from defending the national interests (territorial integrity, sovereign independence, military prowess, etc.) against other nation-states to striving for dominance or relative gains over its adversaries.¹²¹

¹¹⁵ Swaine 46.

¹¹⁶ Swaine 46.

¹¹⁷ Scobell 8.

¹¹⁸ Swaine 46.

¹¹⁹ Swaine 49.

¹²⁰ Scobell v.

¹²¹ Guang 498.

The result is a Chinese cultural mindset prone to implementing force in the conduct of foreign affairs and eager to expand its power over the interstate system. There are two possibilities, however, to explain this dualistic strategic culture and its militant, revisionist tendencies. The first possibility is that Chinese leaders genuinely adhere to cultural moralism but interpret its Confucian and moralistic principles as morally justifying realpolitik behaviour. The concept of *Tianxia* and “active defence” are two of the main catalysts behind this phenomenon. In this case, cultural moralism intertwines with the realpolitik ideology and plays an equal role in influencing the aggressive strategic decisions of Chinese leaders.

The second possibility is that Chinese elites only adhere to the realpolitik ideology, and use Confucian principles as merely a façade to justify the nation’s bellicose behaviour. In this case, China adopts a more defined concept of realpolitik, referred to as a “hard realpolitik” paradigm. This paradigm encourages offensive military behaviour and a desire to achieve dominance within the interstate system, as seen with the previous possibility. Additionally, it also encourages leaders to base their foreign policy decisions on the global balance-of-power through a decision axiom known as *quan bian*. According to this strategic mindset, Chinese leaders should implement peaceful, defensive, and accommodationist policies when China lacks the power to address external challenges and goals by force. This passivity allows weaker nations to avoid falling victim to more powerful rivals until they can develop superior material strength. Once the nation has achieved superior strength, the *quan bian* decision axiom entices leaders to pursue their preferred foreign policy approach of using military means to advance national interests. This behaviour is evident throughout China’s history, from the Qin kingdom during the Warring States period (fifth to second century BC) to the Ming Dynasty during the fourteenth and seventeenth century. By examining China’s former realpolitik behaviour, doubts begin to emerge whether China truly abides by moral principles, or simply reacts according to the tenets of realism. Regardless of which possibility is true, the existence of an aggressive realpolitik mentality represents a strong concern for American security analysts.

Legitimizing Warfare through Confucian Morality

The belligerent, realpolitik nature of China's true strategic culture may result from the very principles inherent in cultural moralism that Chinese elites so quickly highlight as sources of benevolence. "Compared with the extremely anti-militarism and anti-political activism of Daoism, Confucianism", according to Tiejun Zhang, "is relatively active in both political and military domains exemplified by its emphasis on the centralized authority of the emperors and righteous wars."¹²² This emphasis on "centralized authority" refers to the Confucian *Tianxia* concept. As previously mentioned, this belief places the Chinese emperor as the supreme ruler over "all under heaven" and morally accountable for the maintenance of *Datong*, or an ideal world of harmony and order.¹²³ The philosophical prevalence of this belief encouraged a deep cultural assumption and moral conviction in China's universal centrality and entitlement to exercise control over barbarians, who in turn must offer their submission to Chinese rule.¹²⁴

While the Confucius philosophy desired rulers to use their superior virtue (through *wang dao*) to maintain this *Datong*, it also permitted the limited use of military means to restore Sinocentric order. Sun-tzu understood this reality when he exclaimed that there are times when even the most virtuous leader must resort to arms in order to maintain social and political order.¹²⁵ Yongjin Zhang further noted this Confucian assent to violent state behaviour by commenting how "China, as the superior moral power, was responsible for maintaining and harmonizing this [*Tianxia*] order with the moral examples it set, with institutional innovations and with force if necessary."¹²⁶ China's ancient tributary system reflected this sense of entitlement to the application of force in maintaining Chinese dominance and control within *Tianxia*. As Jerome Cohen of the Harvard Law School explains:

Underlying the imperial tribute system was the theory that China could 'intervene whenever and wherever she judged it necessary because the

¹²² Zhang "Chinese Strategic Culture" 77.

¹²³ Yaqing 330.

¹²⁴ Zhang "System, empire and state in Chinese international relations" 55.

¹²⁵ Holmes "What the Chinese Learned from Sun-tzu" 2.

¹²⁶ Zhang "System, empire and state in Chinese international relations" 53.

*Chinese emperor was responsible for all the peoples under Heaven and because their rulers were viewed as his appointed representatives.*¹²⁷

Decisions to violently restore this *Tianxia* “centralized authority” are often linked with the concept of ‘just’ or “righteous wars.” As early as the 5th century BC, Chinese military strategists, influenced by Confucius philosophy, stressed the importance of initiating wars based strictly on the justness of their causes.¹²⁸ In a 2004 China Military Science article, Zhang Xiaojun and Xu Jia asserted that within Chinese strategic culture lies the Confucian inspired belief that “when war cannot be avoided, the issues of right and wrong in the war are of primary importance.”¹²⁹ According to Mencius teaching, a “righteous [or just] war was considered as a primary means to eliminate the evil of certain rulers, and it was said (according to Mencius) for the well-being of the people and for re-establishing Confucian virtue.”¹³⁰ While still deemed as a means of last resort, Confucian tradition permitted these offensive wars “to counteract antisocial conduct and reinforce the norms which integrated the society into a harmonious whole.”¹³¹ This emphasis of the *Tianxia* concept on dominating local populations and willingness to do so through military force provides a strong correlation with the ideology of realpolitik, as the tenets of realism encourage nations to dominate the interstate system through coercive means.

The story of the *Seventh Capture of Meng Huo* offers a famous example of an offensive, “righteous war” being waged to re-establish both the *Tianxia* centralized authority and Confucian norms and virtues. This tale is one of many stories included in the quasi-factual novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, written by a Confucian scholar named Luo Guanzhong during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Pundits regard this immensely popular book as “perhaps the most widely known and influential of all the traditional Chinese novels...”¹³² with its romanticized accounts of Chinese internecine

¹²⁷ Jerome Alan Cohen, “China and Intervention: Theory and Practice,” University of Pennsylvania Law Review 121.3 (Jan. 1973): 475.

¹²⁸ Craig 9.

¹²⁹ Craig 9.

¹³⁰ Zhang “Chinese Strategic Culture” 78.

¹³¹ Stephen C. Neff, War and the Law of Nations: A General History. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005): 10.

¹³² Peter R. Moody Jr., “The Romance of the Three Kingdoms and Popular Chinese Political Thought,” The Review of Politics 37.2 (April 1975):178.

strife during the Three Kingdoms period (220-280).¹³³ The *Seventh Capture of Meng Huo* recounts the true story of Zhuge Liang, a legendary strategist and Prime Minister of the Shu-Han kingdom,¹³⁴ who launched a military campaign against a southern barbarian population to restore *Tianxia* for his kingdom.

Zhuce Liang commenced his southern operations after Meng Huo, a powerful southern barbarian king in the province of Nanzhong, rebelled against the Shu-Han kingdom, which regarded itself as a continuation of the traditional ‘Middle Kingdom.’ To defy the wishes of an emperor, who was both the “son of the Heaven” and supreme symbol of morality, was an act of moral perversion within the Confucian Sinocentric culture.¹³⁵ Zhuge Liang consequently saw his offensive mission as a righteous quest to resolve an act of immorality (a rebellion) by punishing those who defy the *Tianxia* world order and neglect to respect their morally bound subordination to the imperial court.¹³⁶ The goal of this famed strategist was not to kill Meng Huo; rather, Zhuge Liang intended to bring Meng Huo and his people back into the Confucian cultural orbit and re-establish the barbarian kingdom’s place as a tributary state by civilizing them through Confucian moral education and suasion.¹³⁷ It is true that Confucianism does encourage rulers to achieve this barbarian submission without using violence. In certain situations, however, deadly but limited force is acceptable if it will provide the time required for moral education to take place.

The southern campaign of Zhuge Liang sought to provide this time for moral education by using military means to defeat Meng Huo’s armies and capture the barbarian king seven times.¹³⁸ By continuously releasing the Nanman king, Zhuge Liang demonstrated his benevolence and Confucian moral superiority, which finally resulted in Meng Huo’s complete subjugation. With his seventh and last capture, the rebel leader stated, “Though I am from outside civilization, but I know correct conduct and

¹³³ John W. Killigrew, “A Case Study of Chinese Civil Warfare: The Cao-Wei Conquest of Shu-Han in AD 263,” *Civil Wars* 4.4 (Winter 2001): 95.

¹³⁴ Bin Yang, “Military Campaigns against Yunnan: A Global Analysis,” *University of Singapore* (Sept. 2004): 15, 22 March 2008 < <http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/showfile.asp?pubid=278&type=2> >

¹³⁵ Cao 9.

¹³⁶ Cao 9.

¹³⁷ Cao 9.

¹³⁸ Yang 17.

righteousness (liyi). How can I be so shameless (as to fight again?).”¹³⁹ By being morally defeated, Zhuge Liang achieved Meng Huo’s obedience and long-term material support in the future military endeavours of the Shu-Han without requiring the garrisoning of troops in Nanzhong province.¹⁴⁰ Despite its fictional glamorization by Luo Guanzhong, this true historical event aptly illustrates the tendency for China to use violence in the enforcement of the *Tianxia* world order, and to justify such actions as a “righteous war” based on Confucian morality.

While PRC elites often cite the voyages of Zheng He (1405-1431) as exemplifying China’s benevolent nature, a closer examination reveals yet another illustration of Chinese leaders violently imposing the *Tainxia* perspective on distant populations. Some pundits argue that the Yongle emperor did not send Zheng He abroad to convey Chinese friendship and passivity. Instead, his true goal was to demonstrate Chinese superiority and power over foreign barbarians, gain additional tributaries, and re-establish and expand the Sinocentric Confucian world order.¹⁴¹ In so doing, the Yongle emperor hoped to increase his domestic prestige and reclaim China’s global *Tianxia* dominance following the Mongolian invasion and occupation of the ‘Middle Kingdom’ in the preceding dynasty.¹⁴²

To assert the Ming Dynasty’s newfound authority and strength, Zheng He frequently demonstrated his armada’s military prowess and imposed Chinese justice and Sinocentric order on various states along his travels. For example, the Admiral quelled an uprising in Sumatra during one voyage and brought the rebel leader back to Nanjing, where the emperor later had him executed.¹⁴³ During another voyage, Zheng He’s soldiers landed in Sri Lanka and captured the Sinhalese King as punishment for his refusal to offer a sacred tooth of the Buddha to the Chinese emperor.¹⁴⁴ After the Sinhalese King and his royal family were brought to Nanjing, emperor Yongle excused their misdeeds and returned them to Sri Lanka (Ceylon).¹⁴⁵ Through this dual exhibition

¹³⁹ Cao 8.

¹⁴⁰ Yang 17.

¹⁴¹ Frederic Wakeman Jr., “Voyages,” *The American Historical Review* 98.1 (Feb. 1993): 9.

¹⁴² Jesus, Attilio. “China’s empire of exploration.” *Le Monde Diplomatique* Sept. 2005. 5 Nov. 2007 <<http://mondediplo.com/2005/09/18zhenghe>>

¹⁴³ “The Asian Voyage: In the Wake of the Admiral”.

¹⁴⁴ “The Asian Voyage: In the Wake of the Admiral”.

¹⁴⁵ Wakeman 11.

of power and benevolence, “the suzerainty of China was acknowledged by more foreign rulers than ever before; and representatives of 67 overseas states, including 7 kings, came bearing tribute.”¹⁴⁶ These tributes were essential in solidifying China’s *Tianxia* perspective, as the Chinese population viewed such gifts as acknowledgements of their emperor’s supreme leadership over the universe.¹⁴⁷ China’s quest for a ‘Pax Sinica’ ended with the termination of Zheng He’s voyages in 1433 and the adoption of more isolationist policies by Chinese rulers.¹⁴⁸ Regardless of this abrupt end to the admiral’s voyages, his exploits serve as another historical instance of China utilizing military force to assert its Sinocentric, moral world order on foreign populations.

Some scholars argue that the *Tianxia* concept remains prevalent amongst the modern Chinese leadership, as demonstrated with the Sino-Vietnamese border war of 1979. This conflict ensued following Vietnam’s invasion of Cambodia, an action which Beijing regarded as a challenge to China’s traditional influence in Indochina and as a rebellion against its traditional ‘fatherly’ authority.¹⁴⁹ The PRC sought to “punish” the Vietnamese and teach them a lesson so “they could not run about as much as they desired.”¹⁵⁰ A Vietnamese publicist best phrased this filial relationship by stating:

*Seeing Beijing rise up and threaten to punish Hanoi, public opinion sees the image of the stately Great Dragon in its holy wrath recounting the disobedient child’s sins, and, in front of the assembled world, slapping him hard in the face as an example. The naughty child, trembling with fear, would throw himself at the Great Dragon’s feet to beg pardon, while the witnesses would advise him never to displease his elder again.*¹⁵¹

The above illustrations clearly demonstrate how the concept of *Tianxia* morally justifies Chinese elites to commence offensive wars in defence of an idealistic Sinocentric world order.

Historical observations of the “active defence” theory provide additional modern examples of morality encouraging Chinese state violence. As a fundamental guideline of

¹⁴⁶ Wakeman 12.

¹⁴⁷ “The Asian Voyage: In the Wake of the Admiral.”

¹⁴⁸ Attilio.

¹⁴⁹ Dellios “Part 1” 3.

¹⁵⁰ Dellios “Part 1” 3.

¹⁵¹ Dellios “Part 1” 3.

the current Chinese military strategy,¹⁵² “active defence,” in the words of senior PLA Colonel Wang Naiming, “...emphasizes that the nature of [Chinese] military strategy is defensive, but also active in requirements. It requires the organic integration of offence and defence, and achieving the strategic goal of defence by active offence.”¹⁵³ According to Andrew Scobell, this means, “the line between offence and defence is blurred,” allowing greater moral flexibility in the implementation of offensive military options.¹⁵⁴ By labelling all wars as defensive, and thus righteous and just, China is morally free to launch offensive, pre-emptive battles in order to “restore or protect national territory or to maintain national prestige.”¹⁵⁵ This observation illustrates why China labelled its war with Vietnam in 1979 as a “self-defensive counterattack” (ziwei huanji) even though the PRC was the invading force.¹⁵⁶ Under Mao Zedong, a leader who tended to strictly judge military conflicts based on their moral standards, China also waged border wars with India in 1962 and with the Soviet Union in 1969 under a similar label of “self-defence counter-attacks” (ziwei fanji).¹⁵⁷

Chinese perceptions of morality are a serious concern for Western security analysts. By adhering to a warped sense of ethical principles, China has felt obligated to use force to maintain the Confucian *Tianxia* world order and to launch “righteous wars” designed to eliminate evil, restore Confucian norms, and defend Chinese territory and pride. While Chinese elites claim that their nation’s adherence to morality creates a benevolent and pacifistic strategic culture, Western observers can also witness that morality justifying aggressive realpolitik behaviour in the conduct of foreign policies. Andrew Scobell describes this dualistic nature of China’s strategic culture as creating a “Cult of Defence”, where Chinese leaders only perceive their offensive military operations as moral righteous:

“Most Chinese strategic thinkers believe that Chinese strategic culture is pacifistic, defensive-minded, and nonexpansionist. However, at least in the contemporary era, these sincerely held beliefs are essentially negated, or rather twisted by its assumptions that any war China fights is just and any

¹⁵² Jijun.4.

¹⁵³ Scobell 13.

¹⁵⁴ Scobell 13.

¹⁵⁵ Scobell 11.

¹⁵⁶ Scobell 10.

¹⁵⁷ Zhang “Differences Between Traditional Chinese and Western Military Thinking” 212 ; Scobell, 10.

military action is defensive, even when it is offensive in nature...The combined effect of these beliefs and assumptions is paradoxical: while most of China's leaders, analysts, and researchers believe profoundly that the legacy of Chinese civilization is fundamentally pacifist, they are nevertheless predisposed to deploy force when confronting crises."¹⁵⁸

The moralistic catalysts of China's aggressive and dominant-seeking behaviour cause the Chinese strategic culture to become inherently antagonistic towards the U.S. unipolar world. The *Tianxia* idea of a moralistic world governed by China fuels the aims of Chinese nationalistic citizens to reassert a Sinocentric international order. As Tiejun Zhang explains, this idealistic vision of Chinese centrality and superiority, which he refers to as the "Central Kingdom Complex", serves "as a driving force for the [current] 'rejuvenation of the Chinese nation' (zhenxing zhonghua)."¹⁵⁹ Zhang further states, "Though a stronger China would mean that the country might exert greater influences in the world, it should not be exaggerated to perceive that the present Chinese people are so naïve to think that they are still the centre of the world or East Asia."¹⁶⁰ Through this 'Central Kingdom Complex', America occupies a position of international hegemony divinely bestowed to China. PRC elites are therefore morally inclined to surpass American power by achieving a superior balance of material capabilities and reducing the United States hegemonic strength in order to restore a *Tianxia* world order. Modern adherents to Confucianism may also regard the U.S. as an illegitimate and unrighteous ruler who relies on "ba dao," or force and coercion, to maintain its rule. Such a determination would morally justify China to challenge and eliminate American hegemonic power through the "righteous war" doctrine.¹⁶¹ The fact that righteous wars are still "frequently emphasized in contemporary writings on Chinese security strategy" demonstrates the continued prevalence and danger of this archaic dogma.¹⁶²

James Lilley, a former U.S. Ambassador, casts doubt on whether Chinese elites genuinely believe in their Confucian morality and pacifist strategic culture, or if they use

¹⁵⁸ Scobell 4.

¹⁵⁹ Zhang "Self-Identity Construction of the Present China" 284.

¹⁶⁰ Zhang "Self-Identity Construction of the Present China" 284.

¹⁶¹ Zhang "Chinese Strategic Culture" 77.

¹⁶² Zhang "Chinese Strategic Culture" 80.

it simply as a rhetorical screen to disguise a more malignant strategy. During a panel discussion at the University of Chicago, Ambassador Lilley stated:

...you can have your moralisms and your commitments to peace...but I think one also has to lift up the rug and take a good hard look at some of the battles that China has had on its periphery. You can look the other way and say that these were all defensive moves, that they were responses to provocations from neighbours, but I think you'd want to say, "Tell that to the Indians" of the 1962 struggle. "Tell that to the Vietnamese" in 1979 with the taking of the Paracel Islands in '74 from a very weak Vietnam. There is a problem in justifying with words actions that belie those words...I tend to look at examples, and I've been aware and personally involved in some of those examples, where it wasn't peaceful at all.¹⁶³

If China is not truly committed to moralism, then perhaps, as the next section will elaborate, it is simply using its historic Confucian culture to disguise a strategy based on power politics and realpolitik aims.

China's Cultural Realpolitik Mentality

Alastair Iain Johnston is one of the most notable scholars to identify the existence of both Confucian-Mencian theory and realpolitik ideology in China's strategic culture. His book, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (1995), is "...often cited as the quintessential third generation work on strategic culture."¹⁶⁴ The intent of this study was to investigate the nature of China's dualistic strategic culture and analyze its historic propensity to use military force against external threats. His findings, however, strongly conflict with some pundits who believe that cultural moralism and realpolitik ideologies equally influence Chinese strategic calculations. Andrew Scobell's "Cult of Defence" theory, for example, views Chinese strategic culture as possessing two main operative strands, Confucian-Mencian theory and Realpolitik, with both strands equally influencing the strategic calculations of Chinese elites. Contrastingly, Johnston's study concluded that while China's strategic culture does exhibit these two strands, it "divorced" the Confucian-Mencian theory from

¹⁶³ James R. Lilley, "China And The Future Of The World," The University of Chicago, Chicago. 28 April 2006. 17 April 2007 <<http://chicagosociety.uchicago.edu/china/coverage/ForeignpolicyPanel.pdf>>.

¹⁶⁴ Jeffrey S. Lantis, "Strategic Culture: From Clausewitz to Constructivism," *Strategic Insights* 4.10 (Oct. 2005) <<http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2005/Oct/lantisOct05.asp>>.

its security policy decision-making process for the majority of its history.¹⁶⁵ Rather than a factor of consideration during the formation of strategic policies, this pacifistic, idealized strand serves merely as a “habitual discourse designed, in part, to justify behaviour in culturally acceptable terms.”¹⁶⁶

Johnston argues that the true operational force traditionally guiding Chinese foreign policy was a “parabellum, or hard realpolitik” paradigm.¹⁶⁷ This hard realpolitik ideology heavily favours the use of force in international relations. As Johnston explains, “this [realpolitik] paradigm reflects a set of characterizations of the external environment as dangerous, adversaries as dispositionally threatening, and conflict as zero-sum, in which the application of violence is ultimately required to deal with threats.”¹⁶⁸ According to the paradigm, “the best way of dealing with security threats is to eliminate them through the use of force;”¹⁶⁹ therefore, rulers favoured offensive operations over static defence or accommodationist strategies.¹⁷⁰ Amitav Acharya is one of the many scholars to concur with Johnston’s findings.¹⁷¹ As stated within a 2003 article, Amitav notes, “Despite its supposedly moral underpinning such as ‘impartiality’ and ‘inclusiveness,’ the Chinese world order actually operated on the basis of a pragmatic realpolitik, with power and security being major considerations and force being an important instrument.”¹⁷²

At the heart of this Chinese hard realpolitik strategic tradition lies a decision axiom known as *quan bian* that:

“...stresses absolute flexibility and a conscious sensitivity to changing relative capabilities. The more this balance is favourable, the more advantageous it is to adopted offensive coercive strategies; the less

¹⁶⁵ Alastair Iain Johnston. Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998) xi.

¹⁶⁶ Johnston “Cultural Realism” x.

¹⁶⁷ Johnston “Cultural Realism” 61.

¹⁶⁸ Alastair Iain Johnston, “Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China,” The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics ed. Peter J. Katzenstein. (New York: Columbia University Press, Nov. 1996) <<http://www.ciaonet.org/book/katzenstein/katz07.html>>

¹⁶⁹ Gregory Moore, “From the Ground Up: recent contributions of the China/area studies and Sino-American relations literature to IR theory,” Journal of Contemporary China 13.39 (May 2004): 399.

¹⁷⁰ Johnston “Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China.”

¹⁷¹ Despite agreeing with Johnston in the existence of realpolitik behaviour throughout Chinese history, some scholars, like Michael Swaine and Ashley Tellis, believe that this mentality derives from material or structural conditions, rather than cultural factors. Such a debate is beyond the scope of this paper. The intent of this author is merely to draw attention towards the abundant examples of realpolitik behaviour in Chinese history, which subsequently forms an important aspect of its culture.

¹⁷² Amitav Acharya, “Will Asia’s Past Be Its Future?” International Security 28.3 (Winter 2003/2004): 154.

*favourable, the more advantageous it is to adopted defensive or accomodationist strategies to buy time until the balance shifts again.”*¹⁷³

Therefore, while military aggression is the preferred solution to foreign challenges, such violence is only accepted if a ruler possesses superior strength over his rivals. Understanding and appropriately reacting to the relative balance-of-power of a state with its rivals, as mentioned in the Chinese decision axiom of *quan bian*, is thus essential for survival in an anarchic interstate system.

One of the first examples of this hard realpolitik and *quan bian* decision axiom came from the ‘Warring States Period’ between 475 BC and 221 BC. This epoch of Chinese history witnessed the collapse of centralized authority in China following the decline of the Zhou dynasty in 771 BC. In its wake emerged a Chinese mainland consumed with relentless internecine warfare, as seven major kingdoms - including the Chu, Qin, Zhao, Qi, Wei, Yan, and Han - competed with one another to unify the country under their individual leadership.¹⁷⁴ As John King Fairbank comments, “central power grew out of the sword” during this period, and “victory in war [became] the ultimate criterion of a ruler’s worth.”¹⁷⁵ Interstate competition led to the “prevalence of war, disintegration of feudalism, formation of international anarchy, emergence of territorial sovereignty, and configuration of the balance-of-power.”¹⁷⁶

The Warring States Period is a crucial point of analysis for two reasons. First, it offers a great example of the hard realpolitik mentality permeating throughout Chinese cultural thought, and strongly counters the notion of a genuinely pacifistic strategic culture in China. Second, the behaviour of the Qin, the prevailing Chinese state during this period, represents “...a model of emulation...” for the PRC in the present international community.¹⁷⁷ This stems from the belief of Chinese strategists that the PRC currently faces “an identical situation” to that of the ancient Qin kingdom.¹⁷⁸ One such

¹⁷³ Johnston “Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China.”

¹⁷⁴ Wei Zongyou, “In the Shadow of Hegemony: Strategic Choices,” *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 1 (2006): 208.

¹⁷⁵ Holmes “China Fashions a Maritime Identity” 112.

¹⁷⁶ Victoria Tin-Bor Hui, “Toward a Dynamic Theory of International Politics: Insights from Comparing Ancient China and Early Modern Europe,” *International Organization* 58 (Winter 2004): 176.

¹⁷⁷ Ralph D. Sawyer, “Chinese Strategic Power: Myths, Intent, And Projections,” *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 9.2 (Winter 2006/07): 30.

¹⁷⁸ Sawyer 30.

strategist is Colonel Liu Chungzi of the National Defence University Strategy Department in Beijing. He asserts that Sun-tzu's *The Art of War* was "the product of the multipolar world structure of China 2500 years ago [during the Warring States period]...[yet] there are a surprising number of similarities between Sun-Zi's time and the contemporary multipolar trend...".¹⁷⁹ Other Chinese strategists urge the PRC to study the "treasures" of strategies from the Warring States period, as they predict the modern world to be entering, or to have already entered, an "amazingly" similar period.¹⁸⁰

The prevalence of a hard realpolitik mentality during this period originated from the similarity of the warring Chinese state structure to the ideology of structural realism. Not only did it possess an uncanny resemblance to, if not an exact model of, the anarchic interstate system encapsulated within the realist doctrine, but it also exhibited a behavioural norm of structural realism known as the balance-of-power theory. According to this theory, "the condition of international anarchy gives states a powerful aversion to unbalanced power", due to their fear of being coerced by a stronger rival to accept or take actions detrimental to their national interests.¹⁸¹ States address this concern by 'balancing' against the strongest nation through the implementation of various strategies. Such strategies include the enhancement of military/economic capabilities and the formation of defensive alliances with similarly weak counterparts.¹⁸² This behaviour prevents a nation from developing the superior material resources required to dominate the interstate system, sway the balance of relative power in favour of the weaker states, and maintain the interstate power equilibrium.¹⁸³

The balance-of-power theory was prevalent throughout the Warring States period (and the preceding Spring and Autumn period) as numerous kingdoms vied and ultimately failed to achieve hegemonic dominance over the Chinese interstate community. As Victoria Tin-Bor Hui notes:

¹⁷⁹ Michael Pillsbury, *China Debates the Future Security Environment* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2000), 18 Dec. 2007.

<<http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/china/doctrine/pills2/part03.htm>>.

¹⁸⁰ Pillsbury 2000.

¹⁸¹ Stephen Walt, "Keeping the World 'Off-Balance': Self-Restraint and U.S. Foreign Policy," *Harvard University* (Oct. 2000): 6.. 30 Nov. 2007 <[http://ksgnotes1.harvard.edu/Research/wpaper.nsf/rwp/RWP00-013/\\$File/rwp00_013_walt.pdf](http://ksgnotes1.harvard.edu/Research/wpaper.nsf/rwp/RWP00-013/$File/rwp00_013_walt.pdf)>

¹⁸² Walt 7.

¹⁸³ Vesna Danilovic, *When The Stakes Are High: Deterrence and Conflict among Major Powers* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002) 73.

*“...for more than three centuries, ambitious domination-seekers rose but fell, attempts at domination were made but checked, balancing as a foreign policy was pursued and balances in the distribution of relative capabilities occurred at various times.”*¹⁸⁴

Despite the failures of previous kingdoms, such as the Wei and Qi, the state of Qin was ultimately able to overcome the balance-of-power phenomenon, develop the necessary strength to dominant the interstate system, and unify China under its banner. Its unique success resulted from the Qin leadership’s pursuit of “...the ‘logic of domination,’ which involves counterbalancing [divide-and-conquer] strategies, ‘Machiavellian’ [ruthless and deceptive] tactics, and self-strengthening reforms.”¹⁸⁵

The pursuit of the latter goal – self-strengthening reforms – was particularly important to the Qin kingdom’s eventual victory. Before 356 BC, this kingdom adopted a vigorous campaign to enhance its administrative, economic, and military capabilities to develop superior relative power to its rivals.¹⁸⁶ While pursuing this goal, the Qin leadership implemented defensive and benign foreign policies to avoid incurring the wraith of larger neighbours who might attack the Qin for fear of its growing strength.¹⁸⁷ This behaviour aligns with the *quan bian* decision axiom of hard realpolitik. Once Qin did acquire advantages in relative power in the post-356 BC period, its rulers pursued an aggressive, offensive strategy against opposing states. While Qin initiated 7% of all wars involving great powers from 656-357 BC, it initiated 54% of all great power wars after 356 BC until it unified the nation in 221 BC.¹⁸⁸

The security behaviour of Chinese emperors against northern Mongolian forces during the Ming Dynasty (AD 1368-1644) provides another example of this hard realpolitik Chinese mindset. By this period, Mongolians had become a powerful source of fear for Ming leaders after the recent Mongol conquest of the entire Chinese mainland during the thirteenth century.¹⁸⁹ In a demonstration of hard realpolitik thought and its *quan bian* decision calculus, Ming leaders tended to favour aggressive, offensive

¹⁸⁴ Hui, “Toward a Dynamic Theory” 186.

¹⁸⁵ Hui, “Towards a Dynamic Theory” 179.

¹⁸⁶ William C. Wohlforth, “Testing Balance of power Theory in World History,” *European Journal of International Relations* 13.2 (2007): 169.

¹⁸⁷ Hui, “Towards a Dynamic Theory” 189.

¹⁸⁸ Hui, “Towards a Dynamic Theory” 189.

¹⁸⁹ Yuan-Kang Wang, “Offensive Realism and the Rise of China,” *Issues & Studies* 40.1 (March 2004): 13.

campaigns against these Mongolian populations when they clearly possessed a military advantage.¹⁹⁰ When their ‘hard power’ waned relative to Mongolian forces, however, Ming leaders opted for more defensive and diplomatic options.

Assessments of relative strength were therefore essential to the decision-making of Ming emperors, as they influenced the Dynasty to adopt one of three forms of strategies towards the Mongolians: offence, defence, and appeasement.¹⁹¹ Yuan-Kang Wang, assistant professor at the National Chengchi University in Taipei, argued that shifts between these strategies correlated with the perceived balance-of-power between the Ming and the Mongolians:

The Ming was most powerful from 1368 to 1449, and consequently during this period adopted an offensive strategy vis-à-vis the Mongols. As the balance shifted to the disadvantage of the Ming...[they] chose to build the Great Wall along the northern frontiers from 1450 to 1548. Ming power reached rock bottom from 1549 to 1644, when the Ming, forced to appease the Mongols, accepted their demands for trade and tribute.¹⁹²

According to Alastair Iain Johnston’s study, Ming strategists viewed the use of defensive and accommodationist strategies, like peace treaties, as “temporary fixes” rather than as culturally preferred ways of dealing with external threats.¹⁹³ Chinese emperors during this period valued peaceful strategies only as means to provide breathing space to improve their relative, predominantly military, power until they possessed sufficient capabilities to neutralize their enemies by force. They were ultimately unsuccessful in this regard. Nevertheless, this cultural preference for violence, and view of diplomatic and defensive measures as “temporary fixes,” counters the pacifist culture promoted by Chinese elites and demonstrates ancient Chinese rulers’ sensitivity to the balance-of-power in their interstate system.

Aside from its behaviour towards northern barbarian populations, the Ming Dynasty also illustrated a realpolitik mentality through the exploits of Zheng He. Rather than attribute the acts of the ‘eunuch admiral’ to cultural moralism, scholars like Sun Yantze of Peking University believe that they resulted from more rational calculations.

¹⁹⁰ Johnston “Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China.” 219.

¹⁹¹ Wang, “Offensive Realism” 13.

¹⁹² Wang, “Offensive Realism” 13.

¹⁹³ Johnston “Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China.”

As stated, surprisingly, in the *People's Daily Online*, one of China's government-affiliated news agencies, Sun Yantze argues that Zheng He's "southern thrust" to garner goodwill amongst Southeast Asia was "an essential realpolitik goal."¹⁹⁴ Since Mongolian forces threatened China from the north, the Ming emperor sent the admiral to establish stability along China's southern borders to prevent the empire from facing conflict on two fronts. In his *Le Monde diplomatique* article, Attilio Jesus further explains this rationale by stating that the Ming ruler's "aim was to impose Pax Sinica, to stabilize Asia by making sure no country should become too powerful in relation to its neighbours; and to keep trade routes open, especially maritime routes."¹⁹⁵ He also states that:

*Fleet policy was a very contemporary realpolitik. As Louise Levathes points out: "The Chinese simply arranged to replace unfriendly leaders in countries where they encountered difficulties with someone willing to trade on their terms." And the fleet's large military force was useful for persuading foreign countries that they should open to trade. When Zheng He first reached La-sa, a walled town near Mogadishu, locals were wary. After the town was bombarded, using gunpowder, they surrendered.'*¹⁹⁶

Rather than being an attempt to achieve some morally inspired *Tianxia* world order, Zheng He's voyages and periodic violent behaviour may have been a realpolitik-inspired initiative to maintain Chinese superiority in relative power over neighbouring states.

Its distant predecessor, the Han Dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD), also showed a remarkable similarity with their Qin and Ming counterparts in their strategic relations with neighbouring populations. According to Ban Gu, a first century Chinese historian, observers could classify Han Dynasty strategies into two types: "military policy," which Ban saw as the most effective and long-lasting option in achieving peace; and a "bribery" or "peace" policy.¹⁹⁷ Adoption of either strategy depended on the relative capabilities of the Han military. For example, Han rulers launched aggressive, offensive campaigns of conquest against weaker southern neighbours, while adopting more defensive, peaceful tactics towards the militarily potent northern nomads.¹⁹⁸ This parallels the Ming

¹⁹⁴ "Zheng He's voyages leaves rich legacy," *People's Daily Online* 30 July 2005. 25 Nov. 2007 <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200507/30/eng20050730_199319.html>

¹⁹⁵ Attilio.

¹⁹⁶ Attilio.

¹⁹⁷ Edward Q. Wang, "History, Space, and Ethnicity: The Chinese Worldview," *Journal of World History* 10.2 (1999): 295.

¹⁹⁸ Wang, "History, Space, and Ethnicity: The Chinese Worldview" 294.

Dynasty's use of the *quan bian* decision axiom, where in the words of Amitav Acharya, "China's use of force, which was mostly limited to frontier areas such as Vietnam, [was] explained by a lack of capability, rather than imperial benevolence; where the Chinese did have the capability, they had no hesitation in resorting to force."¹⁹⁹

Whenever Han China lacked capabilities, it relied on an underlying tradition of "conducting relations with neighbouring countries on a basis of equality...", and even acquiesced in Chinese inferiority.²⁰⁰ Accepting egalitarianism with foreign barbarians occurred following the numerous defeats of the Han army at the hands of northern nomadic tribes. Being unable to defeat their foes militarily, Han emperors, in accordance with the 'bribery/peace' strategy, demonstrated their parity with the northern nomads through "gifts, subsidies, the ritual trappings of imperial prestige, and sometimes [*heqin*]."²⁰¹ The latter option was a tactic used to pacify barbarian populations by marrying imperial daughters to their chieftains.²⁰² Such examples of *quan bian* calculations and behaviour mirror the actions of other Chinese dynasties that granted barbarians status above the preferred subordinate level during times of military weakness. Such examples include the policies of the Tang Dynasty towards Tibetans, the Song Dynasty towards Mongolians, and the Han Dynasty towards the Xiongnu Federation.²⁰³ In fact, "even the powerful and ambitious Yongle Emperor (1402-24) of the Ming was believed to have addressed Central Asian monarchs on equal terms."²⁰⁴

Many scholars question China's past examples of Chinese morality and view cultural moralism merely as a façade to disguise the realpolitik nature of the Chinese strategic culture. Some intellectuals hypothesize that Confucianism's emphasis on the "rule by morality" concept, for example, where China seeks to civilize and pacify barbarians through cultural education (*wenjiao*) and pacifistic tactics, may have resulted from purely realpolitik considerations. As Q. Edward Wang explains, Han Chinese adopted a culturalist approach to external states, with policies like *heqin*, following the realization "...that often they were either unable to fend off non-Han invasion or figured

¹⁹⁹ Amitav 154.

²⁰⁰ Wang "History, Space, and Ethnicity: The Chinese Worldview" 295; Zhang "System, empire and state" 54.

²⁰¹ Zhang "Chinese Strategic Culture" 77.

²⁰² Cao 14.

²⁰³ Amitav "Will Asia's Past Be Its Future" 154.

²⁰⁴ Zhang "System, empire and state in Chinese international relations" 54.

that culturalism would be less costly than military operations.”²⁰⁵ To many academics, the *Tianxia* worldview was also simply a moral licence to coerce neighbouring states and to pursue the realpolitik aim of regional domination. They similarly view the ‘righteous war’ concept as providing an ethical excuse for Chinese elites to carry out their preferred method of solving security threats with violent military actions. This is evident in Alastair Johnston’s definition of the above moralistic principle:

*Generally, [this righteous war] concept meant ‘sending forth armour and weapons in order to punish the unrighteous,’ namely, those who bullied weaker states, killed their own people, insulted other states, and otherwise rebelled against the established political and social order. In the face of unrighteous behaviour, the violent destruction of the enemy was both necessary and desirable. Within this context the ends justified the means: once the ends of war were deemed righteous, then actions that in another context would be unrighteous (i.e., invasion and killing) were infused with moral intent. Since the adversary was a threat to the moral political order, the contest was explicitly zero-sum: the enemy could not be won over but had to be destroyed.”*²⁰⁶

Realpolitik calculations may also explain the actions of Zhuge Liang and his objective to capture Meng Huo until he morally educated the rebel leader to submit. In truth, such actions may have derived more from Zhuge Liang’s pragmatic appreciation of the limits of military victory than on any moralistic consideration.²⁰⁷ Victoria Tin-Bor Hui further notes that states during the Warring States period, including the Qin, viewed the utility of Sun-tzu’s moralistic teachings of defeating an opponent before the commencement of battle more as a rational, “...coercive strategy to minimize the costs of expansion [and war],” than as a strategy to preserve moral values.²⁰⁸

Modern examples of a Chinese adherence to a hard realpolitik mentality further encourage scholars to doubt China’s belief in cultural moralism. According to Victoria Tin-Bor Hui, the Chinese border wars with India in 1962 and Vietnam in 1972 portray the use of realpolitik, rather than idealistic, strategic considerations amongst China’s leadership. In her view, the commencement and termination of these battles was not the

²⁰⁵ Wang “History, Space, and Ethnicity: The Chinese Worldview”297.

²⁰⁶ Johnston “Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China.”

²⁰⁷ Bin Yang, “Military Campaigns against Yunnan: A Global Analysis,” *Asia Research Institute* Sept. 2004. 23 Dec. 2007 < <http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/showfile.asp?pubid=278&type=2>>

²⁰⁸ Victoria Tin-Bor Hui. rev. of *Chinese Strategic Culture and Foreign Policy Decision-Making: Confucianism, Leadership, and War*, by Huiyun Feng, *China Quarterly* (Sept. 2007): 783.

result of moral incentives either to assert a *Tianxia* world order or to utilize limited ‘active defence’ operations. Rather, China’s behaviour during these engagements resulted from Chinese leaders utilizing a ‘realist’, or *realpolitik*, decision-making process.²⁰⁹ Other scholars, such as William Chang, believe that the current Chinese administration now views its nation residing in an a “Machiavellian anarchy,” with rational nation states vying with one another in an international system to maximize their national wealth, security, and power vis-à-vis other countries.²¹⁰ As a result, CCP leaders now realize “...the essential need to analyze great power relations and manipulate them for their country’s own benefit”.²¹¹ Perhaps Thomas Christensen best articulates the dominance of realism in current Chinese strategic thought. In his view, “China may well be the high church of *realpolitik* in the post-Cold War world”, with analysts far more likely to think like traditional balance-of-power theorists than their Western counterparts.²¹²

Sinologists further question the authenticity of the PRC’s adherence to Confucian morality, especially in light of its previous opposition to the ideology. In fact, “for nearly fifty years [the CCP] systematically destroyed Confucianism’s teachings and influence, causing basic erosion in both.”²¹³ Ralph Sawyer believes the CCP’s newfound affection for this philosophy stems from its desire to accomplish two non-idealistic tasks.²¹⁴ Domestically, Chinese elites aspire to re-impose the ideology’s ideas of submissiveness and self-discipline to better control a volatile population struggling through intense domestic reform. Externally, Beijing wishes to conceal its *realpolitik* intent by shrouding Chinese strategic culture in the guise of Confucian benevolence, thus mitigating regional fears towards the PRC’s growing power. To enforce this peaceful image, numerous pundits accuse CCP elites of selectively mining their history for examples of Chinese pacifism. As James Holmes notes, and as former U.S. Ambassador Lilley hinted, “Beijing may be pursuing a grand strategy predicated on *realpolitik* while using Ming history

²⁰⁹ Hui “Chinese Strategic Culture” 783.

²¹⁰ William S. W. Chang, “China and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Negotiations”, *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs* 1 (Spring 2001): 34.

²¹¹ Gilbert Rozman, “China’s Quest for Great Power Identity,” *Chinese Foreign Policy in Transition* ed. Guoli Liu (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 2004) 123.

²¹² Thomas J. Christensen, “Chinese *Realpolitik*” *Chinese Foreign Policy in Transition* ed. Guoli Liu (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 2004) 59.

²¹³ Sawyer 11.

²¹⁴ Sawyer 11.

[specifically, the supposed pacifistic qualities of Admiral Zheng He’s voyages and other historic examples] to soften or even disguise its intentions.”²¹⁵ Analysts observing Chinese behaviour must comprehend the “potential instrumentality of strategic culture” for PRC elites, who can alter its image, but not its being, to “clothe strategic choices in [a] culturally acceptable language...deflect criticism, [and] suppress potential dissent...”²¹⁶

The above illustrations of a violent Chinese strategic culture provide an essential context when evaluating the current foreign policies of the PRC. Despite the frequent claims of China’s inherently benevolent nature, there is substantial evidence demonstrating its preference for an offensive, militant foreign policy stance. This author is therefore convinced that the notion of the Chinese strategic culture being inherently benign, which CCP elites routinely promote, is a common fallacy. There is also sufficient proof to suggest that a hard realpolitik strand of Chinese strategic culture has existed throughout the nation’s history and represents the primary factor in the foreign policy decision-making of former Chinese rulers. Subsequently, prudent analysts must ponder two possibilities when evaluating Beijing’s ongoing rhetoric regarding its benevolent past. The first is that PRC elites are aware of the existence of this hard realpolitik paradigm throughout their history and purposefully disguise it behind a veil of Confucian benevolence to allay fears of China’s growing strength and possible future intentions. The second possibility is that the Chinese leadership is naïve to its existence and truly adheres, in both the past and present, to Confucian moralistic principles. In regards to the latter option, a unique interpretation of moralism encourages Chinese rulers to adopt aggressive, realpolitik behaviour despite their commitment to morality.

In either case, China’s cultural tendency to exhibit hard realpolitik behaviour represents a serious concern for the United States and its allies. Both strands of China’s strategic culture are antagonistic towards the U.S. hegemony. American pre-eminence is counter to the *Tianxia* world order and viewed as illegitimate by the ideology of cultural moralism. The unipolar world is additionally antithetical to the strategic desires of China’s realpolitik strand, as it threatens the survival of China in an anarchic interstate

²¹⁵ Holmes “China Fashions a Maritime Identity” 111.

²¹⁶ Holmes “China Fashions a Maritime Identity” 114.

environment and hinders the realpolitik desire amongst Chinese elites to maximize their relative power. When viewed in conjunction with the *quan bian* decision axiom, American analysts have reason to be concerned about the future intentions of the PRC. According to Chinese officials, the PRC should use the victory of the Qin kingdom as a point of emulation in how to dominant an interstate system while avoiding the wraith of the larger states. Therefore, China may cooperate with the current world order only in order to conduct its self-strengthening reforms, after which it will then adopt its preferred militant approach to achieving its national aims. Deng Xiaoping's surreptitious call for his country to disguise its ambition and hide its claws under the slogan "Bidding time to build up our strength" (*tiaoguang yanhui*) only exacerbates this concern.²¹⁷

Summary

A detailed analysis of China's strategic culture reveals the existence of a benevolent ideological strand predicated solely on cultural moralism and an aggressive, realpolitik strand prone to violent foreign policies. The former strand represents China's fictitious, idealized self-image that morally commits its rulers and strategists to seek peaceful and virtuous relations with neighbouring states. According to the persistent claims of CCP elites, this principled adherence to Confucian moralism has made the Chinese strategic culture inherently benign, in stark contrast to the malignant nature of its Western counterpart. The latter aggressive strand, however, represents China's true strategic culture, with Chinese leaders prone to adopt violent, realpolitik foreign policies. A unique interpretation of Confucian moralism provides one possibility for this behaviour. According to this view, morality does play a significant, operative role in Chinese strategic calculations, but encourages realpolitik behaviour through its various principles, which it then defines as being ethically defensible. The second possibility is that this bellicose nature stems from Chinese leaders following a strict hard realpolitik mentality, predicated on structural realist notions, with Confucian moralism merely used to conceal rulers' malignant, realist intentions.

²¹⁷ Minxin Pei, "Assertive Pragmatism: China's Economic Rise and its Impact on Chinese Foreign Policy," Institut Francais Des Relations Internationales (Fall 2006): 13.

Understanding China's dualistic strategic culture, with its emphasis on the ideologies of realpolitik and cultural moralism, is crucial when analyzing the motivations of the Chinese strategic mentality. While not providing an infallible predictor of the PRC's future intentions, this strategic culture does form the underpinnings and subconscious force behind Chinese elites' strategic mindset and approach to foreign affairs. Regardless of whether the second, realpolitik strand of China's strategic culture stems from purely realpolitik calculations, or warped interpretations of Confucian principles, it is driven to maximize its relative power against other rivals and is antagonistic towards any hegemonic rule other than its own. The purely realpolitik ideology would oppose a hegemonic power due to the threat that it poses to China's security, while a realpolitik ideology based on cultural moralism would oppose the U.S. hegemony because it is an illegitimate and unrighteous power. Such revisionist incentives, however, are balanced through the *quan bian* decision axiom, where Chinese leaders are encouraged to adopt accommodationist foreign policies until their state achieves the necessary material strength to challenge the world order. These dynamics are what form the foundation of China's dualistic strategic mentality, which is overly antagonistic towards the U.S. unipolar world, yet is willing to adopt both status-quo and revisionist foreign policies. The following section will investigate the second factor shaping the strategic mentality of the PRC – nationalism.

III

THE STRUGGLE FOR CCP LEGITIMACY THROUGH NATIONALISM

Introduction

For over two decades, the authoritarian government of the PRC – the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) - has felt increasingly vulnerable and insecure. The fall of eastern communism and the Chinese implementation of Deng Xiaoping’s “socialism with Chinese characteristics,” which introduced massive capitalistic reforms throughout the PRC in 1979, has undermined Chinese communism as a cohesive force uniting China’s populace under CCP rule. Communism’s erosion coincides with government elites facing graver, more malignant threats to their political survival from growing sources of domestic instability. These sources include rampant government corruption, economic inequality, massive unemployment, and economic degradation. These sources of unrest have caused public protests to skyrocket in recent years. According to China’s Ministry of Public Security, “mass incidents” (or protests) have increased nationwide by 268% from 1993 to 1999 (8,700 to 32,000 protests respectively), with not a single year during this period recording an increase of less than 9%.²¹⁸ Other PRC official sources cite a 50% surge in “public order disturbances” between 2003 and 2005: from 58,000 to 87,000 incidents.²¹⁹ Beijing has responded to this domestic instability and the public’s dwindling confidence in the CCP by substituting the Communist ideology with nationalism. This substitution creates the second factor moulding the strategic mentality of the PRC leadership.

Nationalism first entered the Chinese conscience during the “century of humiliation” as a reaction to the ignominy of being defeated at the hands of British, French, American, Japanese, and other Western forces. China’s hundred or so years of

²¹⁸ Murray Scot Tanner, “China Rethinks Unrest”, *The Washington Quarterly* 27.3 (2004): 149.

²¹⁹ Thomas Lum, “Social Unrest in China,” *Congressional Research Service* (8 May 2006): 1-2.

victimization at the hands of these foreign “inferior” states invalidated the traditional Chinese ideology of *Tianxia* that saw China as the supreme power in the world. The failure of this Sino-centric universalism spawned the Chinese nationalist movement, which stimulated Chinese citizens to finally end the “century of humiliation” by overthrowing Japanese occupation forces in 1945. Despite Mao Zedong overlooking nationalism during the majority of his reign, Deng Xiaoping soon rediscovered its utility following the social chaos that accompanied his economic reforms. As Chinese acceptance of capitalist practices intensified and further undermined the communist ideology, the CCP saw nationalism as the last political belief still endorsed by its citizens. Therefore, the government quickly embraced state nationalism as the nation’s new central cohesive force. Initiatives like the “Campaign of National Unity” and the promotion of the “victim narrative” effectively fuelled the fires of nationalism amongst the public. They also simultaneously legitimized the Party as the historic defender of national honour and the best body capable of rejuvenating China back to its historic glory.

The promotion of state nationalism has now placed the legitimacy of the CCP on its ability to meet the patriotic demands of its population; this includes the restoration of China’s great power status and the advancement of national prosperity. As pragmatic nationalists, the PRC leadership maintains its political survival by rhetorically playing to patriotic sentiments. Despite its superficial nationalist persona, the CCP actually adheres to a very pragmatic domestic and foreign strategy to further China’s economic modernization and development. In the eyes of the CCP leadership, greater wealth is essential in order to ensure the continuation of their authoritarian rule, since it will provide the necessary capabilities to achieve nationalist demands, rejuvenate the country, and quell the current domestic turmoil.

The use of nationalism has unfortunately released an unruly strand of patriotic sentiment, called popular nationalism. This domestic movement is outside of state-control and increasingly represents a threat to China’s pragmatic foreign policies and CCP rule. Popular nationalism embodies the emotional and irrational zeal of Chinese citizens who are frustrated with China’s demise during the century of humiliation and who are impatient to see its restoration. These nationalists reject the CCP’s pragmatic policies towards maintaining amicable and cooperative policies with wealthy Western states like

the U.S. and Japan. Instead, they demand their government to aggressively assert China's national interests and protect Chinese honour from hostile foreign behaviour, regardless of the economic consequences. The government therefore finds itself in a difficult balancing act. It must maintain support from domestic nationalists, who are essential in ensuring domestic stability, but also pursue a pragmatic foreign policy that aims to promote status-quo relations with countries vital to economic trade and development. By balancing these two goals, China's foreign policy demonstrates a dualistic approach to the U.S. unipolar world that is both aggressive and accomodationist.

The Century of Humiliation and the Birth of Nationalism

Before nationalism gained prevalence in the late 1940s, Chinese leaders viewed their nation as the centre of the universe, or 'Middle Kingdom', through its *Tianxia* world order concept. For over 2,000 years, this ideology articulated "a clear distinction of a Chinese 'Us' vis-à-vis the non-Chinese 'Others'," and juxtaposed a Chinese self-image of cultural superiority with a world filled with "culturally inferior barbarians".²²⁰ Such a perspective of the world explains why the concept of nationalism and patriotism never established strong roots within traditional Chinese thought. Chinese citizens never considered their nation existing amongst other states, but rather envisioned China as being the sole entity of importance in the universe.²²¹

The period known as the century of humiliation would deal a critical blow to China's sense of universal superiority and would ultimately destroy the *Tianxia* concept amongst Chinese citizens. From 1840 to 1949, China was the victim of repeated attacks, manipulation, and occupation by foreign powers. According to the Chinese *Record of National Humiliation*, the period officially began with the Qing Dynasty's disastrous defeat by British troops in the 1840-1842 Opium War.²²² This defeat forced the Qing Empire to sign the Treaty of Nanjing, which was the first of the so-called 'Unequal

²²⁰ Chen Zhimin, "Nationalism, Internationalism, and Chinese Foreign Policy", *Journal of Contemporary China* 14.42 (2005): 36; Kuo-Shu Yang, "Chinese responses to modernization: A psychological analysis", *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 1.1 (Dec. 2002): 83.

²²¹ Zhimin, "Nationalism, Internationalism, and Chinese Foreign Policy" 37.

²²² Suisheng Zhao, "China's Pragmatic Nationalism: Is it Manageable?" *The Washington Quarterly* (Winter 2005-06):132.

Treaties'. The terms not only ceded the island of Hong Kong over to the British, but also opened five 'treaty' ports to foreign powers, including Shanghai, and resumed the importation of opium into the Qing Empire.²²³ The "Middle Kingdom" would later suffer additional insults to its national pride, including the Second Opium War in 1856-60, the Sino-French War of 1883-1885, the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, the 'Boxer Uprising' of 1899-1900, and the second Sino-Japanese War of 1937-1945.²²⁴ Each of these stages of the century of humiliation caused the Qing Dynasty to sacrifice its territorial integrity (including the loss of Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea and parts of Manchuria), domestic autonomy, and international influence (especially in Vietnam). PLA General Li Jijun remarked on this period with the following:

*Before 1949, when the People's Republic of China was established, more than 1000 treaties and agreements, most of which were unequal in their terms, were forced upon China by the Western powers. As many as 1.8 million square kilometres were also taken away from Chinese territory. This was a period of humiliation that the Chinese can never forget.*²²⁵

The malevolent actions of these barbarian forces against the Qing Dynasty, especially those inflicted by the Japanese, devastated China's pride and invalidated the central premise of the *Tianxia* concept - the global supremacy of the Chinese culture.²²⁶ The imperial powers not only proved the ineptitude of China's military, but also represented a formidable threat to China's culture and religion. By the 1890s, foreigners appeared poised to dismantle China entirely.²²⁷ Exacerbating this revelation was the loss of respect amongst Chinese citizens for their ruling class's "corrupt stupidity," which a key national humiliation textbook regards as having facilitated the foreign aggression.²²⁸ As China struggled for survival, domestic intellectuals turned to nationalism "as a means

²²³ Lan Nike, "Poisoned Path to Openness," *Shanghai Star* 20 Nov. 2003, 5 March 2007
<<http://app1.chinadaily.com.cn/star/2003/1120/cu18-1.html>>

²²⁴ Nike.

²²⁵ Thomas Kane, "China's Foundations: Guiding Principles of Chinese Foreign Policy," *Comparative Strategy* 20 (2001) 46.

²²⁶ Zhimin "Nationalism, Internationalism, and Chinese Foreign Policy" 38.

²²⁷ Erica Strecker Downs, "Legitimacy and the Limits of Nationalism," *International Security* 23.3 (Winter 1998/99): 118.

²²⁸ William A. Callahan, "National Insecurities: Humiliation, Salvation, and Chinese Nationalism," *Alternatives* 29 (2004): 204.

of mobilizing the energies of the Chinese people to ‘save China’” from their continuous suffering.²²⁹

While numerous variations of nationalism emerged during this tumultuous period, one of the most important forms of the ideology was Liang Qichao’s ‘state nationalism’.²³⁰ Liang Qichao was a well-traveled intellectual at the turn of the twentieth century who exposed himself to Japanese and Western ideas and political theories. He believed that the Qing Dynasty’s defeat in the Sino-Japanese War awoke the Chinese people “from the dream of 4,000 years” and illustrated the harsh reality of the international balance-of-power.²³¹ By relying on foreign political and social models, Liang concluded that China’s weakness was a result of the absence of organic integration and forceful order in Chinese society.²³² Nationalism could address this vulnerability, according to Liang, by uniting the Han, Manchus, Mongols, Hui, Miao, and Tibetans under a broad nation, in a manner similar to Western powers, which would strengthen China’s survivability in a Darwinist world.²³³ Under this ideology, citizens would hold their state accountable for the defence of China’s national interests while also placing the needs of the nation above their personal interests, particularly in times of national peril.²³⁴

This form of nationalism achieved a mass consciousness during the second Sino-Japanese war in 1931-45.²³⁵ China was devastated by Japan’s military victory in the 1895 Sino-Japanese War, as it was regarded as the most inferior culture of all the attacking imperialist powers.²³⁶ When the Japanese renewed hostilities against China during the 1930s, and committed such atrocities as the 1937 Nanjing massacre, the Chinese people reacted with a powerful anti-Japanese, nationalistic sentiment to resist the continuation of their indignity. One patriotic banner during this period particularly articulates the virulence of this anti-Japanese nationalism. It depicted a heroic Chinese soldier holding a

²²⁹ Downs 118.

²³⁰ Zhimin “Nationalism, Internationalism, and Chinese Foreign Policy” 38.

²³¹ Suisheng Zhao, “Chinese Nationalism’s Double Edge,” *Wilson Quarterly* (Autumn 2005): 6.

²³² Zhimin “Nationalism, Internationalism, and Chinese Foreign Policy” 38.

²³³ Zhimin “Nationalism, Internationalism, and Chinese Foreign Policy” 38.

²³⁴ Zhao “Chinese Nationalism’s Double Edge” 6.

²³⁵ Zhimin “Nationalism, Internationalism, and Chinese Foreign Policy” 40.

²³⁶ Downs 118.

decapitated Japanese head as a trophy; inscribed on the banner were the words “To wipe out our humiliation with our enemy’s blood.”²³⁷

The CCP skilfully capitalized on this upsurge of nationalism to further their cause and legitimize their party as the rightful leader of China. They denounced previous regimes’ willingness to compromise and capitulate to foreign powers, and vowed that they would instead stand up and fight against the Japanese aggressors.²³⁸ The CCP’s ability to capture the leadership of this anti-Japanese nationalism was crucial in their ultimate rise to power. Chalmers Johnson’s study in 1962 convinced many scholars that “the communist rise to power in China should be understood as a species of nationalist movement,” and that mass nationalism was an integral part of the communist revolution.²³⁹ When the CCP finally assumed control of China and founded the PRC, Mao Zedong told the world that the Chinese people had finally ended their suffering: “Ours will no longer be a nation subject to insult and humiliation. We have stood up.”²⁴⁰

While the CCP saw great utility in nationalism as a tool to defend against foreign aggressors, it downplayed the ideology after the Party’s rise to power. Mao replaced nationalism, for its narrow focus on national interests, with communist internationalism, which sought to further the global expansion of communism. The term ‘nationalism’ was subsequently abandoned and replaced with ‘social patriotism,’ which Premier Zhou Enlai labelled as “not a narrow nationalism, but a patriotism aimed to strengthen national pride under the guidance of internationalism.”²⁴¹ Although the form of state nationalism that first appeared during the second Sino-Japanese War dwindled in importance after the founding of the PRC, the CCP soon rediscovered its value during the domestic turmoil created by Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms.

Nationalism and CCP Legitimacy

The majority of Chinese analysts agree that the Marxist-Maoist ideology has waned since the fall of the Eastern European communist states and the implementation of Deng

²³⁷ Callahan, “National Insecurities” 206.

²³⁸ Downs 119.

²³⁹ Guang 490.

²⁴⁰ Callahan “National Insecurities” 206.

²⁴¹ Zhimin “Nationalism, Internationalism, and Chinese Foreign Policy” 41.

Xiaoping's 'socialism with Chinese characteristics.' While the collapse of the international communist movement had a traumatic impact on the Chinese leadership's sense of vulnerability in the early 1990s, the country's ongoing adoption of Western economic reforms continues to represent a challenge to the legitimacy of the CCP. Since 1979, Chinese citizens have found their government endorsing the very capitalistic economy that the Marxist-Maoist doctrine historically demonized as a catalyst for corruption, moral decline, and economic disparity.²⁴² The fact that these negative ramifications now plague the PRC, in addition to other sources of domestic instability, further enforces the hypocrisy of the CCP's past communist rhetoric. As "the communist ideology has all but disappeared in practice in China,"²⁴³ recent opinion polls indicate that only a minority of ordinary citizens still identify with the values and goals of communism.²⁴⁴ This erosion of the CCP's founding doctrine is a major threat to the credibility and the continued authority of the Chinese leadership. As Greg Austin explains:

*...without a coherent ideology, the political system has no social glue [to give] the government legitimacy in the eyes of most of the people. The struggle to find a new ideology and to establish a new social contract with a very distrusting population is a defining feature of Chinese politics...*²⁴⁵

While the influence of Communist values and principles has declined throughout China, the CCP has managed to survive as the nation's authoritarian government by re-establishing the basis of its legitimacy with nationalism and the pursuit of nationalistic goals and aspirations.

The CCP's Promotion of State Nationalism and the Victim Narrative

Nationalism has been an important component of the Chinese Communist ideology since the founding of the PRC, but it officially remained subordinate to the ideology of

²⁴² Lu Xing, "Transitional Rhetoric of Chinese Communist Party Leaders in the Post-Mao Reform Period: Dilemmas and Strategies," Quarterly Journal of Speech 92.3 (August 2006): 265.

²⁴³ Greg Austin, "China's power: searching for stable domestic foundations," Power and Responsibility in Chinese Foreign Policy ed. Yongjin Zhang (Canberra: Asia Pacific Press, 2001) 82-83.

²⁴⁴ Minxin Pie, "Beijing Drama: China's Governance Crisis and Bush's New Challenge," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace – Policy Brief 21 (November 2002): 3.

²⁴⁵ Austin 82-83.

Marxist-Maoist thought since the late 1950s.²⁴⁶ This changed in the wake of Deng Xiaoping's tumultuous economic reforms and the resulting political and ideological loss of faith amongst Chinese citizens. The Tiananmen Square incident in 1989 was arguably the most significant event during China's transformation to a market economy in the 1980s. During this crisis, students held a massive anti-government protest in Tiananmen Square that the PLA eventually had to quell, killing approximately 2,600 people in the process.²⁴⁷ Party members feared that this June 4th movement represented the "bankruptcy of the official ideology" as well as the fatal consequence of losing Communism's "spiritual pillars."²⁴⁸ Reformist leaders, including Deng Xiaoping, now believed that Marxist-Maoist dogma was ineffective as a cohesive ideology for China, and thus set out in search of a suitable replacement.²⁴⁹

Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin, his successor, found such a substitute in nationalism, which remained the "one bedrock of political belief shared by most Chinese people in spite of the rapid decay of Communist official ideology."²⁵⁰ For Chinese leaders, nationalism became a "patriotic antidote to the pressures that had led to the 1989 confrontation."²⁵¹ In the early 1990s, they launched an intensive patriotic education campaign, called the "Campaign of National Unity," to rebuild the CCP's legitimacy amongst Chinese citizens by associating the Party with this nationalist, rather than Marxist, doctrine.²⁵² Officially, this campaign sought to strengthen *aiguo*, or patriotic feelings, which in Chinese literally means "loving the state."²⁵³ The CCP desired this re-education to make the Party indistinguishable from the Chinese state, and to therefore reflect the public's love of the country directly upon itself. National interests were now synonymous with the CCP's interests, making any criticism of the Party line an

²⁴⁶ Suisheng Zhao, "A State-Led Nationalism: The Patriotic Education Campaign in Post-Tiananmen China," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31.3 (Sept. 1998): 296.

²⁴⁷ Andrew Lui, "Looking Back at Tiananmen Square," *Peace Review* 12.1 (2000): 144.

²⁴⁸ Zhao "A State-Led Nationalism" 289.

²⁴⁹ Zhao "A State-Led Nationalism" 289.

²⁵⁰ Zhao "A State-Led Nationalism" 289.

²⁵¹ Rana Mitter, "Old Ghosts, New Memories: China's Changing War History in the Era of Post-Mao Politics," *Journal of Contemporary History* 38.1 (2003): 121.

²⁵² Zhimin "Nationalism, Internationalism, and Chinese Foreign Policy" 49; Christopher R. Hughes, "The Resurgence of Chinese Nationalism in the Global Era," *Open Democracy.Net* 18 April 2006. 02 May 2007 <<http://193.41.101.59/debates/article.jsp?id=3&debateId=83&articleId=3456>>

²⁵³ Zhao "A State-Led Nationalism" 290.

unpatriotic act.²⁵⁴ Such an attempt to make the Party the “embodiment and object of nationalist, or patriotic sentiment” is what Ian Seckington, Suisheng Zhao, and Tianbiao Zhu refer to as ‘state-centred,’ ‘state-led,’ or simply ‘state’ nationalism.²⁵⁵ Harking back to Liang Qichao’s teachings, this ideology asserts that all citizens of China, irrespective of their ethnic origins, are members of a large nation united within the Communist state and should therefore pledge their political loyalty to the CCP.²⁵⁶

This patriotic education campaign emphasized modern Chinese history and portrayed the CCP as the nation’s historic guardian and protector of national honour, as well as the hero who victoriously ended the century of humiliation.²⁵⁷ Comments by Jiang Zemin during the closing ceremony of the sixth plenum of the 14th Party Congress in 1996 provided an example of this form of rhetoric:

*In recent history our Motherland has suffered long periods of invasion and humiliation by big foreign powers. Many patriots and people from all nationalities, in order to save the nation from subjugation and ensure its survival, carried out arduous explorations and an unyielding struggle in which countless martyrs laid down their lives. The establishment of the CCP is an historical manifestation of this struggle turning from defeat towards victory. Our Party...united and drew in all patriots to struggle together...Members of the Chinese Communist Party are the most resolute and thorough-going patriots. The patriotism of the Chinese Communist Party is the highest example of the Chinese nation and Chinese patriotism.*²⁵⁸

The government has utilized a “victim narrative” to further interconnect the CCP’s legitimacy with state-nationalism and to bolster its credibility as the ruling party of China.²⁵⁹ Chinese elites created this narrative by exploiting the palpable sense of civil shame that has existed since the century of humiliation. In doing so, the Party hopes to exaggerate its achievement at restoring the nation’s pride in 1949 and to improve the confidence of Chinese citizens in the Party’s ability to return the nation to greatness.

²⁵⁴ Fei-Ling Wang, “Beijing’s Incentive Structure: The Pursuit of Preservation, Prosperity, and Power,” *China Rising: Power and Motivation in Chinese Foreign Policy* ed. Yong Deng (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2005) 26; Zhao “A State-Led Nationalism” 289.

²⁵⁵ Ian Seckington, “Nationalism, Ideology and China’s ‘Fourth Generation’ Leadership,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 14.42 (Feb. 2005): 25.

²⁵⁶ Zhao “A State-Led Nationalism” 291.

²⁵⁷ Seckington 26.

²⁵⁸ Seckington 26.

²⁵⁹ Gries, Peter Hays. “Nationalism and Chinese Foreign Policy.” *China Rising: Power and Motivation in Chinese Foreign Policy* ed. Yong Deng (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2005) 106.

Observers of Chinese nationalism need to comprehend the importance of the national humiliation discourse in modern Chinese subjectivity. Citizens in China are proud of the superpower status that their nation held several times in the last 2,000 years, including during the Han Dynasty, the Tang Dynasty, and the early Qing Dynasty.²⁶⁰ In fact, China was a significant international superpower even as late as 1820, just twenty years before the start of the First Opium War and the century of humiliation. At that time, China's GDP constituted 28.7% of world GDP, which is a much larger percentage than that currently held by the United States.²⁶¹ Aside from economics, China also possessed 35.5% of the world's population; now the PRC, which remains the most populous country on earth, possesses only 21.4% of all human beings.²⁶²

The resulting sense of historical pride strongly conflicts with the population's current feelings of victimization and sorrow following the traumatic events of the "century of humiliation". Citizens believe that China's decline as a superpower was a historical mistake caused by national weakness, and they lament their nation's current ineptitude to reclaim their former international status.²⁶³ According to William Callahan, "it would not be an exaggeration to argue that the master narrative of modern Chinese history is the discourse of the century of national humiliation."²⁶⁴ This discourse is important in Chinese society because the continuous retelling of past disgraces forms a powerful motivation for citizens to restore national honour. As the ancient work *Liji* (Book of rites) notes, "The humiliation of a thing is sufficient to stimulate it; the humiliation of a country is sufficient to rejuvenate it."²⁶⁵ Embracing the national humiliation narrative thus became a means to both self-criticize the weaknesses of the nation and produce a subsequent discourse of national rejuvenation. The heart of this latter colloquy of rejuvenation lies within the public's yearning to strengthen the nation and reclaim the former superpower status that they feel China rightfully deserves.

The CCP has capitalized on this undercurrent of shame by amplifying the victim narrative through an immortalisation of China's past disgraces and portraying itself as the

²⁶⁰ Yan Xuetong, "The Rise of China in Chinese Eyes," *Journal of Contemporary China* 10.26 (2001): 33.

²⁶¹ Akihiko Tanaka, "Global and Regional Geo-Strategic Implications of China's Emergence," *Asian Economic Policy Review* (2006): 180.

²⁶² Tanaka 180.

²⁶³ Xuetong "The Rise of China in Chinese Eyes" 33.

²⁶⁴ Callahan "National Insecurities" 204.

²⁶⁵ Callahan "National Insecurities" 203.

only body capable of rejuvenating the country back to its former glory. Deng Xiaoping, amongst other Chinese leaders, commenced this narrative during the 1980s when they created three national-level museums dedicated to the War of Resistance against Japan.²⁶⁶ All of the exhibits focused on the Sino-Japanese wars due to those conflicts ability to generate the greatest amount of shame and subsequent nationalistic fervour amongst the Chinese public. Two of the museums focused exclusively on the oppression and abuse of Chinese citizens at the hands of Japanese soldiers; one is even based exclusively on the Nanjing Massacre or ‘Rape of Nanjing.’²⁶⁷ In both of these exhibitions, the CCP is either briefly mentioned or completely absent from the galleries due to its theme of victimization. Alternatively, the third exhibit, called the War of Resistance Museum, frequently mentions the CCP in its portrayal of the patriotic struggle against Japanese aggression, and intertwines the Party within the museum’s heroic narrative.²⁶⁸ Collectively, the museums display a “victim/hero dichotomy” with the CCP acting as the nation’s saviour from a hundred years of suffering.²⁶⁹

This dichotomy remains prevalent throughout the “patriotic education campaign” in the 1990s and in later Party rhetoric to help strengthen the ideology of state-nationalism. The national unity campaign frequently encouraged citizens to visit the above-mentioned exhibits and to recall the humiliation that the country experienced before the establishment of the PRC. The CCP also proclaimed that “patriotic education shall run through the whole education process from kindergarten to University,” with a strong emphasis on China’s historic victimization.²⁷⁰ For example, students in middle school history class now had to memorize dozens of treaties that the late Qing Dynasty signed with foreign invaders after losing numerous defensive wars.²⁷¹ Facilitated by the government’s campaign, iconic images of the hundred years of humiliation, such as the

²⁶⁶ Sheila Miyoshi Jager, “The Politics of Identity: History, Nationalism, And The Prospect For Peace In Post-Cold War East Asia,” *Strategic Studies Institute* (April 2007): 10, 22 Sept. 2007

<<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB770.pdf>>

²⁶⁷ Mitter 127.

²⁶⁸ Mitter 128.

²⁶⁹ Mitter 128.

²⁷⁰ Steven W. Mosher, “Does the PRC Have a Grand Strategy of Hegemony?” U.S. House of Representatives International Relations Committee, Washington. 14 Feb. 2006. 27 Feb. 2007

<<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/congress/mos021406.pdf>>

²⁷¹ Wu Xu. “American Patriotism and Chinese Nationalism: What If These Two Forces Clash over the Taiwan Issue?” *Perspectives* 6.1 (31 March 2005): 30. 20 Sept. 2007

<http://www.oycf.org/perspectives/28_03312005/4_WuXu_Patriotism.pdf>

ruins of the Yuanming Garden palace, now appear throughout Chinese popular culture on T-shirts, calendars, and commercial brands.²⁷² Jiang Zemin's reintroduction of "National Humiliation Day" in 2001, following a U.S. spy-plane collision with a Chinese fighter jet, perhaps best demonstrates the continued prevalence of this discourse of dishonour in modern Chinese society.²⁷³ As a national humiliation textbook articulates to the Chinese public, "Never forget national humiliation...The invasion of the imperialist powers and the domestic reactionary ruling class's corrupt stupidity together created the roots of this catastrophe."²⁷⁴ The CCP was identified throughout this patriotic education campaign as the only body preventing China from descending back into chaos, and slogans emerged stating "Only The CCP Can Save China" and "No CCP, No New China."²⁷⁵ The narrative of national humiliation and victimization links with the narrative of national salvation.²⁷⁶ By exploiting this resentful public subjectivity, the CCP not only further enforces the heroism of the Party at ending the nation's hardship, but it also provides national rejuvenation as the basis to legitimize their authoritarian rule.

Chinese Rejuvenation through Pragmatic Nationalism

The CCP's use of the victim narrative and the nationalist ideology has cemented the domestic authority and credibility of the government on its ability to fulfil nationalists' desires, paramount of which is the rejuvenation of the country back to its former glory. Chinese leaders had used the slogan, 'rejuvenation of China' (zhenxing zhonghua) since the days of Sun Yatsen (in the late 19th and early 20th century) and Mao Zedong.²⁷⁷ However, instead of its auxiliary importance under Mao, this slogan later became the cornerstone of the government's legitimacy under Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, and, currently, Hu Jintao. Beijing regards pragmatic nationalism as the foreign and domestic policy doctrine most capable of achieving this national restoration, and subsequently maintaining CCP political supremacy. Economic development is the paramount objective

²⁷² Callahan, "National Insecurities" 208.

²⁷³ Callahan "National Insecurities" 202.

²⁷⁴ Callahan "National Insecurities" 204.

²⁷⁵ Zhimin 49; and Wang "Beijing's Incentive Structure" 26.

²⁷⁶ Callahan "National Insecurities" 204.

²⁷⁷ Xuotong "The Rise of China in Chinese Eyes" 34.

of this pragmatic dogma. Its adherents within the Chinese ruling class view the nation's lack of wealth and modernization as being the main reason for the national victimization experienced during the century of humiliation. These elites also view economic development as the best way for the PRC to acquire the necessary capabilities to regain its great power status and satisfy the demands of nationalists. Leaders from Deng Xiaoping to Hu Jintao have therefore striven to transform the Chinese society to best support this pragmatic objective.

Unfortunately for the CCP, a strand of nationalism outside of state control is now challenging their use of pragmatic foreign policies. Referred to as 'popular nationalism', this domestic movement represents a threat to the legitimacy of the Party and places increasing pressure on government officials to heed nationalistic demands that are detrimental to economic growth. The emerging strength of this populist sentiment is forcing government elites to play a difficult balancing act. On one hand they must maintain amicable relations with wealthy states to continue China's economic growth and modernization, which is vital to the CCP goal of rejuvenating the nation back to a great power. On the other hand, Chinese officials must placate domestic nationalists, who demand their nation to act as a forceful and proud nation and to challenge any foreign behaviour deemed disrespectful to the PRC, regardless of the economic consequences.

Pragmatic Nationalism and the Significance of Prosperity and Modernization

Numerous scholars have defined China's pragmatic approach to the achievement of nationalist desires as "pragmatic nationalism" (Suisheng Zhao), "realpolitik nationalism" (Lei Guang), "assertive pragmatism" (Minxin Pei), and "positive nationalism" (Chen Zhimin). Despite slight differences between each definition, all of these terms share a common belief in pragmatism being a primary force behind Chinese foreign policies. This pragmatism is defined as "behaviour disciplined by neither set of values nor established principles."²⁷⁸ Its strategy is therefore:

...ideologically agnostic, having nothing, or very little, to do with either communist ideology or liberal ideals. It is a firmly goal-fulfilling and

²⁷⁸ Zhao "Chinese Foreign Policy: Pragmatism and Strategic Behaviour" 4.

*national-interests-driven strategic behaviour conditioned substantially by China's historical experiences and geostrategic environment.*²⁷⁹

This dogma identifies China's economic weakness and lack of modernization as the principle cause of the century of humiliation. In the *Political Science Quarterly*, Suisheng Zhao, the central advocating scholar for pragmatic nationalism, stated, "China fell victim to external imperialism because political decay, technological backwardness, and economic weakness had eliminated any possibility of defending itself."²⁸⁰ In light of this historic trauma, pragmatic Chinese elites realized that a strong economy was central to the country's development of the military and political power necessary to prevent future imperialist aggression and to restore the international status of China.²⁸¹ They also realized that a long-term aim of the national-humiliation narrative, which is so vital for political authority, was for the CCP to "prove that it is better than previous 'stupidly corrupt' regimes by achieving social and economic development."²⁸² Pragmatic nationalism is just one of many forms of nationalism to develop in response to the public's desire for national rejuvenation. Nativism, anti-traditionalism, and liberal nationalism all identified different sources of Chinese weakness as the main catalyst for the country's historic victimization and loss of international power.²⁸³ Subsequently, they each offered unique solutions to restore China's honour, including the sole embracement of Chinese values, the adoption of foreign cultures and economic/political models, and the promotion of state rights and individual freedoms. While these various nationalist perspectives continue to fluctuate in popularity amongst Chinese elites, pragmatic nationalism, and its emphasis on rejuvenation through prosperity and modernity, has remained the dominant ideology of the CCP since the implementation of economic reforms in the 1980s.²⁸⁴

Deng Xiaoping recognized the logic in pragmatic nationalism and quickly emphasized the need to shift China's priority from 'revolution' to 'modernization' upon

²⁷⁹ Zhao "Chinese Foreign Policy: Pragmatism and Strategic Behaviour" 4.

²⁸⁰ Suisheng Zhao, "Chinese Nationalism and Its International Orientations," *Political Science Quarterly* 115.1 (2000): 9.

²⁸¹ Tianbiao Zhu, "Nationalism and Chinese Foreign Policy," *The China Review* 1.1 (Fall 2001): 5.

²⁸² Callahan "National Insecurities" 205.

²⁸³ Zhao "China's Pragmatic Nationalism" 136.

²⁸⁴ Zhao "China's Pragmatic Nationalism" 138.

gaining power in the late 1970s.²⁸⁵ As ‘China’s architect of economic reform,’ Deng believed that, “modernization is at the core of all [of the country’s] tasks, because it is the essential condition for solving both our domestic and our external problems”, and argued that nothing short of a World War would tear China from this path.²⁸⁶ His initiatives strongly demonstrated pragmatism because unlike nativist or anti-traditionalist thought, Deng adopted any policies that could best modernize the nation, regardless of whether they were modern or traditional, foreign or domestic.²⁸⁷ As he famously stated, “No matter whether the cat is black or white, it is a good cat so long as it catches mice.”²⁸⁸

The CCP demonstrated its rationality by selectively accepting certain status-quo, Western-style economic reforms in 1979 after acknowledging that “both the nation’s problems and most of the possible solutions [come] from the outside.”²⁸⁹ Deng Xiaoping expressed this selective adoption of capitalistic practices while ignoring subsequent Western liberal ideology as if opening up the window but putting in screens to keep out the flies.²⁹⁰ This ability to gain power both from reacting to and absorbing from the outside world - in this case foreign aggression and Western economic principles - is a hallmark of pragmatic strategic behaviour.²⁹¹ Under Deng Xiaoping’s leadership, economic development became the ‘central task’ for the CCP to follow over the next 100 years in order to rejuvenate the nation.²⁹² Such long-term strategic thinking is a testament to the rationality and patience of Chinese leaders towards the modernization of China.²⁹³

A major, unprecedented consequence of Deng Xiaoping’s revolutionary economic reforms and strategic mandate was to fuse the political preservation and legitimacy of the

²⁸⁵ Quansheng Zhao. “Chinese Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era.” Chinese Foreign Policy in Transition, ed. Guoli Liu (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 2004) 295-296.

Quansheng Zhao, “Chinese Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era”, Guoli Liu, “Chinese Foreign Policy in Transition”, p.295-296.

²⁸⁶ Xing 269; and Zhao, “Chinese Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era” 295-296.

²⁸⁷ Suisheng Zhao, “Chinese Nationalism and Pragmatic Foreign Policy Behaviour,” Chinese Foreign Policy: Pragmatism and Strategic Behavior ed. Suisheng Zhao (London: M.E. Sharpe, 2004): 70.

²⁸⁸ Xing 269.

²⁸⁹ Suisheng Zhao. “Chinese Foreign Policy: Pragmatism and Strategic Behaviour.” Chinese Foreign Policy: Pragmatism and Strategic Behavior ed. Suisheng Zhao (London: M.E. Sharpe, 2004): 5.

²⁹⁰ Joseph Fewsmith, “The Domestic Context of Chinese Foreign Policy: Does “Public Opinion” Matter?” The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978-2000 ed. David Lampton (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001): 159.

²⁹¹ Zhao “Chinese Foreign Policy: Pragmatism and Strategic Behaviour” 5.

²⁹² Fei-Ling Wang, “Preservation, Prosperity and Power: what motivates China’s foreign policy?” Journal of Contemporary China 14.45 (Nov. 2005): 682.

²⁹³ Xuetong “The Rise of China in Chinese Eyes” 34.

CCP with China's continued modernization and economic development. As Deng himself asserted, nationalistic goals for the restoration of China's great power status will only materialize after the country has vastly improved its technological and economic power. Fei-Ling Wang aptly describes this link between Party preservation, great power status and prosperity as forming a "triangular" incentive structure.²⁹⁴ According to her model, the restoration of China's international great power status serves as the basis for Chinese elites' legitimacy to rule over the PRC. This redemption, however, is only possible with the continued growth of the Chinese economy through status-quo, capitalistic practices. It is only through the improvement of national prosperity that the Chinese public will enjoy a standard of living equivalent to citizens of other great powers. Furthermore, China's regional and international influence and status will only improve by drastically increasing funds to the military and improving the economic power of the Chinese economy. It is for this reason that Fei-Ling Wang states, "economic prosperity is not only the pathway for Beijing to strive towards its political preservation; it is also the foundation for rising nationalistic aspirations in China."²⁹⁵

The fact that economic development is now a key indicator of the CCP's legitimacy to rule has encouraged the successors of Deng Xiaoping to better facilitate economic reforms in China.²⁹⁶ Following Deng's death in 1997, Jiang Zemin found himself in control of a nation that was experiencing immense economic growth but at the expense of significant domestic turmoil, including rising unemployment, widening income gaps, and the further erosion of China's socialist ideology.²⁹⁷ Despite nationalism usurping communism as the dominant doctrine in China, Chinese elites still "pay lip service to Marxist theory and Maoist thought" to aid in maintaining domestic stability.²⁹⁸ Jiang Zemin, therefore, set out to improve national unity by redefining the mission and purpose of the Chinese Communist Party. His solution was to further intertwine economic development with the Chinese socialist movement. As David Lai explains, Chinese elites in the late 1990s continued to justify China's acceptance of Western economic reforms by

²⁹⁴ Wang "Preservation, Prosperity and Power" 683.

²⁹⁵ Wang "Preservation, Prosperity and Power" 683.

²⁹⁶ Downs "Legitimacy and the Limits of Nationalism" 118.

²⁹⁷ Jia Hepeng, "The Three Represents Campaign: Reform the Party or Indoctrinate the Capitalists?" *Cato Journal* 24.3 (Fall 2004): 264.

²⁹⁸ Xing 272.

referring to Karl Marx's theory of social development. According to Marxism, human society develops in an evolutionary fashion from primitive tribes all the way to capitalist societies; at this point, capitalism gives way to socialism and then finally communism.²⁹⁹ Jiang stated publicly that China prematurely adopted socialism without going through the necessary capitalist phase of this evolution.³⁰⁰ Jiang declared in the CCP 15th national convention in 1997 that China was still in the early stages of socialism and would need to embrace status-quo capitalistic economic development for perhaps 100 years before the socialist phase is complete.³⁰¹

Jiang further justified the country's economic reforms by introducing the "Three Represents" initiatives in 2000.³⁰² Also referred to as "Jiang Zemin Thought", this theory stated that "the CCP must always represent: 1) the development trend of China's advanced productive forces; 2) the orientation of China's advanced culture; and 3) the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people."³⁰³ The second Represent was perhaps the most revolutionary in Jiang's theory for its encouragement of the CCP to accept capitalists and entrepreneurs amongst its ranks.³⁰⁴ As Jiang Zemin stated,

*We should unite with the people of all social strata who help to make the motherland prosperous and strong...We should recruit members of other social strata to the Party in order to increase the Party's influence, adapting to the new situation, and explore new systems and new ideas in management.*³⁰⁵

As Xing Lu notes, these "Three Represents" aimed to redefine the CCP's mission in order to solidify the Party's authority in the pursuit of economic development (the first Represent), infuse its ideology with entrepreneurs and capitalistic practices (the second

²⁹⁹ David Lai, "U.S. – China Relations: A New Start?" The People's Liberation Army and China in Transition ed. Stephen J. Flanagan (Washington D.C.: National Defence University, 2003) 332.

³⁰⁰ Lai "U.S. – China Relations: A New Start?" 332.

³⁰¹ Lai "U.S. – China Relations: A New Start?" 332.

³⁰² Xing 273.

³⁰³ Raviprasad Narayanan, "The Politics of Reform in China: Deng, Jiang, and Hu." Strategic Analysis 30.2 (April-June 2006): 335-336.

³⁰⁴ Narayanan "The Politics of Reform in China" 336.

³⁰⁵ Xing 274.

Represent), and revitalize the moral position of the Party as a servant of the public (the third Represent).³⁰⁶

Since succeeding Jiang Zemin as the Party's General Secretary in November 2002, Hu Jintao has followed his predecessors in placing economic development as China's top priority but has added a stronger socialist tone to the reform. While Jiang Zemin admirably focused on economic growth and Party restructuring, he failed to achieve his third Represent, which commits the Party to address the interests of the majority.³⁰⁷ Hu Jintao therefore implemented a doctrine called "Putting People First," where the CCP would actively strive to narrow the income disparity in China and seek to alleviate the hardships experienced by the nation's poor.³⁰⁸ This policy goes beyond mere rhetoric, as the Chinese President has made significant steps to improve the living standards of poor rural citizens and improve social spending throughout the nation in recent years.³⁰⁹ This renewed focus on Chinese poverty, however, has not distracted the CCP from its commitment to empowering the upper and middle classes that are just as vital to the Party's political preservation. Hu Jintao and his Premier, Wen Jiabao, have implemented new property laws in 2007 to protect the growing wealth of the middle class, and to create improved bank and corporate tax laws to aid domestic businesses.³¹⁰ To further legitimize the CCP's authority, the Hu-Wen leadership has also created a "scientific development" theory that consists of a "five balances" program.³¹¹ This concept asserts that Chinese economic growth should strive for:

*...balanced urban and rural development, balanced development among regions, balanced coastal and interior regions, balanced economic and social development, the balanced development of man and nature, and a balance between domestic development and China's opening to the outside world.*³¹²

³⁰⁶ Xing 274.

³⁰⁷ Xing 276.

³⁰⁸ Xing 277.

³⁰⁹ Joseph Kahn, "China Backs Property Law, Buoying Middle Class," The New York Times 16 March 2007. 02 April 2007

<<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/16/world/asia/16china.html?ex=1331697600&en=6284ab99568d916f&ei=5088>>

³¹⁰ "China's next Revolution," The Economist 10-16 March 2007: 9; Kahn

³¹¹ Yongnian Zheng, "The New Policy Initiatives in China's 11th 5-Year Plan," China Policy Institute (Nov. 2005): 6.

³¹² Zheng "The New Policy Initiatives in China's 11th 5-Year Plan" 6.

Hu Jintao implemented all of these economic initiatives to revitalize the base of CCP authority, ensure its legitimacy through the current domestic turmoil, and ultimately build what the Chinese president refers to as a harmonious society.

To maintain the CCP's political preservation, Chinese leaders have attempted to solve the social instability created by their economic reforms by embracing even more Western capitalistic practices and policies. In a sense, the Party hopes "that it can [economically] grow its way out of social unrest before it threatens the regime's survival."³¹³ Former Premier Zhu Rongji aptly phrased this belief in the power of economic success in March 2003: "Development is the fundamental principle, and the key to resolving all problems China is facing. We must maintain a comparatively high growth rate in our national economy."³¹⁴ Chinese pragmatic nationalists realize that failure to do so will create a "legitimacy crisis that could threaten regime stability," according to China expert Peter Hays Gries.³¹⁵

The Great Balancing Act: Popular Nationalism and a Pragmatic Foreign Policy

The simultaneous pursuit of pragmatic policies designed to further China's national wealth with a domestic legitimation strategy based on nationalism is placing Chinese elites in an increasingly precarious situation. The CCP leadership intended nationalism to act as a cohesive force within the PRC to maintain internal stability and ensure the Party's legitimacy with, and supremacy over, the domestic populace. With the use of state nationalism and the victim-hero narrative, they have generally been successful in these regards. However, the deliberate promotion of patriotic sentiment has unwittingly created a strand of nationalism outside of state-control that is progressively becoming "a constraint on, and a threat to, the CCP."³¹⁶ Scholars refer to this unruly strand as "popular nationalism" for its embodiment of the public discourse of patriotic Chinese citizens. By providing an overview of its affect on Chinese elites, this section

³¹³ Tanner "China Rethinks Unrest" 145.

³¹⁴ Tanner "China Rethinks Unrest" 145.

³¹⁵ Gries "Forecasting US-China Relations, 2015" 69.

³¹⁶ Phil Deans, "State patriotism versus popular nationalism in the People's Republic of China," International Institute For Asian Studies Newsletter 34 (July 2004): 10.

will demonstrate why Minxin Pei refers to nationalism as one of the “demons” challenging the PRC’s commitment to pragmatic, cooperative foreign policies.³¹⁷

The origin of popular nationalism lies within the fallout of Deng Xiaoping’s “socialism with Chinese characteristics.” As scholar Yinan He states, Chinese citizens before the early 1980’s were relatively passive to their country’s recent history as the victim of foreign aggression. During the Cold War, the Chinese government opted to portray countries like Japan and the U.S. in a neutral, if not friendly manner, despite their role in the century of humiliation. CCP officials reasoned this as a sound decision due to the strategic value of maintaining friendly relationships with key states in the face of the Soviet threat.³¹⁸ Preserving amicable relations required the PRC to control all access to information regarding the past and current abuses of these strategic partners from its citizens. This public nescience with recent history, however, came to a rapid end following the severe public unrest that resulted from China’s economic reforms in the 1980s and the nation’s subsequent adoption of state nationalism. This “official nationalism took a firmly antagonistic stand vis-à-vis the West,” according to Chinese scholar Ben Xu, with “...both the past history of Western antagonism and present hostility on the part of the West [playing] a significant role.”³¹⁹ While the CCP launched this patriotic education campaign merely to ensure domestic stability, it also sparked a powerful, emotional zeal amongst the PRC’s citizenry.

The resulting bottom-up, popular form of nationalism is highly suspicious and confrontational with Western nations and is exceptionally sensitive to any perceived threats or abuses by foreign powers. Popular nationalists are citizens who feel empowered by China’s newfound economic strength and believe that the nation should now behave, and be respected, like the great power it is rapidly becoming. Any foreign behaviour to the contrary is infuriating to these patriots. They vehemently oppose what they perceive as neo-imperialist acts from other countries and strongly criticize the West for its perceived attempts to contain China’s rising power.³²⁰ This is particularly true when such

³¹⁷ Pei “Assertive Pragmatism” 7.

³¹⁸ Yinan He, “History, Chinese Nationalism and the Emerging Sino-Japanese Conflict,” Journal of Contemporary China 16.50 (Feb. 2007) 4.

³¹⁹ Ben Xu, “Chinese Popular Nationalism: Its Intellectual Politics and Moral Dilemma,” Representations 76 (Autumn 2001): 121.

³²⁰ Xu “Chinese Popular Nationalism” 124.

actions appear as a continuation of foreign nations' historic malevolence to the Chinese state. It is no wonder why popular nationalism came to prominence in China in the 1990s as:

*'a reaction' to the humiliations that China suffered at the hands of Western powers – from its lost bid to host the 2000 Olympics, its repeated failure to enter the WTO, and its ravished embassy in the war in Yugoslavia [bombed by NATO forces in 1999].*³²¹

One of the most famous books to encapsulate the popular nationalist movement was *China Can Say No*, which came out in 1996 following the then recent military standoff between China and the U.S. in the Taiwan Strait. According to one of the authors, this book, which became a national bestseller, represented the public opinion of “young people in China who are really fed up with and utterly offended by...[the American] policy of confronting and containing China.”³²² *China Can Say No* aptly illustrated the public's growing anti-American sentiment and demonstrated how domestic opinion of America had shifted from admiration of its economic success to suspicion and anger with its injurious policies. As one Hong Kong scholar commented, the American image was now of “...a country that interferes in other's affairs for its own interests, and a country which is particularly hostile to China's progress and tries to keep China weakened and divided.”³²³ This animosity fuelled widespread protests by Chinese nationalists when American behaviour supported the above stereotype. Such instances included the U.S. navy's inspection of the Chinese cargo ship *Yinghe* on the open sea in 1993, the U.S. intervention in the Taiwan Strait in 1996, the NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999, and the collision of a U.S. spy plane with a Chinese fighter in 2001.

Though the U.S. is often vilified in China for its hegemonic behaviour, most anti-American sentiment amongst popular nationalists pales in comparison to the rancour they hold for Japan. The Campaign of National Unity focused on all foreign powers that victimized China during its recent history. The government, however, placed particular emphasis on Japan and its numerous atrocities against the Chinese population throughout

³²¹ Lin Xiaoping, “Globalism or Nationalism? Cai Guoqiang, Zhang Huan, and Xu Bing in New York.” *Third Text* 18.4 (2004): 283.

³²² Xu “Chinese Popular Nationalism” 127-128.

³²³ Philips C. Saunders, “China's America Watchers: Changing Attitudes Towards the United States.” *The China Quarterly* (2000): 59.

this nationalist education. By the CCP targeting its eastern rival as “the national enemy” to galvanize domestic stability and solidify Party authority, it also “unexpectedly opened the gate to a flood of anti-Japanese popular nationalist sentiment.”³²⁴ While anti-Japanese emotions were strong amongst Chinese citizens during the late 1980s and 1990s, they have reached new heights in recent years. According to a 2004 survey by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, only 6% of Chinese respondents felt “friendly” towards Japan, while 53% “expressed their ‘unfriendliness’” towards their Asian neighbour.³²⁵ Tokyo’s present refusal to acknowledge its historic abuses, its insensitivity to China’s sense of victimization, and its apparent neo-imperialist behaviour are behind this malignity. Nationalists have even commenced violent protests across the mainland following insulting Japanese behaviour, such as the Japanese government’s 2005 approval of high school textbooks that gloss over historic Japanese atrocities in Asia. The fact that rising anti-Japanese sentiment has caused Japan to move even closer to its ally, the United States, has only exacerbated domestic anger towards these foreign powers.

While nationalistic sentiment may help to strengthen domestic stability, the CCP does not want it to interfere with China’s pragmatic maintenance of amicable foreign relations with wealthy Western nations. As Suisheng Zhao acknowledges, “pragmatic Chinese leaders know that China’s economic success depends heavily on integration with the outside world, particularly on cooperative relations with advanced Western countries.”³²⁶ This is certainly true in terms of the PRC’s relationship with the U.S. and Japan. In 2007, America and Japan were China’s top two trading partners, with trade amounting to \$302 billion and \$236 billion respectively.³²⁷ In 2008, Japan was also the fourth largest investor of foreign direct investment (FDI) into China, while the United States was the 6th largest investor of FDI during the same year.³²⁸ It is therefore in the interests of China to maintain a cordial relationship with these and other rich countries by avoiding confrontation with states over issues that do not jeopardize national interests. As

³²⁴ He “History” 9.

³²⁵ Yongnian Zheng, “China-Japan Relations: The Clash of Two Asian Giants,” China Policy Institute (February 2006): 3.

³²⁶ Zhao “China’s Pragmatic Nationalism” 139.

³²⁷ “US-China Trade Statistics and China’s World Trade Statistics,” The US-China Business Council 20 June 2008 <<http://www.uschina.org/statistics/tradetable.html>>

³²⁸ “Forecast 2008: Foreign Investment in China.” The US-China Business Council 2008: 3. 20 June 2008 <<http://uschina.org/public/documents/2008/02/2008-foreign-investment.pdf>>

William Chang explains, China must develop and maintain a responsible international image in order to increase its diplomatic manoeuvrability with foreign powers to further commercial trade and avoid intimidating foreign companies from investing in China.³²⁹ If China fails to project this status-quo image, Japanese and American leaders may take steps to minimize their economic relations with China and therefore undermine its national rejuvenation. This explains the CCP's contradictory behaviour following the abusive U.S. and Japanese actions mentioned previously. During these occasions, the Party publicly appeared to act sternly in the face of foreign aggression, but actually sought to achieve compromise between the two powers and pacify domestic nationalism. For example, the Chinese government quickly quelled all anti-American protests following the 1999 Chinese embassy bombing when it appeared that they would damage Sino-U.S. relations, despite encouraging them initially.³³⁰ It also launched police crackdowns on anti-Japanese protestors in 2005 when Japan and other regional powers, such as Singapore, expressed concern towards the "PRC's immature nationalism."³³¹

A greater threat to the CCP comes less from popular nationalism's challenge to pragmatism and more from its basal anti-government tone. "Nationalism has a long history in China of being used as a cover for anti-government action," according to James Miles. If not properly controlled, it can turn on the CCP and challenge its legitimacy based on the very patriotic standards that the government set for itself in the wake of Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms. These standards oblige the Communist Party to protect China's national honour, prevent any further victimization, and rejuvenate the nation back into a great power. Unfortunately for Chinese elites, popular nationalism has grown over the past decade partially because of the government's inability to live up to its heroic persona.

Nationalists are highly critical of official pragmatic policy, according to Ian Seckington, as they value preserving China's national pride and great power image over maintaining amicable trading relations for the sake of economic growth.³³² Observers witnessed the first signs of this criticism immediately after the onset of the patriotic

³²⁹ Chang "China and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Negotiations" 40.

³³⁰ Zhao "China's Pragmatic Nationalism" 140.

³³¹ Thomas J. Christensen, "Have Old Problems Trumped New Thinking? China's Relations with Taiwan, Japan, and North Korea," *China Leadership Monitor* 14 (Spring 2005) 6-7.

³³² Seckington 27.

education campaign. With the newly released information on Japan's historic barbarity, Chinese citizens were quick to express "...frustration with the earlier government 'lies'" regarding Japanese benevolence.³³³ Currently, patriots voice their dissent nationwide through popular media outlets and publications. The aforementioned *China Can Say No* book, for example, had

*...a distinctly antigovernment edge to it as well. The authors charged that the Chinese government had been naïve and soft in its dealings with the United States, that it should be more forthright in just saying no, and that the government was neither confident nor competent...*³³⁴

Popular nationalists are now increasingly calling upon the Chinese government "...for more decisive action in defence of China's interests, especially against the U.S., than the Party-state may be willing to countenance."³³⁵ CCP elites are fully aware of the danger in not appeasing and/or controlling domestic nationalists. As Susan L. Shirk, a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State under the Clinton Administration, asserts:

*The previous two dynasties...fell to revolutionary movements that accused the government of failing to defend the nation against foreign aggression. Today's leaders worry that they could meet the same fate if they don't stay ahead of popular nationalists.*³³⁶

Many scholars respond with scepticism to the assertion that domestic views and sentiment actually influence the decision-making of China's leadership. Foreign policy scholars traditionally believe that authoritarian nations, such as the PRC, are "free of domestic constraints and thus at a diplomatic advantage" over their democratic counterparts who must constantly pay attention to public opinion.³³⁷ As the French political sociologist Alexis de Tocqueville commented, "I have no hesitation in saying that in the control of society's foreign affairs democratic governments do appear decidedly inferior to others."³³⁸ According to this great mind, authoritarian governments differ from democracies in that they can "make decisions more rapidly, ensure domestic

³³³ He "History" 9.

³³⁴ Fewsmith 163-164.

³³⁵ Seckington 27.

³³⁶ Susan L. Shirk, "China's 'Split Personality,'" *Time* 9 April 2007. 03 June 2007 <http://time-blog.com/china_blog/2007/04/chinas_split_personality.html>

³³⁷ Peter Hays Gries, "Nationalism, Indignation, and China's Japan Policy," *SAIS Review* 25.2 (Summer-Fall 2005): 111.

³³⁸ Gries "Nationalism, Indignation, and China's Japan Policy" 111.

compliance with their decisions, and perhaps be more consistent in their foreign policy.”³³⁹ While public opinion can compel leaders of democratic states to adopt aggressive or non-aggressive behaviour against their will, authoritarian leaders are free to adopt whatever decisions they see fit for any given situation.³⁴⁰

Despite continuing to be an authoritarian state, the PRC has lost full control over public opinion, and therefore forfeited its ‘diplomatic advantage’, due, ironically, to its “...sustainable high economic performance in the past quarter of the century.”³⁴¹ China is no longer the centralized, rigid society that it was under Mao Zedong. Chinese citizens now enjoy a “wide range of economic, social and cultural freedoms and are increasingly demanding political liberties.”³⁴² Economic growth has also encouraged media commercialization, which has weakened the government’s control over the medium and provided greater opportunities for domestic patriotic converse. As Yongnian Zheng explains, the “...public space [for nationalists] is expanding rapidly as China gets increasingly integrated with the outside world...such socio-economic changes have given rise to new waves of popular nationalism in China.”³⁴³

The Internet serves as a crucial breeding ground for this unofficial discourse. By mid-2005, China had over 100 million Internet users, second only to the U.S. in terms of its web population,³⁴⁴ who could now rapidly exchange nationalist ideas with one another and access immense amounts of information. Shih-Ding Liu, assistant professor at the University of Macau, China, offers insight into the implications of what he calls “cyber-nationalism”:

The internet, with its decentralizing and participatory nature, helps facilitate a bottom-up force for the Chinese people in negotiation and competition with the top-down propaganda regime...the increasingly popular use of the internet makes it more and more difficult for the state apparatus to monopolize the production and circulation of Chinese nationalist discourse...On the net, the agent of Chinese nationalism is no longer the state or the Party; the cyber-nationalism contains variegated

³³⁹ Charles W. Kegley, *World Politics: Trend and Transformation* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 2003) 66.

³⁴⁰ Gries, “Nationalism, Indignation, and China’s Japan Policy” 111.

³⁴¹ Zheng “China-Japan Relations” 3.

³⁴² Gries “Nationalism, Indignation, and China’s Japan Policy” 112.

³⁴³ Zheng “China-Japan Relations” 3.

³⁴⁴ Zheng “China-Japan Relations” 3.

*popular imaginations that may support, oppose or negotiate with the state's claim to legitimacy.*³⁴⁵

Regardless of whether they are voicing their dissent in cyberspace or on the streets of Beijing, "...popular nationalists are increasingly asserting their right to participate in nationalist politics."³⁴⁶

Aside from the broadening of public space that has accompanied Chinese economic reform, the CCP's loss of total control over nationalism can also be attributed to a lack of political strength and will within the PRC leadership. The CCP's weakness to public opinion, according to David Lampton, the Director of Chinese Studies at the Nixon Centre, derives from "...the current generation of Chinese leaders [lacking] the revolutionary and charismatic authority that legitimized the rule of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping."³⁴⁷ It also stems from the detrimental social and ideological impact that China's economic reforms have had on the legitimacy of the CCP. In addition, China's current authoritarian system withholds any procedural legitimacy that citizens would give to a democratically elected government.³⁴⁸ This political weakness "...only accentuates [the CCP's] vulnerability against popular sentiments," and forces the government to further embrace nationalism to maintain public support for its authority.³⁴⁹ Like most authoritarian states, the PRC has the coercive power to silence these nationalistic sentiments; however, the Chinese leadership lacks the will to aggressively combat nationalism on a grand scale. Government elites fear that any hard-handed actions against Chinese patriots will subsequently erode the CCP's nationalistic credentials. History also offers an ominous warning to those Chinese leaders that wish to try. As Yinan He points out, "no Chinese government in modern history, the late Qing, Republican, or Nationalist, succeeded in putting down 'patriotism'; each time they tried, it incurred massive anti-government revolts."³⁵⁰

³⁴⁵ Shih-Diing Liu, "China's popular nationalism on the internet. Report on the 2005 anti-Japan network struggles," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 7.1 (2006): 149.

³⁴⁶ Gries "Forecasting US-China Relations, 2015" 71.

³⁴⁷ David Lampton, ed. "China's Foreign and National Security Policy-Making Process: Is it Changing and Does it Matter?" *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978-2000*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001) 15.

³⁴⁸ Gries "Nationalism, Indignation, and China's Japan Policy" 112.

³⁴⁹ Zheng "China-Japan Relations" 5.

³⁵⁰ He "History, Chinese Nationalism and the Emerging Sino-Japanese Conflict" 18-19.

China's greater public space and the CCP's weakened authoritative position have caused popular nationalism to become a major force in foreign policy decisions amongst Chinese elites. As one Shanghai analyst stated, "domestic politics have become deeply involved in foreign policy. This is a watershed in Chinese foreign policy, because generally [it] was detached from domestic politics..."³⁵¹ Scholars like Peter Hays Gries even go as far as to say that popular nationalists currently "...play a greater role in foreign policy decision making in China than in the United States."³⁵² It is easy to come to the same conclusion if one appreciates how this unofficial discourse is now "...more powerful than at any time in the history of the People's Republic..." according to Yinan He.³⁵³ As popular nationalism grows in strength, it forces the CCP to periodically abandon its pragmatic policies and co-opt with popular sentiment to dissuade nationalists from directing their ire against the government.

Sino-Japanese relations offer the best examples of this behaviour. Despite its importance to Chinese economic development, PRC officials have maintained a hard-line policy towards Japan to "placate public anger and deflect anti-establishment challenges."³⁵⁴ Beijing cautiously negotiates all pragmatic foreign policies with Tokyo, as public anger can quickly turn on its "traitorous" leadership if it appears to not be fulfilling its nationalist obligations.³⁵⁵ An iconic instance of popular nationalism hijacking the CCP's pragmatic policies came in the beginning of 2005, when Japan attempted to gain a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Such a development was concerning to Chinese elites, as it would give their regional rival greater international power. Nevertheless, they decided to take a backseat on the issue so as not to "...jeopardize China's lucrative trade and investment relations with Japan."³⁵⁶ However, after 30 million Chinese nationalists signed an Internet petition opposing Japan's UNSC bid, and after two weekends of nationwide demonstrations, public pressure forced the CCP to oppose the Japanese bid.³⁵⁷

³⁵¹ Saunders "China's America Watchers" 59.

³⁵² Gries "Nationalism, Indignation, and China's Japan Policy" 112.

³⁵³ He "History, Chinese Nationalism and the Emerging Sino-Japanese Conflict" 19.

³⁵⁴ He "History, Chinese Nationalism and the Emerging Sino-Japanese Conflict" 11.

³⁵⁵ He "History, Chinese Nationalism and the Emerging Sino-Japanese Conflict" 11.

³⁵⁶ Gries "Nationalism, Indignation, and China's Japan Policy" 111.

³⁵⁷ Gries "Nationalism, Indignation, and China's Japan Policy" 111.

The PRC leadership now faces a difficult balancing act between satisfying its two sources of domestic legitimacy: furthering nationalistic ambitions and maintaining economic growth. As Erica Strecker Downs and Phillip C. Saunders stated in the journal of *International Security*:

*...the contradictions between domestic appeals to nationalism and a development strategy that relies heavily on foreigners mean trade-offs exist between nationalism and economic performance. The CCP's challenge is to pursue both sources of [political] legitimacy in a complementary manner, seeking to manipulate foreign and domestic perceptions so that the contradictions between a legitimation strategy based on nationalism and one based on economic performance do not become unmanageable.*³⁵⁸

In order to maintain this manageability, the CCP treats nationalism not as a threat to be eliminated, but rather “as a force whose expression must be [properly] ‘channelled’.”³⁵⁹ The first priority in channelling these patriotic emotions is to steer nationalist anger away from delegitimizing the government’s authority and “...towards the appropriate triumvirate of scapegoats: namely, Japan, Taiwan, and the United States.”³⁶⁰ To do this, Chinese leaders must appear resistant in the face of foreign aggression and help direct nationalist outbursts if the government is unable to prevent such sentiment from spreading in its infancy. The second priority is to subdue nationalist sentiment when it restricts state autonomy in foreign affairs and threatens China’s goal of economic reform.

The CCP response to the 1999 U.S./NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade illustrates this behaviour. As nationalists began to mobilize, the government provided buses for student demonstrators to take them closer to the U.S. embassy. The CCP made this decision “...understanding full well that the students were going to take to the streets in any event and that if they did not throw stones at the American embassy they would throw them at Zhongnanhai.”³⁶¹ When the protests got out of control, the

³⁵⁸ Downs “Legitimacy and the Limits of Nationalism” 120-121.

³⁵⁹ Zhao “China’s Pragmatic Nationalism” 140.

³⁶⁰ Nicholas Khoo. “Correspondence: China Engages Asia? Caveat Lector,” *International Security* 30.1 (Summer 2005): 205.

³⁶¹ Fewsmith 173.

CCP then ordered their state-run news agencies to deter further protests and even had then-vice president, Hu Jintao, give a televised speech to mollify the public outrage.³⁶²

The CCP also demonstrated their tactical flexibility in balancing between nationalism and pragmatism during the 2001 U.S. spy-plane collision with a Chinese fighter jet. Despite publicly appearing uncompromising in the face of American aggression, PRC leaders quickly prohibited anti-U.S. demonstrations and censored nationalist discourse online.³⁶³ In order to avoid damaging both its nationalistic legitimacy and economic ties with the U.S., the CCP also cunningly mistranslated a speech by then Secretary of State Colin Powell. When Mr. Powell used the words “very sorry,” referring to the death of the Chinese pilot, the Party instructed its state-media to translate the phrase as *baoqian*, which is almost identical in meaning to the Chinese expression of apology that Beijing originally demanded.³⁶⁴ The PRC was therefore able to find a face-saving solution despite domestic nationalists’ opposition to compromise.

Maintaining a proper balance between these two legitimation strategies requires the government to constantly gauge the level and direction of patriotic emotions during the conduct of their foreign affairs, especially during crises. An accurate understanding of public opinion demarcates space within which the leadership can pragmatically deal with foreign powers. If the CCP feels that the threat to its political preservation from Chinese nationalists outweighs the benefit of maintaining amicable foreign relations, then it will co-opt with popular sentiment and abandon its pragmatic policies, as seen with Japan’s UNSC bid. Such trade-offs between economics and nationalism, according to Nicholas Khoo, underscore the fact “...that nationalistic and political factors trump economic explanations for Chinese foreign policy.”³⁶⁵ PRC leaders are therefore very aware of the “boundaries of the permissible,” where crossing such thresholds will illicit massive anti-government reactions from domestic nationalists.³⁶⁶ John Keefe, who was a special assistant to U.S. ambassador to China Joseph Prueher, commented on this behaviour during the 2001 spy-plane incident. As the crisis continued, Keefe later noted that American diplomats in Beijing “saw a Chinese government acutely sensitive to Chinese

³⁶² Zhao “China’s Pragmatic Nationalism” 140.

³⁶³ Zhao “China’s Pragmatic Nationalism” 141.

³⁶⁴ Zhao “China’s Pragmatic Nationalism” 141.

³⁶⁵ Khoo “Correspondence: China Engages Asia” 200.

³⁶⁶ Lampton “Chinese Foreign and National Security Policy” 14.

public opinion.”³⁶⁷ Such observations illustrate how Chinese foreign policymaking is increasingly becoming what Robert Putnam referred to as a ‘two-level game,’ with “diplomats keeping one eye on domestic nationalists while keeping their other eye on their foreign counterparts.”³⁶⁸

The fact that instances of nationalists usurping official pragmatic doctrine may become more common in the future is deeply concerning to peaceful pragmatic leaders in both Beijing and abroad. Foreign policy decision makers realize that China’s public space is rapidly growing alongside its flourishing economy. Their fear is that this freedom will force CCP elites to increasingly heed public opinion as their legitimacy becomes ever more fragile in the face of an emboldened popular nationalist movement coupled with worsening domestic unrest.³⁶⁹ Patriotic citizens demand their nation to make massive improvements to its political, economic, and military status, and to assertively reclaim its former glory as a world superpower. As these voices grow louder, the CCP may discover that in playing the nationalism card it has, according to the Chinese saying, “mounted a tiger and can’t easily dismount (qihu nanxia).”³⁷⁰ The Party may deem satisfying nationalists’ demands outright as their best option to maintain domestic control. Such a development could turn China into a belligerent nation, wildly reacting to the aggressive emotions of its people. On the other hand, it could also cause the ruling government to topple, as nationalists increasingly push their government to pursue policies beyond its current capabilities, and descend the region into chaos. It is therefore in the security interests of China and the greater Asian community for the CCP to continue channelling popular nationalism to provide Beijing with the political flexibility it needs to pursue pragmatic foreign policies.

Summary

Faced with perilous threats to its political legitimacy, the CCP has sought refuge in nationalism as the post-communist ideology capable of galvanizing public support

³⁶⁷ Gries “Nationalism and Chinese Foreign Policy” 112.

³⁶⁸ Gries “Forecasting US-China Relations, 2015” 71.

³⁶⁹ He “History” 3.

³⁷⁰ Fewsmith 186-187.

behind its leadership and ensuring its continued authority in China. This ideological substitution plays a major role in shaping the dualistic strategic mentality of the PRC. By constantly reminding Chinese citizens of their nation's past victimization and intertwining patriotism with loyalty towards the government, the CCP has successfully based their legitimacy to rule on the achievement of nationalistic demands for the rejuvenation of China back into a great power. Chinese elites view economic development and modernization as key to achieving this goal, and rely on pragmatic foreign policies to maintain amicable relations with rich foreign states, like the U.S., which are vital to China's growing prosperity. Unfortunately, the CCP has unwittingly sparked a nationalistic movement amongst Chinese citizens that rejects these pragmatic foreign policies. While this strand of popular nationalism also desires greater wealth, it demands its leaders to adopt an antagonistic and assertive stance against nations that are disrespectful to the PRC, regardless of the economic consequences. The threat of this popular nationalism towards the survival of the authoritarian government forces Chinese elites to periodically abandon their pragmatic and cooperative approach to international relations in favour of more confrontational policies. This balancing act between benevolent policies designed to increase commercial ties with wealthy states and antagonistic policies designed to improve domestic stability forms a powerful factor influencing China's strategic mindset. Since the Chinese leadership wants to maintain peaceful relations with foreign wealthy states, the U.S. and other great powers should avoid actions that fuel Chinese nationalist zeal and restrict the diplomatic flexibility of PRC elites. As the next chapter will demonstrate, however, American foreign policies appear highly threatening to Chinese interests and encourage both patriotic Chinese citizens and Chinese elites to desire a revision of the U.S. unipolar world.

IV

CHINA'S OMINOUS PERCEPTIONS OF THE AMERICAN HEGEMONY

Introduction

The unique perceptions of Chinese elites towards the current interstate system represent the final factor influencing the strategic mentality of the PRC leadership. China holds both pessimistic and optimistic interpretations of the U.S. unipolar world. Its pessimistic interpretation views the current American hegemony as highly threatening to the national security of the PRC and its goals to re-emerge as a great power. Such an ominous understanding of the current world order encourages Chinese elites to revise the interstate structure to become less menacing. China's optimistic interpretation views the current dynamics of the unipolar world as offering a strategic opportunity for China to pursue its national interests while behaving within status-quo norms. This chapter will focus on the former pessimistic interpretation.

China perceives its national rejuvenation as occurring in a highly volatile and foreboding geostrategic environment. While Asia is home to the world's fastest-growing economies, it also consists of seven of the ten largest militaries on earth and four of the world's seven declared nuclear powers.³⁷¹ The region is plagued with multiple flashpoints between major nations, any one of which "...could explode into large-scale warfare that would make the current Middle East confrontations seem like police operations," according to James F. Hoge Jr.³⁷² The most notably of which include the Vale of Kashmir, the Korean Peninsula, and the Taiwan Strait. Asia also consists of numerous states that are simultaneously emerging onto the world stage as potential great, or even super, powers. This has resulted in intense economic, military, and political competition between said nations, as each vies for regional influence, resources, and power. Amongst

³⁷¹ Andrew Scobell, "Flashpoint Asia: The Most Dangerous Place?" *Parameters* 31 (2001): 129-133, 18 Oct. 2007 <<http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/parameters/01summer/sumrvess.htm#Scobell>>

³⁷² Hoge "A Global Power Shift in the Making."

the mosaic of threats concerning China's leadership, the American hegemony that emerged following the end of the Cold War reigns supreme. As David Shambaugh explains, "there is little doubt that Chinese leaders and strategists view the United States as the greatest threat to world peace, as well as to China's own national security and foreign policy goals."³⁷³ In fact, the "American factor" is so pervasive within the Chinese policy community that the PRC leadership considers it in every security calculation they make.³⁷⁴ In the words of Hu Jintao, America's international presence makes it the "central thread in China's foreign policy strategy."³⁷⁵

This section illustrates why China regards American global dominance as the greatest threat to its national rejuvenation and thus deserves such a prominent role in the Politburo's strategic decision-making. Chinese threat perceptions towards the U.S. derive from predominately realist/realpolitik calculations, which encourage the PRC to view the U.S. as intent on solidifying its hegemonic status, changing the world order to promote its ideals and interests, and preventing China from emerging as a potential rival to U.S. supremacy. American behaviour from 1991 to the present has seemingly validated Chinese elites' trepidations regarding the global objectives of the superpower. Washington's behaviour in the 1990s, seen with its launch of the first Gulf War, its growing ties with Taiwan, and its intervention into Kosovo, demonstrated to Chinese elites that America was a belligerent, interventionist hegemon willing to forcefully assert its vision of the new world order. America's protection of Taiwan and its accidental bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade were particularly threatening, as China regarded them as deliberate attempts to humiliate the PRC and undermine its pursuit of great power status.

Chinese apprehension towards the U.S. has not abated during the first decade of the 21st century; in fact, it has worsened.³⁷⁶ Chinese analysts view the Bush administration as hostile to the PRC, and believe Washington is taking advantage of its

³⁷³ David Shambaugh, "China's Military Views the World: Ambivalent Security" *International Security* 24.3 (Winter 1999-2000): 71.

³⁷⁴ Craig "Chinese Perceptions" 57.

³⁷⁵ Earl Carr, "US needs to match the Chinese in diplomacy" *Taipei Times* 27 Jan. 2004. 25 March 2008 <<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2004/01/27/2003092644>>

³⁷⁶ Rosalie Chen, "China Perceives America: perspectives of international relations experts," *Journal of Contemporary China* 12.35 (2003) : 286.

‘war on terror’ to both strengthen its hegemonic rule and contain China with an encirclement of military bases. While Iraq originally consumed America’s attention, Beijing now perceives the Bush administration as recommitted to thwarting the rejuvenation of the PRC, as seen with the U.S. promulgation of the so-called “China-threat theory.” This concept strives to both brand the PRC as America’s strategic rival and exacerbate Asian concerns regarding Chinese future strategic intentions. Washington has skilfully capitalized on these fears by garnering regional support in balancing against China’s growing power and thus created a volatile and challenging environment for the PRC to advance its national interests. By describing the above threats, this section will illustrate why Chinese decision-makers consider American hegemonism, and its power politics, as the greatest challenge the PRC’s re-emergence as a great power. Appreciating China’s sense of vulnerability is essential when attempting to understand its strategic mentality, as it creates a strong desire amongst Chinese elites to revise the American-led unipolar world and status-quo structure into an interstate system more conducive to Chinese interests.

Chinese Threat Perceptions towards the United States

The PRC perceived the American hegemony that emerged following the Soviet Union’s collapse in 1991 as a grave threat to its national security due to its predominately realpolitik implications. Whether because of strategic cultural or structural incentives, Chinese analysts and policymakers predominantly view U.S. hegemony through a realpolitik/realist prism.³⁷⁷ To a realist, a hegemon is a dangerous entity, as its superiority in material capabilities provides it with the means to coerce weaker states to abide by its desires, which may in effect reduce the enfeebled countries’ chances for survival. America has entered the post-Cold War period as such a hegemonic, unchecked superpower, with unmatched political, economic, and military capabilities. PRC analysts subsequently fear that America may use its superior capabilities to either force China to adopt policies to its disliking, or to assault Chinese interests and national security.

³⁷⁷ Saunders “China’s America Watchers” 45, 48.

A major realist consideration involves the theory of power transition, or what Alastair Iain Johnston refers to as the “power-transition realpolitik argument.”³⁷⁸ This theory highlights two fears of Chinese analysts and policymakers in light of U.S. hegemony. The first is that China is now operating within an American-formed international status-quo that supports Washington’s values and national interests, while not necessarily those of the PRC. This status-quo includes an international financial system comprised of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organization and the World Bank. According to Douglas Lemke:

*These financial institutes provide resources (credit, capital, relief from trade disputes) disproportionately to states that organize their domestic economics in accordance with American concepts of market capitalism, free trade, and respect for liberal democratic norms of conduct and human rights.*³⁷⁹

The status-quo also includes an array of political international organizations, such as NATO and the UN, which America can ignore or utilize when undertaking aggressive, hegemonic behaviour. According to Yong Deng, Chinese commentators often use two ancient Chinese idioms to articulate this relationship between America and international organizations. The first is *Xie Tianzi Yiling Zhuhou*, meaning “hijack the emperor to order the dukes about in his name,” and *Zhi Xu Zhouguan Fanghuo, Buxu Baixing Diandeng*, meaning “the magistrates are free to burn down houses while the common people are forbidden even to light lamps.”³⁸⁰ The first idiom refers to America’s ability to coerce international organizations into legitimizing U.S. aggressive behaviour against other nations. The second highlights U.S. hypocrisy in promoting the legitimacy of these organizations when they suit its own interests, but rejecting them if they do not. As Chinese scholars note, this relationship has allowed a pre-eminent United States: “...to set the agenda, weaken and isolate its adversaries, and mobilize international support for its policy of hegemonic control. All of U.S. hegemonic behaviour is now undertaken in the name of achieving some global public good.”³⁸¹

³⁷⁸ Alastair Iain Johnston, “Is China a Status-quo Power?” *International Security* 27.4 (Spring 2003): 5.

³⁷⁹ Lemke 56.

³⁸⁰ Yong Deng, Yong, “Hegemon on the Offensive: Chinese Perspectives on U.S. Global Strategy,” *Political Science Quarterly* 116.3 (Autumn 2001): 351.

³⁸¹ Deng “Hegemon on the Offensive” 351.

The second power transition concern rests on American perceptions of China's rapid growth in national power and its future strategic intentions. PRC analysts fear that the United States deems their nation as a dissatisfied state that will soon become a future challenger to American global dominance and national interests. In the words of Wang Jisi, the director of the Institute for American Studies, the U.S. views China as its "main adversary" in its Asia strategy because "China's rise will bring structural challenge to American hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region."³⁸² Such assumptions, if true, are very dangerous within power transition theory, as they may encourage the dominant nation to nullify the threat before the challenger achieves power parity. Thucydides, the "first power-transition theorist", famously articulated this tendency in his historical accounts of the Peloponnesian War between the Greek states of Athens and Sparta.³⁸³ According to his writings, "What made [the Peloponnesian War] inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta."³⁸⁴ While U.S. military action against the PRC is considered a more long-term possibility, Chinese analysts expect Washington in the short-term to attempt to contain and limit China's growing national power in order to ensure the maintenance of its international status-quo.

The PRC's nationalistically based self-image as a victim of foreign aggression has further influenced China to utilize the realist ideology in conceptualizing its relations with the United States. Some pundits believe that China's experience during the century of humiliation reawakened its realpolitik mentality and appreciation for power politics. In the words of Yuan-Kang Wang, "China's century of humiliation demonstrated to the CCP leadership that power is the key to state survival."³⁸⁵ This realpolitik renaissance not only encouraged Chinese leaders and nationalists alike to strengthen the nation, but also to defend national interests according to the realist principles underlying the Westphalian interstate system.³⁸⁶ Such principles lie in the ideas of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and international legitimacy. Within this conceptual framework, the PRC leadership and

³⁸² Yuan-Kang Wang, "China's Grand Strategy and U.S. Primacy: Is China Balancing American Power?" *The Brookings Institution* (July 2006) : 10. 15 Nov. 2007.
<http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2006/07china_wang.aspx>

³⁸³ Mark Kauppi, Mark V. "Thucydides: Character and Capabilities." *Roots of Realism*. ed. Benjamin (Frankel. Portland: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1996) 145.

³⁸⁴ Kauppi 142.

³⁸⁵ Wang "China's Grand Strategy and U.S. Primacy" 5.

³⁸⁶ Guang "Realpolitik Nationalism" 499.

domestic nationalists now identify threats as those that breach, or threaten to breach these “prevailing norms in international society.”³⁸⁷ Erica Strecker Downs notes the link between nationalism and realpolitik principles like sovereignty and territorial integrity in her article “Legitimacy and the Limits of Nationalism”:

*The development of Chinese nationalism in [the context of the “century of humiliation”] has given sovereignty and territorial integrity intense symbolic value. Although the content of Chinese nationalism has varied as successive state leaders have tried to impose definitions that served their immediate political goals, nationalist values such as territorial unity and national power provide citizens with an independent basis for evaluating the government’s performance.*³⁸⁸

Samuel Kim also articulates the link between the century of humiliation and the realpolitik ideology in his article *China’s Quest for Security in the Post-Cold War World*:

*The [century of humiliation] seems to have endowed the Chinese with the 19th century conception of absolute state sovereignty and taught the lesson of the importance of power politics in international relations and its corollary – that China could not be respected without power.*³⁸⁹

Sovereignty appears to be the most important and sensitive aspect of these Westphalian principles amongst the Chinese leadership, with some pundits even accusing China of adhering too strongly to the concept in foreign relations.³⁹⁰ As former PRC president Jiang Zemin stated in 1994, “China had a long history of being maltreated, divided, slaved, and robbed [in early modern history], and thus we value highly the independence and sovereignty of ours and others.”³⁹¹ Yang Chengxu, the director of the China Institute of International Studies supports this point by stating how “sovereignty is the last shield of developing countries” like China against foreign interference in internal affairs.³⁹² This Chinese sensitivity and commitment to the Westphalian principle creates tension between the PRC and the United States, as Washington advocates “a view of

³⁸⁷ Guang “Realpolitik Nationalism” 499.

³⁸⁸ Downs 118.

³⁸⁹ Samuel S. Kim, “China’s Quest For Security in the Post-Cold War World,” *Strategic Studies Institute* (July 1996): 3, 24 May 2007 <<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/PUB89.pdf>>

³⁹⁰ Guang “Realpolitik Nationalism” 499.

³⁹¹ Tiejun Zhang, “Self-Identity Construction of the Present China,” *Comparative Strategy* 23.3 (July 2004): 290.

³⁹² Zhang, “Self-Identity Construction of the Present China” 291.

limited sovereignty”, with human rights trumping sovereignty considerations.³⁹³ In the eyes of Chinese analysts, America promotes this concept “...to justify its aggressive interference in other countries’ domestic affairs, to demonize certain countries that defy its will, and ultimately to provide a pretext for power politics.”³⁹⁴

The accumulation of fears derived from the above realpolitik perspectives on American hegemony have created a deep sense of suspicion and concern amongst the PRC leadership towards U.S. international behaviour. While this apprehension results from different calculations in every perspective, two commonalities exist within the assortment of views. The first is that the U.S. desires to advance its political, cultural, military, and economic domination over the existing state system. As Susan Craig discovered, “among China’s influential elite, there is near unanimity on one point: America’s global strategy is hegemony.”³⁹⁵

The second and subsequent commonality is that the U.S is intent on constraining China’s ability to rejuvenate and re-emerge as a possible rival to American pre-eminence. Many analysts, especially amongst PLA research institutes, believe that “the United States seeks to contain, weaken or break up China...[and] are sceptical that the U.S. will tolerate a strong China...”³⁹⁶ According to Evan Medeiros:

*Chinese policymakers and analysts are convinced that the United States poses the most significant long-term external threat to China’s national rejuvenation and regional aspirations. For many Chinese, Washington seeks to contain or at least constrain China’s re-emergence as a great power in Asia for fear that it will undermine U.S. global predominance and its alleged pursuit of ‘absolute security.’*³⁹⁷

From the PRC’s holistic perspective, its policy advisors believe that Washington is pursuing these two broad strategic goals through a comprehensive and unified strategy. While U.S. officials may see their foreign military and political behaviour as a collection of separate incidents, China views them as aspects of one grand design.³⁹⁸ As Yong Deng asserts, “Beijing’s predilection to attribute to the United States a highly coherent global

³⁹³ Chen “China Perceives America” 287-288.

³⁹⁴ Chen “China Perceives America” 288.

³⁹⁵ Craig “Chinese Perceptions” 27.

³⁹⁶ Saunders “China’s America Watchers” 64.

³⁹⁷ Evan S. Medeiros, “Strategic Hedging and the Future of Asia-Pacific Stability,” *The Washington Quarterly* 29.1 (Winter 2005-2006): 154.

³⁹⁸ Craig “Chinese Perceptions” 47.

strategy bent on power expansion defines how Beijing perceives American China policy.”³⁹⁹ This perception, unfortunately, “breeds a conspiratorial view”, with all U.S. foreign policies and actions appearing as malignant moves in a sinister ‘power politics’ game of chess.⁴⁰⁰ Such apprehension has intensified since the end of the Cold War as China’s unique conspiratorial outlook continuously identifies American actions from 1991 to the present as attempts to further its global dominance and constrain Chinese power.

Aggressive U.S Behaviour in the 1990s

The Gulf War of 1991 was one of the first instances of U.S. behaviour to reinforce PRC elites’ aforementioned fears. PLA analysts had predicted Iraq to bog the United States down in a protracted land war, similar to that seen during the USSR-Afghanistan war or the Iraq-Iran conflict.⁴⁰¹ Contrary to these assumptions, America soundly defeated Saddam Hussein’s forces while suffering only minimal losses. According to David Shambaugh, “this was the PLA’s first exposure to a high-tech war, and they were stunned.”⁴⁰² Iraq possessed more advanced weapons than the PLA at the time, and its rapid defeat demonstrated both the power of American military technology and the vulnerability of China’s armed forces.⁴⁰³ Beijing thus realized its lack of power in the face of U.S. hegemony and that America confidently based its new world order on a willingness to use military force.

Following the Iraqi defeat, Beijing was shocked to witness America intensifying its relations with Taiwan, a nation so important to Chinese elites that its fate directly correlates with the survivability of the CCP Party. China regards the island as a former Chinese province conquered by Japanese forces during the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-95), and now wrongfully separated from the PRC. Taiwan’s ruling government stems from the former U.S.-backed Kuomintang regime, which was the CCP’s defeated

³⁹⁹ Deng “Hegemon on the Offensive” 352.

⁴⁰⁰ Deng “Hegemon on the Offensive” 352.

⁴⁰¹ David Shambaugh, *Modernizing China’s Military: Progress, Problems, and Prospects* (London : University of California Press, 2002) 69.

⁴⁰² Richard Bernstein, “The Coming Conflict with America,” *Chinese Foreign Policy in Transition* ed. Guoli Liu (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 2004) 155.

⁴⁰³ Saunders “China’s America Watchers” 52.

rival during the Chinese Civil War, who took control of the island after fleeing the mainland in 1949. The United States has preserved the island's autonomy and independence from China ever since its first naval intervention in the Taiwan Strait in 1950.⁴⁰⁴ PRC Vice President Zeng Qinghong articulated this fact in a 2002 speech:

*The United States bears a big responsibility for the fact that the Taiwan issue remains unresolved. The United States sheltered the Taiwan authorities continuously for over twenty years after ordering the seventh fleet into the Taiwan Strait...[and] it has never stopped selling advanced arms to Taiwan...help[ing] "Taiwan independence" forces.*⁴⁰⁵

This U.S.-Taiwanese cooperation greatly increased in the 1992 to 1996 period. During this time, America sold 150 F-16 fighters to Taipei, allowed Taiwan's president to visit Cornell University, and, most tumultuously, sparked the "Taiwan Strait crisis" by again sending its navy into the Taiwan Strait to protect the island against PLA intimidation in March of 1996.⁴⁰⁶

The severity of America hindering the PRC's reunification with their former province lies in three factors. The first is that Taiwan stimulates deep nationalistic and cultural emotions amongst Chinese citizens and policymakers. China views American support for the renegade province as a continuation of its "century of humiliation" since Taiwan represents the "sole remaining instance of Chinese soil under the influence and control of foreign powers."⁴⁰⁷ Beijing therefore perceives U.S. cooperation with Taiwan as a calculated attempt to thwart the PRC's rejuvenation, violate its Westphalian principles, and further its national disgrace.⁴⁰⁸ There is also a strong, cultural impetus for national unification between the Chinese mainland and its peripheral states (Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang) amongst the Chinese population. According to General Li Jijun, the century of humiliation contributed to a Chinese "unifying consciousness" dedicated to "maintaining the unity of the country and its territorial integrity and sovereignty."⁴⁰⁹ This consciousness, however, dates back to 221 BC when Qin Shihuang created the single

⁴⁰⁴ Gries "Forecasting US-China Relations, 2015" 73.

⁴⁰⁵ Gries "Forecasting US-China Relations, 2015" 73.

⁴⁰⁶ Saunders "China's America Watchers" 53-56.

⁴⁰⁷ Zhu Feng, "Why Taiwan Really Matters To China," Jamestown Foundation China Brief 4.9 (Sept. 2004): 8-9. 22 June 2007 <http://jamestown.org/china_brief/article.php?articleid=2372919>

⁴⁰⁸ Feng 9.

⁴⁰⁹ Craig "Chinese Perceptions" 7.

unified Chinese state. After Qin's accomplishment, "the idea, or perhaps one should say the ideal or myth, of a single, unified, cultural, imperial China prevailed as the only desirable, and indeed legitimate, China."⁴¹⁰ In "Interpreting China's Grand Strategy," Michael Swaine and Ashley Tellis note this cultural inclination for national unity:

"During the modern era, the commitment to a unified regime rests upon a popular belief in the historical longevity and persistence of a single Chinese state and a single Chinese culture and, most recently, a less traditional, state-centric form of Han nationalism centred upon a putative 'alliance' between ethnic Han Chinese, other mixed Han and non-Han people of the heartland, and the minority peoples of the traditional periphery."⁴¹¹

These authors further state, "Overall, for both the pre-modern and modern Chinese regimes, the unity of the Chinese nation is strongly associated with peace and plenty, whereas disunity means civil war, insecurity, and disaster for elite and commoners alike."⁴¹²

The second factor behind Chinese concerns towards U.S.-Taiwanese relations is that the internal authority of the Chinese Communist Party remains vulnerable to domestic opposition as long as the island remains separated from the mainland. As previously mentioned, the PRC government has utilized a victim narrative to bolster state nationalism and intertwine its legitimacy to rule with the achievement of Chinese great power rejuvenation, which is a key desire of domestic nationalists. State propaganda, as seen during the patriotic education campaign, has made the recovery of "lost territories," such as Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan, key benchmarks of both China's national rejuvenation and the CCP's legitimacy to rule.⁴¹³ The PRC's reclamations of Hong Kong in 1997, and Macau in 1999, were significant feats for the CCP in solidifying its domestic control. However, the inability of the PRC to reclaim the final remainder of its national humiliation erodes the image of the Communist Party as the defender of Chinese honour and status. A Taiwanese declaration of independence is the worst case scenario for Chinese elites, according to Zhu Feng, as it would deal a severe blow to the CCP's

⁴¹⁰ Zhang "Self-Identity Construction of the Present China" 284.

⁴¹¹ Swaine [Interpreting China's Grand Strategy](#) 44-45.

⁴¹² Swaine [Interpreting China's Grand Strategy](#) 45.

⁴¹³ He "History" 4.

credibility and could severely undermine its internal authority.⁴¹⁴ The subsequent domestic upheaval evoked by such a declaration, coupled with the dangerous precedent that it would set for other Chinese regions, notably Tibet, Inner Mongolia, and Xinjiang, would severely threaten the CCP's political survival.⁴¹⁵

The final reason for Chinese opposition to American-Taiwanese cooperation lies in the island's high geostrategic value. For the last four centuries, the main threats to China have originated from its eastern seaboard, with the U.S. representing the current manifestation.⁴¹⁶ Chinese strategists fear that Washington intends to use Taiwan as a forward base, what Douglas MacArthur called "an unsinkable aircraft carrier",⁴¹⁷ to challenge China in the event that Beijing adopts more overt revisionist policies against the U.S. world order.⁴¹⁸ Shipping lanes, especially within the South China Sea, are an increasingly vital conduit for the commercial trade fuelling the economies of the East Asian region. China's leadership believes that its economic prosperity and ability to reclaim the former Sinocentric order in Asia depends on protecting these lanes from foreign aggression.⁴¹⁹ An independent Taiwan impedes this desire, by providing a potential base for foreign forces to menace supply routes, and by acting as a barrier to China's access to the high seas, which it requires to fully project its power through a future blue-water navy.⁴²⁰ PLAN Admiral Liu Huaqing believes foreign forces are containing China through their control of the "first island chain," which runs from southern Japan to the northern Philippines.⁴²¹ Only by reclaiming Taiwan can the PRC break out of this containment and pursuing its maritime interests as a regional and global power.⁴²²

⁴¹⁴ Feng 8.

⁴¹⁵ Feng 9.

⁴¹⁶ Vincent Wei-Cheng Wang, "The Chinese Military and the 'Taiwan Issue': How China Assesses Its Security Environment," *Southeast Review of Asian Studies* 29 (2007): 130.

⁴¹⁷ Xu "American Patriotism and Chinese Nationalism" 34.

⁴¹⁸ Robert Ross, "The Strategic and Bilateral Context of Policy-Making in China and the United States : Why Domestic Factors Matter." *After the Cold War: Domestic Factors and U.S.-China Relations (Studies on Contemporary China)* ed. Robert Ross (New York : M.E. Sharpe, 1998) 10.

⁴¹⁹ James R. Holmes, "China's 'Caribbean' in the South China Sea," *SAIS Review* 26.1 (Winter-Spring 2006): 80.

⁴²⁰ Holmes "China's 'Caribbean' in the South China Sea" 87-88.

⁴²¹ Holmes "China's 'Caribbean' in the South China Sea" 83.

⁴²² Wang "The Chinese Military and the 'Taiwan Issue'" 130.

These Chinese historical/cultural, political, and geostrategic considerations towards Taiwan made Beijing incredibly sensitive to American cooperation with Taipei during the 1992-1996 period. The severity of Taiwanese independence to the political and national security of the CCP are so great that the PRC would be forced to attack and invade the island, regardless of the resulting American military response. The Chinese government articulated this reality with its passing of the so-called anti-secession law in March of 2005. This decree commits China to the employment of "...non-peaceful means and other necessary measures to protect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity" following Taiwanese independence.⁴²³ Washington's foreign policies towards Taiwan in the 1990s therefore demonstrated to Party elites that the U.S. is prepared to risk confrontation with the PRC in order to preserve Taiwanese independence, and subsequently contain China's great power rise.

Beijing's trepidation towards the U.S. hegemony increased later in the decade, as it criticized Washington for hindering its entry into the World Trade Organization and suspected America of undermining its bid to host the 2000 Olympic Games.⁴²⁴ Numerous influential Chinese analysts also accused the United States of adopting a policy of "soft containment" or "preventive containment" against the PRC from 1995-1997.⁴²⁵ As Wang Jisi exclaims: "the U.S. has pursued a dual track post-Cold War policy towards China: a desire to exert pressure on China and to restrict the growth of China's national power and prestige coexists with a desire to preserve contact and co-operation with China."⁴²⁶

The 1999 U.S.-led NATO air campaign in Kosovo was perhaps the most profound event, except for the Taiwan Strait Crisis, to exacerbated Chinese fears of U.S. hegemonism in the 1990s. NATO militarily intervened in the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in March 1999 to prevent Serbian forces from slaughtering Albanians living in the province of Kosovo. Beijing strongly criticized NATO's actions, as it viewed the prevention of ethnic cleansing as insufficient justification to violate national

⁴²³ "Text of China's anti-secession law," [BBC News](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4347555.stm) 14 March 2005, 10 Sept. 2007

<<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4347555.stm>>

⁴²⁴ Xuetong "The Rise of China in Chinese Eyes" 36.

⁴²⁵ Saunders "China's America Watchers" 47.

⁴²⁶ Saunders "China's America Watchers" 47.

sovereignty.⁴²⁷ To Chinese policy advisors, the campaign was merely another forceful attempt by the United States to impose its new world order and concept of limited sovereignty on the international state system. The PLA's newspaper aptly articulates Chinese perspectives on the NATO intervention in Kosovo:

*Peace loving countries and peoples the world over must be highly vigilant against ("hegemonist" threats to the concept of sovereignty), resolutely oppose the absurd theory that "human rights transcend sovereignty," and strive to defend their state sovereignty and build a fair and rational world political and economic order.*⁴²⁸

Chinese analyst regarded the NATO intervention as particularly threatening to PRC security due to it setting a precedent for foreign assaults against sovereign nations based on human rights considerations.⁴²⁹ Politburo elites were sensitive to this American justification for war since it could also permit the West to attack the PRC over its human rights violations and/or aggression towards Tibet, Xinjiang, and Taiwan.

The Kosovo war also inimically altered China's perceptions of the NATO alliance and its relationship with the U.S. While previously seen as a structure with limited regional interests, Beijing now regards NATO "...as a mechanism that the United States could employ in pursuit of its quest for global predominance."⁴³⁰ As staff reporter Zhang Baoxing wrote in the *People's Daily* in August 1998:

*The United States very much desires NATO's 'globalization,' and emphasizes that apart from protecting the territory of NATO member states from aggression, NATO should also undertake military actions outside of its defensive area to protect the common interests of America and Europe.*⁴³¹

⁴²⁷ June Teufel Dreyer, "The PLA and the Kosovo Conflict," *The Strategic Studies Institute* (2000): 2-3. 02 Dec. 2007 <<http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/china/doctrine/plakosov.pdf> >

⁴²⁸ Kane "China's Foundations" 48.

⁴²⁹ Dreyer "The PLA and the Kosovo Conflict" 3-4.

⁴³⁰ Jeanne-Lorraine Wilson. *Strategic Partners: Russian-Chinese Relations in the Post-Soviet Era* (New York : M.E. Sharpe, 2004) 155.

⁴³¹ Wilson *Strategic Partners* 155.

The use of NATO additionally demonstrated Washington's ability to circumvent Chinese and Russian opposition in the United Nations and proved Chinese impotence in influencing U.S. behaviour.⁴³²

This sense of powerlessness intensified after NATO bombers dropped five 2,000 pound munitions on the Chinese embassy in Belgrade on the 8th of May, killing three Chinese journalists and injuring more than 20 staff members.⁴³³ Most Chinese analysts refused to believe the official NATO explanation that the bombing was the result of "intelligence failures".⁴³⁴ Rather, China "almost universally believed...that the NATO bombing of [sic] Chinese embassy in Belgrade in May 1999 was a deliberate, calculated attack to punish China's opposition to the war..." and to destabilize and humiliate the PRC.⁴³⁵ Beijing saw the bombing as a direct assault to its Westphalian principles, and quickly denounced the incident as a "gross violation of Chinese sovereignty".⁴³⁶ The Chinese U.N. ambassador, Qin Huasun, even condemned the bombings as a "crime of war" and, in a reference to China's cultural understandings of hegemonism, labelled the bombing as a "barbarian act."⁴³⁷ The consensus of a PLA seminar during the NATO campaign was that "unholy military alliances" were being strengthened and "gunboat policies [reminiscent of those used by foreign aggressors during the century of humiliation] are once again running rampant."⁴³⁸ According to a Chinese analyst, NATO was utilized in Kosovo as part of an American "python strategy" that would allow Washington to use "its thickest body to coil tightly around the world and prevent any country from possessing the ability to stand up to it."⁴³⁹ Current Chinese analysts and policymakers therefore regard NATO as a crucial tool in strengthening American cultural hegemonism and spreading Western values by force throughout the world.

⁴³² Daniel W. Drezner, "The New New World Order," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2007): 18 Feb. 2008 <<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20070301faessay86203-p10/daniel-w-drezner/the-new-new-world-order.html>>

⁴³³ Xinbo "Understanding Chinese and U.S. Crisis Behaviour" 61.

⁴³⁴ Scobell "China and Strategic Culture" 19.

⁴³⁵ Deng "Hegemon on the Offensive" 352.

⁴³⁶ Eckholm "Crisis in the Balkans"

⁴³⁷ "Chinese Embassy Bombed." *PBS - Online NewsHour* May 8, 1999. 5 Feb. 2008 <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/europe/jan-june99/china_5-8.html>

⁴³⁸ Dreyer "The PLA and the Kosovo Conflict" 5.

⁴³⁹ Michael Lind, *The American Way of Strategy: U.S. Foreign Policy and the American Way of Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) 136.

The U.S.-led NATO intervention in Kosovo, like other American acts during the 1990s, indicated to PRC commentators “that the United States has adopted an offensive-oriented, ‘neo-imperialist,’ ‘neo-interventionist’ strategy geared toward expanding, perpetuating, and imposing its worldwide hegemony.”⁴⁴⁰ This realization has spurred Chinese elites to advance the PLA’s ability to defend national interests against hegemonic aggression. As one Chinese aerospace official stated in regards to the Belgrade embassy bombing: “The bloody lesson teaches us that a strong defence, not just a prosperous economy, is what makes a nation powerful.”⁴⁴¹

The Persistence of the U.S. Threat into the 21st Century

The early years of the twenty-first century were, in the words of Peter Hays Gries, “arguably the worst of times in recent U.S.-China relations.” President George W. Bush came into power in 2000 criticizing the Clinton administration’s soft approach to China, and was determined to develop a tougher stance against a nation he regarded as a “strategic competitor” rather than as a “strategic partner”.⁴⁴² Condoleezza Rice, the current U.S. Secretary of State, even stated in 2000 that China is not a status-quo power, which obviously sent a threatening message to Chinese analysts familiar with power transition theory.⁴⁴³ Both countries quickly faced off against one another following the collision of a U.S. EP-3 spy plane with a Chinese fighter jet on April 1st, 2001, which forced the U.S. plane to land in Chinese territory.⁴⁴⁴ The collision resulted in the death of the Chinese pilot, and the PRC held the crew of the U.S. spy plane for two weeks before permitting their release.⁴⁴⁵ China saw the act as an example of American hegemonism, and, in an appeasement to nationalists, declared the deceased pilot as a “martyr of the revolution” who died defending Chinese sovereignty against foreign aggression.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴⁰ Deng “Hegemon on the Offensive” 350.

⁴⁴¹ Dreyer “The PLA and the Kosovo Conflict” 12.

⁴⁴² Jing-dong Yuan, “Friend or Foe? The Bush Administration and U.S. China Policy in Transition,” *East Asian Review* 15.3 (Autumn 2003): 42, 53.

⁴⁴³ Condoleezza Rice, “Campaign 2000: Promoting the National Interest,” *Foreign Affairs* (Jan./Feb. 2000): 4, 22 Dec. 2007 <<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20000101faessay5-p30/condoleezza-rice/campaign-2000-promoting-the-national-interest.html>>

⁴⁴⁴ Lai “Learning From The Stones” 5.

⁴⁴⁵ Gries “China Eyes the Hegemon” 401-402.

⁴⁴⁶ Zhao “China’s Pragmatic Nationalism” 132.

Following the crisis, George Bush further heightened U.S.-Sino relations by approving the largest arms sale to Taiwan in a decade,⁴⁴⁷ and promising “to do whatever it takes to help Taiwan defend themselves.”⁴⁴⁸ President Bush also declared in 2001 that America would withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and embark on establishing missile defence systems in Europe and Asia.⁴⁴⁹ Washington officially proclaimed these defences as necessary in light of various missile threats from North Korea and other rogue nations. Beijing, however, rejects this justification and views U.S.-Japanese cooperation in missile defence programs as an attempt to erode Chinese military capabilities in Asia.⁴⁵⁰ Chinese analysts also perceive the placement of these missile defences in both Japan and the East China Sea as potentially protecting Taiwan against PLA attacks. Such a development would severely endanger regional stability, according to PRC officials, as it could encourage Taiwan to declare its independence from China, which would force the PLA to attack the island and any intervening American forces.⁴⁵¹

America’s launch of the ‘war on terror’ following the September 11th attacks, while offering room for bilateral cooperation, has worsened Chinese fears of U.S. global intentions. On June 1, 2002, George Bush announced a set of foreign policy principles later referred to as the “Bush Doctrine.” These principles advocated the use of pre-emptive strikes against hostile forces, the international promotion of democracy, and the achievement of absolute military superiority on earth.⁴⁵² Beijing perceives these principles, which the White House articulated in the 2002 and 2006 versions of the U.S. National Security Strategy, as evidence “not only of America’s intent to maintain global predominance, but to remake the world order with itself at the centre.”⁴⁵³ The Bush Doctrine was not a unique departure of President Clinton’s foreign policies to Chinese scholars. Rather, it reflected “the culmination and maturation of the United States’ post-

⁴⁴⁷ Yuan “Friend or Foe” 39.

⁴⁴⁸ Lai “Learning From The Stones” 25.

⁴⁴⁹ “America withdraws from AMB treaty,” *BBC News* 13 Dec. 2001, 24 Jan. 2008 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1707812.stm>>

⁴⁵⁰ Yuan “Friend or Foe” 50.

⁴⁵¹ Yuan “Friend or Foe” 50.

⁴⁵² Zhiyuan Cui, “The Bush Doctrine and Neoconservatism: A Chinese Perspective,” *Harvard International Law Journal* 46.2 (Summer 2005): 403.

⁴⁵³ Craig “Chinese Perceptions” 29-30.

Cold War grand strategy.”⁴⁵⁴ Like his predecessor, albeit with a more militant tone, Bush’s pronouncement demonstrated American resolve to violate state sovereignty in the advancement of democracy and human rights, and to further U.S. interests through military means. Continuity between the foreign policies of President Clinton and the Bush Doctrine also lie in their mutual advocacy for regime change. This concept seeks the replacement of governments considered illegitimate by the U.S. with those more conducive to American ideology, values, and interests.⁴⁵⁵ Its association with America’s Cold War anti-communist strategy of peaceful evolution reminds Beijing that the modern United States still poses a threat to CCP rule.⁴⁵⁶ The Bush Doctrine also threatened the countries of Iran and North Korea, especially after the White House labelled them as part of an “axis of evil in 2002.” Any regime change in these countries would represent a strategic loss to the PRC, as Iran is a key provider of Chinese energy requirements, and North Korea serves as a buffer to U.S. forces in South Korea.

PRC analysts view the American war on terror as facilitating the pursuit of a long-term strategy to solidify U.S. global superiority, rather than solely a campaign to reduce the threat of terrorism. According to one Chinese policy advisor, “the U.S. intends to take advantage of anti-terrorism to control South Asia and to get a foot into the door of Central Asia.”⁴⁵⁷ China identified the Central Asian region as vital to maintaining America’s “dominant position in leading the world” even before the 9/11 attacks, in part for its suspected vast oil resources, which are considered the second largest in the world.⁴⁵⁸ Ge Lide agrees that the region is strategically valuable to Washington:

*For the United States, control over Afghanistan and Central Asia could enable NATO to push forward its eastward expansion simultaneously from the east and west, while helping join the U.S. military forces in Europe, especially in Turkey, with those in the Asia-Pacific region. In that case, the United States will be able to nibble away the strategic space of Russia to the north and threaten the security of west China to the east...*⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁴ Cui “The Bush Doctrine and Neoconservatism” 404, 407.

⁴⁵⁵ Russell Ong, “China and the U.S. War on Terror,” The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis 18.2 (Summer 2006): 107.

⁴⁵⁶ Ong “China and the U.S. War on Terror” 107-108.

⁴⁵⁷ Chen “China Perceives America” 295.

⁴⁵⁸ Ong “China and the U.S. War on Terror” 110-111.

⁴⁵⁹ Mohan Malik, “Dragon on Terrorism: Assessing China’s Tactical Gains and Strategic Losses Post-September 11,” Strategic Studies Institute (Oct. 2002): 29. 15 Feb. 2008

<<http://www.terrorisminfo.mipt.org/pdf/DragonOnTerrorism-ArmySSI.pdf>>

Chinese analysts thus ominously perceived America's rapid post-9/11 presence into Central Asia, including its occupation of Afghanistan, as enhancing Washington's regional influence and access to energy resources at the expense of the PRC. In the words of Deng Hou, the Central Asia director at the China Institute of International Issues, "By using anti-terrorism as the excuse to enter Central Asia, the United States has gained the upper hand in the bid to control [the region]."⁴⁶⁰ The establishment of U.S. military bases in Central and Southeast Asia, including Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and the Philippines, were also seen by CCP elites as "the first stage of an encirclement process" to contain China.⁴⁶¹ Such calculations enticed China's Chief of the General Staff Fu Quanyou to warn the U.S. against using the war on terror to dominate the international state system by publicly stating: "counter-terrorism should not be used to practice hegemony."⁴⁶²

The American invasion of Iraq in 2003, coupled with the capture, and subsequent hanging, of Saddam Hussein, further demonstrated Washington's determination to implement the principles of the Bush Doctrine into its foreign policies. Already impressed with America's quick victory in Afghanistan, Chinese analysts commented on the laudable achievements of the U.S. military. They publicly stated their admiration for the speed of U.S. offensive capabilities and the power of American high-technology weaponry and equipment.⁴⁶³ This second Gulf War again illustrated to China the challenge that Washington's military power poses to the security of nations such as itself. In the words of Senior Colonel Zhang Zhaozhong, head of the Centre for Military Science and Technology at the National Defence University: "many countries have difficult times ahead when they will become targets of an attack by the U.S. Army."⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁶⁰ Malik "Dragon on Terrorism" 44-45

⁴⁶¹ Ong "China and the U.S. War on Terror" 105.

⁴⁶² Malik "Dragon on Terrorism" 31.

⁴⁶³ Susan M. Puska, "Assessing America at War: Implications for China's Military Modernization and National Security," *Shaping China's Security Environment: The Role of the People's Liberation Army*, ed. Andrew Scobell (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006) 56, 14 Jan. 2008
<<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/files/pub709.pdf>>

⁴⁶⁴ David Gompert, "China on the Move," *RAND Corporation* (2005): 20-21, 7 April 2007
<http://www.rand.org/pubs/conf_proceedings/2005/RAND_CF199.pdf>

More concerning to the Chinese leadership was the perception that Iraq, like Afghanistan, represented another American attempt to use the 9/11 attacks to justify hegemonic behaviour. As Liu Jianfei, a professor at the CCP Central Party School, stated:

*If the Afghan war was focused on fighting terrorism, and promoting hegemony was a case of ‘incidentally hitting a rabbit while raking the grass’, the Iraq war was to a very great extent fought in order to promote hegemonist strategy, and fighting terrorism and preventing proliferation just became a pretext for launching the war.*⁴⁶⁵

The war also demonstrated to Chinese elites that America remains willing to act unilaterally without UN support and subsequently threaten the existing rules and structure of an international order based on state equality and the right to sovereignty. Ruan Zongze of the China Institute for International Security aptly phrased this view by calling the U.S. actions a “grim assault on and challenge to the existing international order”, and that:

*In the eyes of the United States, international treaties, mechanisms, and security arrangements get in the way of its right to act on its own. The Iraqi war shows that the modern international order, represented by the United Nations (UN), has become a constrain on America’s pursuit of its single-pole strategy.*⁴⁶⁶

Beijing therefore saw the Iraq war as another American attempt, reminiscent of Kosovo, to further limit the emergence of multipolarity and use its hegemonic strength to reform the rules of the interstate system to favour the pursuit of its own interests. Despite the difficulties the United States has since encountered in stabilizing Iraq, Yan Xuetong believes that America’s hegemonic position will encourage it to continue pursuing unilateral foreign policies.⁴⁶⁷

While Iraq and Afghanistan currently distract American global attention away from East Asia, Chinese analysts, steeped in realist and “power transition” theory, have no doubt that Washington will inevitably refocus its ire towards containing the PRC. Zhang Yebi, a member of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) Institute of American Studies, is one such analyst. He asserts that “all the war on terror has done is

⁴⁶⁵ Craig “Chinese Perceptions” 30.

⁴⁶⁶ Craig “Chinese Perceptions” 31-32.

⁴⁶⁷ Xuetong “The Rise of China and Its Power Status” 27.

to ‘postpone [the] eastward shift’ in the Bush administration’s security strategy, the ‘spearhead’ of which is unmistakably directed at China.”⁴⁶⁸ Many perceive this shift as already taking place. For example, Brendan Taylor, of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University, stated in 2005, “after four years of distraction spent almost exclusively on waging the so-called ‘Global War on Terror’, Washington’s focus is well and truly shifting back to China.”⁴⁶⁹

America demonstrates its malignant refocus on the PRC, according to Chinese policy advisors, through its promulgation of the “China-threat theory.” According to the “China-threat” school in Washington’s policy community, the PRC is a revisionist power who will use its rapid economic and military strength to “challenge the status-quo and upset global/regional balances of power.”⁴⁷⁰ Chinese publications portray this theory as an American/Western fabrication based on Cold War thinking and an “enemy deprivation syndrome”, where the U.S. needs to find a new opponent to replace the Soviet threat.⁴⁷¹ While support for this theory has fluctuated since the Cold War, Beijing now perceives it gaining in strength, due to either “antiterrorism fatigue” or the growing influence of anti-Chinese hardliners in Washington.⁴⁷²

China views this conspiratorial theory as designed to achieve two American objectives. The first is to sabotage Chinese attempts to develop strong ties with neighbouring nations by exacerbating regional fears of China becoming an aggressive, expansionist state.⁴⁷³ This thwarts the PRC’s ability to regain a Sinocentric world order in Asia by retarding the spread of its influence and enticing neighbouring states to balance against its rise. As Alastair Iain Johnston explains, PRC scholars believe this theory is “...designed to whip up concern about, and thus block, China’s economic development;

⁴⁶⁸ Gries “China Eyes the Hegemon” 403.

⁴⁶⁹ Brendan Taylor, “Towards Hegemony? Assessing China’s Asian Ambitions.” *Security Challenges* 1.1 (2005): 21.

⁴⁷⁰ Yuan “Friend or Foe” 55.

⁴⁷¹ William Callahan, “How to Understand China: the dangers and opportunities of being a rising power,” *Review of International Studies* 31 (2005): 706.

⁴⁷² Craig “Chinese Perceptions” 34.

⁴⁷³ Craig “Chinese Perceptions” 34.

and...undermine China's relations with states on its periphery so as to preserve US hegemony in the region."⁴⁷⁴

The second objective is to turn China into a strategic rival of the United States.⁴⁷⁵ Achieving this image would justify Washington's efforts to contain the PRC, intervene in its domestic affairs, and stop at nothing until China is defeated. This image would also support what some Chinese scholars consider as an American ploy to exacerbate the fears of PRC elites and trap them into launching a disastrous military arms race.⁴⁷⁶ Such a development would heighten regional apprehension towards Beijing and distract the PRC from focusing on economic development. It would also allow Washington to repeat the same tactic that it used to defeat the Soviet Union, which, in the eyes of these Chinese analysts, was to force Moscow to exhaust its economic resources trying to match U.S. military capabilities.⁴⁷⁷

Beijing perceived the China-threat theory regaining momentum in Washington after hearing an inflammatory speech by Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld during a June 2005 Asian strategy conference in Singapore. According to *New York Times* journalist Thom Shanker, Secretary Rumsfeld told the conference that "Beijing's military spending threatened the delicate security balance in Asia and...[its immense military investments] posed a risk not only to Taiwan and to American interests, but also to the nations across Asia...".⁴⁷⁸ Rumsfeld then threw further doubt on China's regional intentions by stating: "Since no nation threatens China, one must wonder: why this growing investment? Why these continuing large and expanding arms purchases?"⁴⁷⁹ Such claims were insulting to Chinese elites considering the various American threats to the PRC's national security. Nevertheless, Rumsfeld's comments indicated an

⁴⁷⁴ Alastair Iain Johnston, "Beijing's Security Behaviour in the Asian-Pacific: Is China a Dissatisfied Power?" Forthcoming in *Rethinking Security in East Asia: Identity, Power, and Efficiency*, ed. Allen Carlson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004) 55. 15 Sept. 2007
<<http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~johnston/cornellpaper.pdf>>

⁴⁷⁵ Craig "Chinese Perceptions" 39.

⁴⁷⁶ Yan Xuetong, "The Rise of China and Its Power Status," *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 1 (2006): 8.

⁴⁷⁷ Xuetong "The Rise of China and Its Power Status" 8.

⁴⁷⁸ Thom Shanker, "Rumsfeld Issues a Sharp Rebuke to China on Arms," *The New York Times* 4 June 2005, 27 Feb. 2008 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/06/04/international/asia/04rumsfeld.html>>

⁴⁷⁹ Michael T. Klare, "Revving up the China-threat," *Asia Times Online* 15 Oct. 2005, 26 Feb. 2008
<<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/GJ15Ad02.html>>

antagonistic official U.S. tone towards Beijing unseen since before the September 11th attacks.⁴⁸⁰

The Pentagon's "Annual Report to Congress: The Military Power of the People's Republic of China" is the most widely referenced example of the resurgent strength of the China-threat theory in America by Chinese scholars.⁴⁸¹ The July 2005 report claimed that Chinese military modernizations were "ambitious" and based on unclear motives, with China at a "strategic crossroads" between being a peaceful, responsible power or embarking on an aggressive, revisionist campaign.⁴⁸² It warned American leaders that China was developing offensive military capabilities and transforming its armed forces to conduct non-defensive operations beyond its borders, or even those of Taiwan. The 2006 Quadrennial Defence Review, also produced by the Pentagon, reinforced the presentiment of the 2005 Annual Report to Congress. This review labelled China as the nation with the "greatest potential to compete militarily with the United States" and linked its concern of Chinese intentions with the need to develop "forces capable of sustained operations at great distances into denied areas."⁴⁸³ The latest 2008 Annual Report to Congress continues to echo the warnings of the above documents, stating that "...analysis of China's military acquisitions and strategic thinking suggest Beijing is also developing capabilities for use in other contingencies [besides Taiwan], such as conflict over resources or disputed territories."⁴⁸⁴

Beijing analysts accuse the United States of using these fabricated fears to intensify its military involvement in Asia in an attempt to contain China's regional ambitions. Qian Wenrong, for example, wrote in a 2005 journal published by the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "The United States has taken further steps to build an even tighter strategic ring of encirclement in China's neighbouring regions...[and] has significantly strengthened its network of military bases in the Asia Pacific region..."⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸⁰ Klare "Revving up the China-threat"

⁴⁸¹ Craig "Chinese Perceptions" 36.

⁴⁸² Craig "Chinese Perceptions" 36.

⁴⁸³ Carl Conetta, "Dissuading China and Fighting the 'Long War'," *World Policy Journal* (Summer 2006): 8. 26 Feb. 2008 <<http://www.comw.org/pda/fulltext/06conetta.pdf>>

⁴⁸⁴ United States. Dept. of Defence. Office of the Secretary of Defence. *Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008*. I. 2008. 08 May 2008 <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/China_Military_Report_08.pdf>

⁴⁸⁵ Craig "Chinese Perceptions" 41.

Such views stems from the American military's current multi-billion dollar initiative to upgrade its headquarters and bases in the Pacific and to relocate troops into Central and East Asian regions.⁴⁸⁶ The island base of Guam is receiving particular interest from the Pentagon, due to its status as an American territory, as well as its proximity to Japan, Taiwan, China, Indonesia, the Philippines and the region's most important sea lanes.⁴⁸⁷ Plans are now underway to allocate \$15 billion to the island in an effort to turn the base into a key regional strategic hub capable of housing the most formidable U.S. military assets, including Trident submarines, Tomahawk cruise missiles, and F-22 fighter jets.⁴⁸⁸

The U.S. navy has also assigned five big-deck aircraft carriers to operate in the Pacific and plans to add a sixth, the USS Carl Vinson, in 2010.⁴⁸⁹ The nuclear-powered USS George Washington will also replace the aging USS Kitty Hawk in the Pacific fleet, following its decommissioning in 2008, which will add "a new net increment of capability" to U.S. naval power in the region.⁴⁹⁰ Finally, America also intends to add 8 new attack submarines and two ballistic-missile-firing boats to the Pacific fleet, as well as place B-1 and B-2 bombers on "permanent rotation" at Guam.⁴⁹¹ Richard Halloran, a Honolulu-based defence analyst, states that "the larger strategic rationale [for this shift] can be summed up in one word, and that's 'China'."⁴⁹² According to the former and current U.S. Pacific Commanders, the American military wants to send a "don't mess with us" message to Beijing and articulate to Chinese leaders that Washington will not give up its control of the western Pacific.⁴⁹³ The significant influx of U.S. military assets into the Asian region compounds the fears of Chinese elites and causes them to fear the worst in terms of American future intentions.

⁴⁸⁶ Conetta "Dissuading China and Fighting the 'Long War'" 8.

⁴⁸⁷ Christian Caryl, "American's Unsinkable Fleet," *Newsweek* 5 Nov. 2007. 20 Feb. 2008
<<http://www.newsweek.com/id/68465>>

⁴⁸⁸ Tony Birtley, "US building up Guam base," *Aljazeera.net* 06 July 2007, 27 Feb. 2008
<<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/C87350F6-6F90-408F-BDAC-6F44A6028C4C.htm>>

⁴⁸⁹ Richard Halloran, "The New Line in the Pacific," *Air Force Magazine Online* 90.12 (12 Dec. 2007). 27 Feb. 2008 <<http://www.afa.org/magazine/dec2007/1207pacific.asp>>

⁴⁹⁰ Halloran "The New Line in the Pacific" 90.

⁴⁹¹ Halloran "The New Line in the Pacific" 90.

⁴⁹² Caryl "American's Unsinkable Fleet"

⁴⁹³ Halloran "The New Line in the Pacific" 90.

America's Strengthening Ties in Asia

Chinese speculations of an invigorated American containment policy have increased following Washington's efforts to strengthen its Japanese security alliance in the post-9/11 world. China harbours deep-seated animosities towards its eastern neighbour, mainly because of numerous Japanese assaults against the Chinese population in the nineteenth and twentieth century, as well as current territorial disputes in the East China Sea. A mutual sense of rivalry also exists between both nations, as they vie against one another for regional leadership and domination. Any signs of Japanese "remilitarization" would not only spark fears that Tokyo was reverting to its former aggressive, imperialist ways, but would also represent a challenge to Chinese interests and ambitions.⁴⁹⁴

In light of this Chinese acrimony towards Japan, PRC elites view two trends within the Japanese military with great apprehension. The first lies in right-wing Japanese leaders seeking a more active role for Japan's Self-Defence Forces (SDF) in global security operations and responsibilities. These politicians demonstrated this inclination for a more robust Japanese military following the September 11th attacks and the subsequent US invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq. During this period, the Japanese legislature, or Diet, passed anti-terrorism legislation permitting the country to dispatch refuelling tankers to the Indian Ocean to support U.S.-led operations in Afghanistan.⁴⁹⁵ It also allowed Japan to send 600 SDF personnel to Iraq in February 2004 to assist the American coalition in reconstruction activities. This latter deployment marked the first time since World War II that Japan has sent troops overseas without an international mandate.⁴⁹⁶

Under Article 9 of Japan's pacifist constitution, Tokyo is prohibited from ever fighting against another nation, and is instructed, "never to maintain land, sea, or armed

⁴⁹⁴ Andrew Erickson, "Hoping for the Best, Preparing for the Worst: China's Response to US Hegemony," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 29.6 (Dec. 2006): 966.

⁴⁹⁵ Emma Chanlett-Avery, "CRS Report for Congress - The Changing U.S.-Japan Alliance: Implications for U.S. Interests," *Congressional Research Service* (10 Jan. 2008): 3. 11 Feb. 2008
<<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33740.pdf>>

⁴⁹⁶ Chanlett-Avery "The Changing U.S.-Japan Alliance" 3.

forces capable of waging war.”⁴⁹⁷ Politicians have historically capitalized on the ambiguities of this constitution to maintain a formidable military that now receives the second or third largest annual defence budget in the world.⁴⁹⁸ However, in May 2007, the Diet passed a bill calling for a national referendum as early as 2010 to amend the constitution’s pacifist qualities and normalize the Japanese armed forces.⁴⁹⁹ This succeeds a December 2006 victory by former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his right-wing political allies in upgrading Japan’s Defence Agency, previously enervated after World War II, into a full-fledge ministry.⁵⁰⁰ This move demonstrated Tokyo’s desire to provide its armed forces with a greater say in national policymaking and budget decisions. The Japanese government is also seeking to reinterpret the constitution in order to allow Tokyo to engage in collective self-defence with the United States.⁵⁰¹ Such a development would theoretically commit Japan to use its military to support the U.S. in the event of Sino-Taiwanese hostilities.

The second trend disturbing Chinese elites is the increasing prowess of the SDF and its growing cooperation with the U.S. military, which, according to Victor Cha, has “reached an unprecedented level of intimacy.”⁵⁰² The joint U.S.-Japanese development of a missile defence system represents a prime example of this trend. With an SDF warship’s successful interception and destruction of a missile during a December 2007 exercise, Japan demonstrated to Beijing the power of its military deterrent, as well as the fruitfulness of its U.S. alliance.⁵⁰³ As previously mentioned, PRC analysts view this missile defence system as a threat to their national interests, due to its ability to undermine Chinese capabilities and possibly protect Taiwan from PLA aggression.

⁴⁹⁷ Chris Hogg, “Revising Japan’s ‘Ambiguous’ Constitution,” BBC News 19 July 2007. 14 Nov. 2007 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6283952.stm>>

⁴⁹⁸ Erickson “Hoping for the Best, Preparing for the Worst” 967.

⁴⁹⁹ Jason T. Shaplen, “Washington’s Eastern Sunset: The Decline of U.S. Power in Northeast Asia,” Foreign Affairs (Nov./Dec. 2007): 3, 10 Feb. 2008 <<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20071101faessay86606/jason-t-shaplen-james-laney/washington-s-eastern-sunset.html>>

⁵⁰⁰ Anthony Faiola, “Japan Upgrades Its Defense Agency,” WashingtonPost.com 16 Dec. 2006, 26 Feb. 2008 <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/15/AR2006121501707.html>>

⁵⁰¹ Shaplen “Washington’s Eastern Sunset” 3.

⁵⁰² Victor D. Cha, “Winning Asia: Washington’s Untold Success Story,” Foreign Affairs (Nov.-Dec. 2007), 24 Jan. 2008 <<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20071101faessay86607/victor-d-cha/winning-asia.html>>

⁵⁰³ A SDF warship successfully intercepted and destroyed a missile during a December 2007 exercise near Hawaii. For full story see. “Japan tests anti-missile system,” BBC News 18 Dec. 2007, 19 Dec. 2007 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7149197.stm>>

Further examples of this trend are evident with Japan's improved forward projection capabilities, which derive from its acquisition of four Boeing 767 midair refuelling tankers and the August 2007 launch of the Hyuga, an aircraft carrier for helicopters.⁵⁰⁴ While Washington seems unwilling to sell Japan its coveted F-22 Raptors, the SDF has added the new F-2 fighter to its arsenal, a plane jointly developed by Japan and the United States.⁵⁰⁵ Both militaries have also achieved greater interoperability with one another, especially in terms of their maritime forces. In fact, "U.S. Navy officials have claimed that they have a closer daily relationship with the [Japanese Navy] than any other navy in the world, with over 100 joint exercises annually."⁵⁰⁶

China regards the U.S. as a key driving force behind Japan's apparent remilitarization, and perceives both nations as mutually striving to contain the rise of the PRC. According to Wu Xinbo, of the Fudan University in Shanghai, China has abandoned its long held belief that the U.S. acts as a convenient constraint on Japanese militarization. Rather, Beijing now regards the U.S.-Japanese alliance "...as a propellant of, rather than as a cap on, Japan's military development."⁵⁰⁷ The consensus amongst China's influential elites is that Japan has become an equal and pivotal player in America's anti-Chinese containment strategy:

*Figuratively speaking, Japan was the "concubine" in the U.S.-Japan alliance in the past...Today, its role has gradually been elevated to one of "lover" and its military independence and flexibility has been greatly strengthened. While shouldering more self-defence responsibilities, it also is enjoying substantially greater military freedom. As their military "integration" further deepens, Japanese and U.S. troops have virtually become two designations of a single armed service in Japan.*⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁴ Norimitsu Onishi, "Bomb by Bomb, Japan Sheds Military Restraints," The New York Times 23 July 2007, 27 Feb. 2008 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/23/world/asia/23japan.html?pagewanted=1&fta=y>> ; and Shaplen "Washington's Eastern Sunset" 3.

⁵⁰⁵ Onishi "Bomb by Bomb"

⁵⁰⁶ Chanlett-Avery "The Changing U.S.-Japan Alliance" 3.

⁵⁰⁷ Wu Xinbo, "The End of the Silver Lining: A Chinese View of the U.S.-Japanese Alliance," The Washington Quarterly 29.1 (2005): 120.

⁵⁰⁸ Craig "Chinese Perceptions" 76-77.

Li Xiushi, of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, sees this post-9/11 integration as marking a transformation of the U.S.-Japanese military strategies from “controlling the periphery” to a “comprehensive outward attack mode” hostile to the PRC.⁵⁰⁹

These Chinese fears surrounding the U.S.-Japanese alliance are by no means groundless. American and Japanese officials have long discussed enhancing their military cooperation. One of America’s most influential proponents is former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, who in 1997 stated: “Japan’s self-prohibition on engaging in collective defence no longer is applicable – in fact, it can be harmful.”⁵¹⁰ The Bush administration has vigorously relied on his 2000 “Armitage Report”, which calls for turning Japan into the U.K. of the Far East, as the blueprint for the current enhancement of the U.S.-Japanese alliance.⁵¹¹

The “Armitage Report” joins the chorus of other government officials calling for greater integration and global cooperation between both militaries. For example, the former Japanese Defence Chief Ishiba Shigeru has called for Tokyo and Washington to go beyond a “Far East-only alliance” and cooperate at a “global strategic level.”⁵¹² U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates, during his November 2007 visit to Tokyo, has also called for Japan to do more to guarantee stability and security in the region.⁵¹³ According to a report for members and committees of the United States Congress, this push by the Bush Administration and its Japanese counterparts for an enhancement of their alliance derives from the need to contain the rise of PRC. As this *CRS Report for Congress* states:

*Although the U.S.-Japan security partnership grew out of a need to contain the Soviet Union and has endured in large part because of North Korea’s threat, many analysts see countering China as the primary driver of the campaign to enhance cooperation today...*⁵¹⁴

Wu Xinbo also quotes a U.S. expert on Japan as noting:

Since the end of the Cold War in 1991 and particularly under the administration of George W. Bush, the United States has been doing everything in its power to encourage and even accelerate Japanese

⁵⁰⁹ Craig “Chinese Perceptions” 76.

⁵¹⁰ Chanlett-Avery “The Changing U.S.-Japan Alliance” 3.

⁵¹¹ Xinbo “The End of the Silver Lining” 121.

⁵¹² James L. Schoff, “Transformation of the U.S.-Japan Alliance,” *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 31.1 (Winter 2007): 89.

⁵¹³ Chanlett-Avery “The Changing U.S.-Japan Alliance” 13.

⁵¹⁴ Chanlett-Avery “The Changing U.S.-Japan Alliance” 16, 18.

*rearmament. Such a development promotes hostility between China and Japan, the two superpowers of East Asia.*⁵¹⁵

Japan equally echoes American desires to contain the PRC. Tokyo has long considered China a major strategic rival in Asia, and has, for the first time, named China as a possible threat to Japanese security in its National Defence Program Guidelines in 2004.⁵¹⁶

The U.S.-Japanese alliance has perhaps best demonstrated its desire to both adopt a more globally active role in security responsibilities and contain China's regional ambitions with the signing of the "Joint Statement of the US-Japan Security Consultative Committee" in February 2005. This declaration listed Taiwan as a "common strategic objective" of both Washington and Tokyo, and indicated that the U.S.-Japanese alliance now "assumes the function of security guarantor to Taiwan."⁵¹⁷ Beijing regards this development as extremely offensive and threatening. Not only did it interfere in the PRC's 'internal affairs' and embolden Taiwanese separatists, but it also added the possibility of Japanese forces intervening in a Sino-Taiwanese conflict. In fact, some analysts regard this declaration as depicting Tokyo's willingness to utilize the alliance in order to confront China's growing military strength and to place Taiwan as a key determinant of the Sino-Japanese rivalry.⁵¹⁸

Chinese analysts regard the substantial improvements in American relations with India, another major Chinese strategic rival, as further proof of Washington's attempt to balance and hinder the rise of the PRC. "China and India are 'not intimate neighbours,'" according to Susan Craig, as they lack mutual trust and respect on a range of issues.⁵¹⁹ While Beijing perceives its national rejuvenation as returning China to its rightful place, it views "...India's pursuit of great power status [as] illegitimate, wrong, dangerous, and a sign of hegemonic, imperial behaviour."⁵²⁰ According to New Delhi, the CCP

⁵¹⁵ Xinbo "The End of the Silver Lining" 125.

⁵¹⁶ Xinbo "The End of the Silver Lining" 123.

⁵¹⁷ Xinbo "The End of the Silver Lining" 126.

⁵¹⁸ Eric Teo Chu Cheow. "Taiwan's Role In The Sino-Japanese Rivalry." The Jamestown Foundation China Brief 5.7 (29 March 2005). 02 Oct. 2007

<http://www.jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=408&issue_id=3280&article_id=236949

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⁵¹⁹ Craig "Chinese Perceptions" 89.

⁵²⁰ Malik "Dragon on Terrorism" 36.

leadership has attempted to thwart India's rise due to the challenge that it poses to Chinese regional interests and ambitions.⁵²¹ India, on the other hand, perceives China as a strategic threat and gained nuclear weapons after conducting five nuclear tests in May 1998 to counter a perceived Chinese nuclear threat, according to then Indian Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee.⁵²²

Washington has capitalized on this regional tension by drastically improving U.S.-Indian relations in the last seven years and facilitating the enhancement of India's national power. According to Ashley Tellis, this enhancement of American-Indian cooperation possibly represents President George W. Bush's "greatest foreign policy achievement."⁵²³ Their shared mutual interests in spreading democracy, fighting terrorism, and preventing any single Asian nation from possessing the capability to dominate the region naturally facilitates bilateral cooperation.⁵²⁴ It is this last common objective that most irks the Chinese leadership, as it is clearly directed towards China's emergence as a great power. Charles Ferguson, of the Council of Foreign Relations, concurs with China's assumption, stating that the Bush Administration "...is trying to cement its relationship with the world's largest democracy in order to counterbalance China."⁵²⁵ By enhancing the U.S.-Indian relationship, Washington hopes to preserve U.S. regional primacy by maintaining Asia's balance-of-power, improving American trade with New Delhi, and helping to create a "concert of democratic states" in the region.⁵²⁶

President Bush has therefore taken great steps to improve U.S.-India cooperation, most notably demonstrated with the passing of a 2006 bill allowing America to transfer nuclear fuel and technology to India.⁵²⁷ Ashley Tellis viewed this policy initiative as removing the last structural impediment to achieving closer strategic and diplomatic

⁵²¹ Malik "Dragon on Terrorism" 36.

⁵²² Claudia Astarita, "China and India: Rivals or Partners? An Analysis of the Background of the Interactions between the Two Major Emerging Asian Powers," Transition Studies Review 14.3 (2007): 550.

⁵²³ Ashley J. Tellis, "What Should We Expect From India As A Strategic Partner?" Gauging U.S.-Indian Cooperation ed. Henry Sokolski (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2007) 231, 5 Nov. 2007
<<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/files/pub755.pdf>>

⁵²⁴ Esther Pan, "The U.S.-India Nuclear Deal," Council of Foreign Relations 7 Feb. 2008, 27 Feb. 2008
<<http://www.cfr.org/publication/9663/>>

⁵²⁵ Pan "The U.S.-India Nuclear Deal"

⁵²⁶ Tellis "What Should We Expect" 243-244.

⁵²⁷ Tim Beal, "Using India to Keep China at Bay," Foreign Policy in Focus 12 Dec. 2006, 28 Feb. 2008
<<http://www.fpiif.org/fpiftxt/3775>>

bilateral relations.⁵²⁸ By agreeing to this deal, Bush demonstrated his willingness to improve America's relations with New Delhi at the expense of countering long-standing U.S. rhetoric on nuclear proliferation and seeming to undermine the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The American-Indian nuclear negotiation also demonstrated to Chinese elites "...the extent to which the United States will go in 'maintaining regional strategic balance' – in other words, supporting India in order to contain China."⁵²⁹ Arms sales are further deepening U.S.-Indian ties, with India having a broader defence relationship with American than with any other nation, according to U.S. officials.⁵³⁰ In February 2008, Washington offered India advanced fighter jets and communicated to Indian military officials the possibility for both nations to establish a joint missile defence system.⁵³¹ There is also speculation that Secretary of Defence Robert Gates offered New Delhi the soon-to-be decommissioned USS Kitty Hawk aircraft carrier.⁵³² These military purchases would greatly enhance Indian geostrategic capabilities and challenge China's ability to project its influence abroad.

Both democratic nations are also improving their military interoperability in response, according to some experts, to the PRC's growing military capabilities and ambitions for a blue-water navy.⁵³³ According to Admiral William Fallon, former Commander of the U.S. Pacific Command, "Our relationship with the Indian Integrated Defence Staff and the Indian Armed Services continues to grow. US and Indian security interests continue to converge as our military cooperation leads to a stronger strategic partnership."⁵³⁴ Indian and U.S. navies now jointly patrol the strategically vital Straits of

⁵²⁸ Tellis "What Should We Expect" 239.

⁵²⁹ Craig "Chinese Perceptions" 91.

⁵³⁰ Thomas Financial News Limited, "U.S. defence secretary in India to push arms sales, military ties," *Forbes.com* 26 Feb. 2008, 28 Feb. 2008
<<http://www.forbes.com/afxnews/limited/feeds/afx/2008/02/26/afx4695785.html>>

⁵³¹ Kristen Roberts, "U.S.-India to study missile defence," *International Herald Tribune* 27 Feb. 2008, 28 Feb. 2008 <<http://www.ihf.com/articles/reuters/2008/02/27/europe/OUKWD-UK-INDIA-USA-GATES.php>>

⁵³² "India: Aircraft Carrier Dynamics," *Strategic Forecasting Inc* 26 Feb. 2008, 26 Feb. 2008
<http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/india_aircraft_carrier_dynamics>

⁵³³ Malik "Dragon on Terrorism" 37.

⁵³⁴ Klare "Revving up the China-threat"

Malacca, and their respective Special Forces units have conducted joint exercises in Alaska and Agra.⁵³⁵

The most disturbing development of U.S.-Indian interoperability for Chinese elites came with the Indian, American, Australian, and Japanese joint military exercises in September 2007. These manoeuvres represented the first demonstration of power by the newly-formed “Quadrilateral Initiative”. This body is the brainchild of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who sought to unify the region’s democratic nations based on their shared values, interests and strategic concerns.⁵³⁶ Days after the exercises, Abe offered India substantial economic and commercial assistance if it agreed to anchor “an Asian arc of freedom” stretching across the Indian and Pacific Oceans and “provide a democratic bulwark – presumably against non-democratic powers.”⁵³⁷ In his address to the Indian Parliament, Abe called for India to join forces with “like-minded countries” who “share fundamental values such as freedom, democracy and respect of basic human rights as well as strategic interests (such as protecting the region’s sea lanes).”⁵³⁸ Beijing perceives the absence of China in Prime Minister Abe’s call for a broader Asian partnership of democracies as threatening and regards the Quadrilateral Initiative as an attempt to form an alliance against the PRC. The fact that all four members of the Initiative have classified China as a potential threat in their respective government defence papers only augments Chinese fears.⁵³⁹ These joint exercises have sent a strong message to Beijing that India is willing to move strategically closer to the U.S. and its regional allies, and that the “...future presence [of the Chinese navy] will not go unchallenged in the Indian Ocean.”⁵⁴⁰

⁵³⁵ Republic of India, Embassy of India-Washington, D.C., India-US Defense Cooperation 04 March 2008, 04 March 2008 < <http://www.indianembassy.org/newsite/indodefense.asp>>

⁵³⁶ G.V.C. Naidu, “New Dimensions to the India-Japan strategic Partnership: Shinzo Abe’s Visit,” Strategic Analysis 31.6 (Nov. 2007): 970.

⁵³⁷ Mahmud Ali, “New ‘strategic partnership’ against China,” BBC News 3 Sept. 2007, 28 Feb. 2008 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/6968412.stm>

⁵³⁸ Nunziante Mastrolia, “Asian players: India and China,” CeMiSS Quarterly (Autumn 2007): 36-37. 27 Feb. 2008 < http://www.difesa.it/NR/rdonlyres/B6310BF6-E884-4881-9F56-2EEA658E782E/14756/Quarterly_autumn_08.pdf>

⁵³⁹ Ali “New ‘strategic partnership’ against China”

⁵⁴⁰ Sudha Ramachandran, “India promotes ‘goodwill’ naval exercises,” Asia Times Online 14 August 2007, 22 Feb. 2008 < http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/IH14Df01.html>; Mastrolia “Asian players: India and China” 37.

PRC analysts observe further signs of Washington attempting to encircle China and create a hostile environment for the pursuit of Chinese regional objectives through America's improving relations with Southeast Asian states. Many of these nations are apprehensive towards Chinese future intentions, especially in light of their ongoing territorial disputes with China, most evident with the contested Spratly and Paracel Islands in the South China Sea.⁵⁴¹ According to Evelyn Goh, Southeast Asian governments are currently hedging (simultaneously balancing and engaging) against three undesirable outcomes: "Chinese domination or hegemony; American withdrawal from the region; and an unstable regional order."⁵⁴² While these states wish to maintain amicable economic relations with China, their leaders also desire America to maintain its regional presence to ensure stability and the preservation of the existing balance-of-power. Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines have therefore maintained and advanced their military relationships with the U.S., while attempting to further economic ties with the PRC.

Summary

The above examples demonstrate why Chinese policy advisors and makers perceive the United States as a hostile hegemonic force representing the greatest threat to the national interests of the PRC. America's emergence from the Cold War as an unbalanced superpower exacerbated Chinese political, cultural, and realpolitik fears. Beijing expected Washington to use its newfound strength to solidify its global dominance, assert a new world order inconducive to Chinese interests and values, and contain and undermine Chinese national power. The belligerent behaviour of the U.S. during the 1990s validated these suspicions in the eyes of PRC analysts. These policy advisors were particularly concerned with the intensifying role of the U.S. as a protectorate of Taiwan, as well as its leadership over the NATO intervention in Kosovo, which resulted in the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade. Both of these acts

⁵⁴¹ Anindya Batabyal, "Balancing China in Asia: A Realist Assessment of India's Look East Strategy," *China Report* 42 (2006): 181.

⁵⁴² Evelyn Goh, "Meeting the China Challenge: The U.S. in Southeast Asian Regional Security Strategies," *East-West Center Washington* (2005): 4, 15 Sept. 2007
<<http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/stored/pdfs/PS016.pdf>>

demonstrated to Chinese elites that the U.S. truly desired to retard China's re-emergence as a great power and prolong its subjugation under hegemonic rule.

Chinese anxieties towards the U.S. have grown alongside the maturation of the Bush administration, which continues to promulgate the Bush Doctrine and the China-threat theory, two highly offensive concepts to Beijing. American attempts are also underway to strengthen its Asian military presence and improve its relations with states surrounding the PRC, particularly those related to Japan and India. Beijing views this as a clear attempt by the White House to create a hostile geostrategic environment around China to thwart its regional ambitions and influence, and therefore prevent or delay its national rejuvenation.

A statement within the PRC's 1998 Defence White Paper still represents the current international outlook of Chinese elites:

*“Hegemonism and power politics remain the main source of threats to world peace and stability; the cold war mentality and its influence still have a certain currency, and the enlargement of military blocs and strengthening of military alliances have added factors of instability to international security.”*⁵⁴³

This ominous fact causes China to be dissatisfied with the current status-quo and intent on revising the current world order into a less threatening model. Such animosity towards the current interstate structure would traditionally encourage revisionist states to challenge the status-quo through military force and the creation of anti-hegemonic alliances. These overt acts of aggression, however, would undoubtedly prompt the U.S. to undermine the PRC's rejuvenation before it gains the necessary material strength to alter the status-quo structure and rules of the American-led interstate system. As the next section will demonstrate, the PRC's international environment is not as dire as some suggest. In fact, it contains numerous opportunities for China to avoid typical state power struggles and rapidly achieve its goal of national rejuvenation while appearing as a typical status-quo power.

⁵⁴³ Shambaugh “China's Military Views the World” 71.

V

A DRAGON'S STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY FOR A PEACEFUL RISE

Introduction

The following chapter furthers the discourse on the perceptions of the PRC leadership towards the interstate system. It argues that China now identifies an opportunity to address the concerns stemming from its strategic culture, its use of pragmatic nationalism, and its threatening outlook of U.S. global dominance while still abiding by the global status-quo. President Jiang Zemin himself commented on this 20-year period of opportunity in his report to the 16th Party Congress in 2002: “An overview of the situation shows that for our country, the first two decades of the twenty-first century are a period of important strategic opportunities, which we must seize tightly and which offers bright prospects.”⁵⁴⁴ Tang Jiaxuan, China’s foreign minister in 2003, also stated, “As we look into the future international situation, we find that for a fairly long period of time, the situation is generally in our favour, China faces a period of important strategic opportunity.”⁵⁴⁵ By investigating why PRC officials perceive advantageous qualities in the current interstate system, this report will highlight the final motivation shaping the dualistic strategic mentality of the PRC leadership.

China’s strategic opportunity stems from the effect of globalization on the dynamics of international relations. Greater global interconnectivity has mitigated traditional power politics by creating mutual interests between states and raising the value of peaceful and cooperative relations. This phenomenon is most evident through the liberal tenets of economic interdependence and multilateralism. Their ability to pacify the

⁵⁴⁴ People’s Republic of China, Full Text of Jiang Zemin’s Report at 16th Party Congress 24 December 2002, 15 March 2008 <<http://www.fiet.gov.cn/html/20080403/100920260985.html>>

⁵⁴⁵ People’s Republic of China. Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in India, Foreign Minister on China’s Diplomacy in 2002: Exclusive Interview 18 December 2002, 14 March 2008 <<http://wcm.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/cein/eng/zyjh/t61432.htm>>.

truculent nature of traditional great power competition creates a propitious environment for the PRC to achieve its national interests.

One of the greatest advantages of these new dynamics of great power competition is that they allow China to pursue *realpolitik* and popular nationalistic aims while appearing as a traditional status-quo power. Despite the acceptance of liberalism amongst Chinese elites, the ideology of realism - with its focus on advancing relative national power and protecting Westphalian principles - remains the dominant prism through which China understands the world. The importance of liberalist values amongst Chinese elites lies in their ability to broaden China's *realpolitik* perceptions of how to challenge American pre-eminence and create more favourable status-quo norms and practices. This broadened realist perception of the PRC leadership is conceptualized through the concept of comprehensive national power (CNP). Globalization has altered the definition of national power from depending primarily on military strength. Now, China views the global balance-of-power as based on a nation's political, economic, technological, societal, and military influences. Excluding the military, these domains represent the central battlegrounds for the PRC to advance its relative power against the U.S. and challenge its hegemony through a "war of comprehensive national power."⁵⁴⁶

This unorthodox form of warfare demonstrates China's desire to alter the status-quo and challenge the U.S. unipolar world while still appearing to be a traditional status-quo and cooperative power. This allows China to maintain the image of a responsible and peaceful state, which is necessary to strengthen the myth of China's historic benevolence and further Chinese efforts to improve its economic development, as desired by pragmatic nationalists. It also allows China to address the demands stemming from the *realpolitik* strand of its strategic culture, popular nationalism, and the ominous view of Chinese realists towards the American hegemony by challenging the U.S. unipolar world and its status-quo rules. Despite this acknowledgment of a strategic opportunity, China's acceptance of purely status-quo behaviour is limited by its view of globalization as a double-edged sword that, while empowering China, also threatens its national security and sovereignty.

⁵⁴⁶ Zhang "Chinese Strategic Culture" 80.

The Mitigation of Traditional Power Politics through Globalization and Liberalism

The origins of China's strategic opportunity lie in the ability of globalization to pacify traditional power politics and promote peaceful and cooperative relations between states. The conventional dynamics of great power competition place China at a disadvantage. It lacks the necessary military strength to acquire strategic resources through force and any overt aggressive behaviour on its part would spark anti-Chinese policies from the U.S. and its allies. Fortunately, Chinese elites perceive globalization as altering the former bellicose nature of interstate competition through its promotion of the liberalist tenets of economic interdependence and multilateralism. With economic interdependence, China develops mutual commercial interest between itself, the U.S., and the local Asian region, which encourage all states to maintain peaceful and amicable relations with one another. Globalization also encourages China to cooperate with the international community through multilateralism in order to tackle non-traditional threats. Its interaction with multilateral institutes further pacifies the international environment for the PRC, as it demonstrates Chinese officials' intent to behave as a status-quo and accommodating power. These liberalist aspects of the current era of globalization diminish the realpolitik-inspired fears of Chinese elitist that they will be victimized by the reigning hegemon or embroiled in regional conflicts. This provides China with a propitious environment conducive to its pursuit of national rejuvenation.

Before World War II, nations viewed the coercive acquisition of strategically valuable territory as one of the most effective means for a state to advance its national power relative to other countries.⁵⁴⁷ This outlook encouraged states to place a heavy emphasis on military capabilities when assessing their counterpart's national power and left power politics as a dangerous, bellicose, and zero-sum affair. Ye Zicheng, Director of Chinese Strategic Studies at Beijing University, noted the pugnacious nature of former interstate competition during a 2005 interview: "It was necessary for the powers of the past to resort to military force because they could not achieve the goal of development

⁵⁴⁷ Rosecrance, Richard. "Power and International Relations: The Rise of China and Its Effects." *International Studies Perspectives* 7 (2006): 32.

using peaceful means. Previously, markets and resources were divvied up. The only way to capture them was to use force.”⁵⁴⁸

Such dynamics, if still present, would be extremely disadvantageous for the PRC in its quest to regain international power and influence. CCP legitimacy is dependent on China continuing its economic development and domestic modernization, but that can only continue if China avoids military conflict and ameliorates the fears of regional actors, especially those of the United States. Any indication of militant, expansionistic desires on the part of the Chinese leadership will confirm the fears of hardliners in America and other Asian nations that the PRC is a revisionist state and a threat to regional security. If China appeared intent on harming any country other than Taiwan, it would enflame the China-threat theory and spark an intensive and overt effort on the part of the U.S. and its allies to contain, undermine, and eliminate Chinese power. Such an aggressive situation would be a disaster to the PRC, as its economic and military capabilities are currently insufficient to handle any conflict with the United States. This fact is most evident when comparing the military expenditures of both nations. While China spent an estimated \$49.5 billion on its armed forces in 2006, America devoted \$528.7 billion to its military during the same period, almost matching the combined military expenditures of all other nations on earth, including that of the PRC.⁵⁴⁹

History also warns Beijing of the folly in engaging in military confrontation with the United States. Chinese analysts have conducted extensive research on countries that have risen and fallen over the last five centuries and have concluded that rising nations that engage in direct confrontation with reigning hegemonic powers fail to achieve international greatness.⁵⁵⁰ Alternatively, they found rising nations that are able to avoid confrontation with the reigning hegemon as more successful in surpassing the dominant state in power. These analysts based their conclusions on the unsuccessful power transitions of France, Germany, Japan, and the Soviet Union in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as the successful power transitions of Britain in the early seventeenth century and the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This

⁵⁴⁸ Craig “Chinese Perceptions” 8.

⁵⁴⁹ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *The 15 Major Spender Countries in 2006 2007*, 12 May 2008 <http://www.sipri.org/contents/milap/milex/mex_major_spenders.pdf>

⁵⁵⁰ Raviprasad Narayanan, “The Chinese Discourse on the ‘Rise of China’,” *Strategic Analysis* 31.4 (July 2007): 647; and John Garver, “Interpreting China’s Grand Strategy,” *China Brief* 5.15 (July 5 2005): 2.

realization prompted members of China's think tanks to develop a so-called "law of avoidance," which instructs Beijing to cooperate with the United States and avoid attracting the ire of the hegemon while rising in power.⁵⁵¹ The belligerent nature of previous great power competition, however, would have made the above law difficult, if not impossible, to follow.

Fortunately, Chinese analysts perceive globalization as transforming the old, militant dynamics of power politics into a more pacifistic form of great power competition that increasingly reflects the merits of liberalism. Chinese intellectual adherents to this IR theory view the liberalist concepts of economic interdependence and multilateralism as mitigating the belligerent nature of international politics by turning it into a cooperative, positive-sum affair involving both state and non-state actors. According to Zheng Yu, globalization means that "there are no absolute winners or absolute losers" and that a zero-sum world no longer exists, thus facilitating cooperation between great powers.⁵⁵² China's National Defence White Paper in 2006 aptly articulates the benign nature of the modern international state system:

*Peace and development remain the principle themes in today's world, and the overall international security environment remains stable...The major international forces compete with and hold each other in check. But, they also maintain coordination and practical cooperation in their mutual relationships, and draw on each other's strengths...Economic globalization accelerates and science and technology make rapid progress; there are profound changes in the international division of labour, global and regional economic cooperation is being vigorously promoted, leading to increasing interdependence among countries. More dialogues are being conducted on traditional security issues, and cooperation in non-traditional security is developing in depth. To address development and security issues through coordination, cooperation and multilateral mechanism is the preferred approach of the international community...World Wars or all-out confrontation between major countries are avoidable for the foreseeable future.*⁵⁵³

Liberal Chinese analysts see economic interdependence as having this pacifying effect on power politics due to its ability to create a mutual interest amongst states for the

⁵⁵¹ Garver "Interpreting China's Grand Strategy" 2.

⁵⁵² Foot "Chinese strategies" 82.

⁵⁵³ People's Republic of China. State Council Information Office. China's National Defence in 2006. Beijing : People's Republic of China, Dec. 2006. 14 Oct. 2007
<<http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/194486.htm>>

preservation of amicable, stable bilateral relations. As Aaron Friedberg notes, liberal optimists believe that “the greater the volume of trade and investment flowing between two countries, the more groups on both sides will have a strong interest in avoiding conflict and preserving peace.”⁵⁵⁴ U.S.-PRC economic relations involve some of the greatest flows of trade and investment in the world, which have helped deepen both nations’ economic interdependence on one another. David Gompert sees this intimate relationship as causing the U.S. and Chinese economies to become “...quite complementary: America the source of new technology and insatiable consumer demand, and China an engine of production with a seemingly inexhaustible labour supply.”⁵⁵⁵ While the value of total U.S.-China trade was only \$1 billion in 1978, it rose to \$387 billion in 2007, making China the second-largest U.S. trading partner after Canada.⁵⁵⁶ These economic forces help promote peace between the hegemon and the rising state by providing mutual interest in preserving amicable U.S.-Chinese relations for the sake of commercial growth.

Mutual financial forces not only improve the likelihood of peace between China and the United States but also diminish the possibility of violence occurring in the general Asian region. Asia is an essential focal point for any nation’s economic trade strategy, as the region now constitutes 37.5% of global GDP based on a purchasing power parity (PPP) basis.⁵⁵⁷ American trade with Asian states has nearly tripled in the past 15 years and now amounts to \$900 billion.⁵⁵⁸ From 1999-2001, the U.S. increased its exports to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) by 131%, increased its imports from ASEAN by 181%, and increased its imports from Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand by between 200% and 300%.⁵⁵⁹ China’s geographical location has caused it to develop an even more intimate economic relationship with the Asian

⁵⁵⁴ Friedberg “The Future of U.S.-China Relations” 12.

⁵⁵⁵ Gompert “China on the Move” 28.

⁵⁵⁶ United State., Congressional Research Service, CRS Report for Congress: China-U.S. Trade Issues Washington: Congressional Research Service, 7 March 2008, 5 May 2008
<<http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33536.pdf>>

⁵⁵⁷ Bhatia, Karen K, Deputy U.S. Trade Representative, “U.S. Trade Relations with Asia,” Washington International Trade Association, Washington. 24 July. 2007. 12 May 2008

<http://www.ustr.gov/assets/Document_Library/Transcripts/2007/July/asset_upload_file258_13189.pdf>

⁵⁵⁸ Bhatia “U.S. Trade Relations with Asia”

⁵⁵⁹ Annitra Jongsthaopongpanth, “US-Asia Interdependencies: A Study of Business and Knowledge Links,” Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy 12.2 (May 2007): 222.

community and to rely heavily on local nations to facilitate its modernization efforts. These neighbouring states serve as crucial markets for Chinese goods; suppliers of raw materials for its industries; and sources of businesses, capital, and technologies through foreign direct investments (FDI). Hong Kong, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Singapore were among the top ten trading partners with the PRC in 2005, as well as the top ten foreign investors in China in 2004; in fact, 61% of all utilized FDI in China came from Asian countries during the same year.⁵⁶⁰ This latter point is important considering that the foreign-funded enterprises that make up FDI produced 58% of all Chinese exports in 2005.⁵⁶¹

These powerful, interconnected economic relations create a mutual desire amongst the PRC, the U.S., and other Asian nations to maintain a stable and peaceful regional environment conducive to further economic growth. In fact, Jiang Zemin's political report to the 14th CCP Congress stated that Chinese foreign policy must revolve around creating a stable domestic, regional, and international environment to facilitate commercial development. PRC foreign policy must, in Jiang's words, "strive for a favourable international environment for China's reforms, opening to the outside world and economic construction."⁵⁶² Such views are consistent with all regional actors. Shen Jiru, director of strategic studies at the Institute of World Economics and Politics at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), believes that the vigorous diplomacy of Japan, Korea, China, Russia, and the U.S. to prevent the North Korean nuclear issue from escalating exemplifies the regional economically-based desire for peace.⁵⁶³ Zheng Yu, who is Shen's colleague at CASS, also reinforces this point by stating, "The rising trend of economic globalization has led to an unprecedented level of economic interdependence, thereby effectively containing the possible escalation of regional conflicts to great-power war."⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁶⁰ Chambers, Michael. "Rising China: The Search for Power and Plenty." *Strategic Asia 2006-07: Trade, Interdependence, and Security*. ed. Ashley J. Tellis (Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2006) 74-77.

⁵⁶¹ Chambers "Rising China" 74.

⁵⁶² Chang Hoon Cha, "The New Growing Paradigm of Chinese Security Perspective," *Global Economic Review* 32.4 (2003): 101.

⁵⁶³ Yong Deng, "China Views Globalization: Toward a New Great-Power Politics?" *The Washington Quarterly* (Summer 2004): 123.

⁵⁶⁴ Deng "China Views Globalization" 123.

Globalization also mitigates the former bellicosity of the interstate system by encouraging international cooperation and multilateralism between states. China, like all other nations, realizes that global interconnectivity derives from various factors, including trade, technology, information, and human migration. This intimacy breeds non-traditional security threats and transnational issues that nations can only effectively address through multilateral cooperation. As Jiang Zemin explained during a 1994 keynote address to an Informal APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) Leadership Meeting:

*Many challenges facing mankind often transcend national boundaries. Economic relations, trade, development of science and technology, environmental protection, population control, disaster reduction and relief, fight against drugs, crime prevention, nuclear non-proliferation, prevention and treatment of AIDS, and so on – these are interdependent global issues. As such, they all call for cooperation and compliance with common norms.*⁵⁶⁵

This aspect of globalization breeds “common security” and “globalized cooperation” amongst the international community.⁵⁶⁶ In the words of Jiang Zemin:

*As countries increase their interdependency and common ground on security [including human security, energy security, and economic security], it has become difficult for any single country to realize its security objective by itself alone. Only by strengthening international cooperation can we effectively deal with the security challenge worldwide and realize universal and sustained security.*⁵⁶⁷

Jiang’s assertion that current global issues facilitate regional cooperation reflects a central tenet of liberalism. According to liberal optimists, the multilateral organizations that are necessary to tackle global challenges promote peace in two ways. First, they provide nations with additional opportunities to clarify their current and future intentions with

⁵⁶⁵ People’s Republic of China, President Jiang Zemin, “President Jiang Zemin’s Keynote Speech at the Informal APEC Leadership Meeting,” Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation, Bogor, Indonesia, 15 November 1994. 12 May 2008 <<http://test.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zzjg/gjs/gjzzyhy/2604/2606/t15273.htm#>> ; and Yong Deng, “The Chinese Conception of National Interests in International Relations,” *The China Quarterly* 154 (June 1998): 317.

⁵⁶⁶ Deng “China Views Globalization” 121.

⁵⁶⁷ Deng “China Views Globalization” 121.

other powers and to discuss relevant bilateral issues.⁵⁶⁸ Second, they allow nations to promulgate their adherence to international norms by committing themselves to the binding cooperative agreements, declarations, and membership requirements of the organization.

Chinese analysts appreciate the liberal benefits of multilateralism, and now place their country's acceptance into international organizations as crucial in defusing the China-threat theory and promoting a peaceful, economically friendly regional environment. Beijing perceives its participation in multilateral institutions as demonstrating its willingness to abide by the established status-quo of the world order. Claims of China being a revisionist state seem less grounded when it both commits itself to the communal, cooperative will of Asian and international states and appears to behave as a responsible world power. Aside from ameliorating the regional fears and potential hostile intentions of regional actors, the PRC's involvement in international regimes also helps mitigate domestic sources of instability by placating Chinese nationalists. The patriotic citizens of the PRC value the international respect that China garners by behaving as a benevolent power and view the international praise of Chinese responsible behaviour as an indicator of China's re-emergence as a great power. These considerations motivate China to immerse itself in over 50 international government organizations and more than a thousand international non-government organizations.⁵⁶⁹ It is vigorously involved in the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the WTO, and the United Nations, and is a full participant in regional institutions such as the Asian Development Bank, the "ASEAN+3" dialogue process, and APEC.⁵⁷⁰

Globalization's ability to reduce the truculent nature of power politics through the liberal tenets of economic interdependence and multilateralism is a key reason why China recognizes a strategic opportunity in the current interstate system. With peace and development as the dominant themes of the current globalized era, China is not required to divert its limited resources into an excessive military build-up to defend its borders and conquer strategic territory. Instead, it can focus the majority of its efforts on achieving

⁵⁶⁸ Friedberg "The Future of U.S.-China Relations" 13.

⁵⁶⁹ International Institute of Strategic Studies, "China's Grand Strategy," *Strategic Comments* 10.9 (2004): 2.

⁵⁷⁰ Chambers "Rising China" 76.

national interests, such as greater wealth and modernization. The pacification of great power competition also provides China with the opportunity to behave as a peaceful and status-quo power that is willing to accept the responsibilities befitting a great power. This helps bolster the image of China as a historically passive state and satisfies Chinese nationalistic demands for the PRC achieving greater international prestige.

Comprehensive National Power and China's Status-Quo Challenge to the Unipolar World Order

Although liberalist values have gained some acceptance amongst Chinese elites in the era of globalization, the PRC leadership continues to rely on the realpolitik ideology to understand modern interstate dynamics. Realist theories of balance-of-power and power transition, with their emphasis on the persistent pursuit for relative gains in power, remain dominant in Chinese strategic calculations. As Yong Deng notes, "Despite a wide range of views existing along the realpolitik-idealpolitik [liberalism] spectrum in the Chinese conception of national interests, the dominant thinking is still realist."⁵⁷¹ Michael Yahuda furthers this argument in a 2007 article for *The International Spectator*:

*China is increasingly carrying out a wide range of policies that converge with international norms and expectations. But it should be recognised that China's leaders and diplomats carry out these policies because they accord with what they regard as China's national interest and not because they have been won over to the liberal principles that underlie institutions such as the UN and the WTO.*⁵⁷²

David Lampton similarly noted the Chinese realist utility of both economic interdependence and multilateralism with the following quote:

"Because interdependence is a by-product of globalization and interdependence is presumed to foster cooperation, it is easy to assume that globalization will slowly erode Beijing's dedication to its narrow national interest and practice of realpolitik. Although there is plenty of evidence of increasing Chinese cooperation and conformity with international norms, there is little evidence that considerations of national interest and

⁵⁷¹ Deng "The Chinese Conception of National Interests" 320.

⁵⁷² Michael Yahuda, "China's Foreign Policy Comes of Age," *The International Spectator* 42.3 (Sept. 2007): 340.

*realpolitik figure any less prominently in Chinese thinking than they always have. As Thomas Moore remarked in 1998: 'The Chinese are receptive to globalization as a means to become modern – it is not a goal, it is a means.'*⁵⁷³

The significance of liberalism is that it has created a propitious environment for China to pursue its realpolitik aims within the present globalized unipolar world. Adherents of both China's realpolitik strategic culture and modern realist mentality oppose directly challenging the current world order and overtly balancing against the superior power of the United States. According to the *quan bian* decision axiom, Chinese strategists are encouraged to adopt accommodationist foreign policies when the international balance-of-power is not in their favour, as is the case with America's present hegemonic status. Realists, such as Qin Yaqing, a professor at China's Foreign Policy Institute, also believe that China lacks the material strength to follow a "forceful rise" that drastically disturbs the international order.⁵⁷⁴ Doing so would enflame the China-threat theory and incite the U.S. into undermining China's growth before it reaches parity with the sole superpower. Qin believes that China must follow a peaceful path, which includes the establishment of amicable economic and political relations, until its self-strengthening reforms remove the present power disparity with the United States.

Globalization offers Chinese analysts the strategic opportunity to avoid conflict with the United States, and therefore safely pursue economic development and self-strengthening reforms. In addition, it simultaneously allows China to address its realpolitik concerns regarding improvements to the balance-of-power and revisions to the current status-quo while still appearing as a cooperative nation. This opportunity derives from the liberal aspects of globalization broadening and transforming China's traditional realist understanding of national strength to align with the comprehensive national power concept.

Military strength largely determined a nation's international standing both before and during the Cold War; however Huang Shuofeng, a well-known Chinese scholar,

⁵⁷³ Lampton "China's Foreign and National Security Policy-Making Process" 24-25.

⁵⁷⁴ Srikanth Kondapalli, "The Rise of China & Implications to Asia," *World Forum for Democratization in Asia* (15 Sept. 2005): 9, 11 June 2007 <http://www.wfda.net/activities_biennial_conference.htm>

believes that this is no longer the case during the present globalized “transition period.”⁵⁷⁵ Richard Rosecrance of Harvard University claims that this devaluation of military power is the result of the benefits of coercive territorial expansion declining in the era of globalization while the costs continue to remain high. Manufacturing, financial, and human capital now play a predominant role in economic growth, rather than land, with human capital constituting about 64% of world gross domestic product.⁵⁷⁶ All of these economic resources are difficult to seize through military force, as high-intensity warfare would likely damage manufacturing capital, and human and financial capital would simply melt across borders and end up in the hands of other countries.⁵⁷⁷ The continued effectiveness of guerrilla warfare against modern militaries in occupied territories further discourages states from attempting to advance their national power through military conquest.⁵⁷⁸ In the words of Yan Xuetong, “Colonization or territorial expansion can no longer make any country a superpower.”⁵⁷⁹ This reality motivates states to acquire markets and resources from strategic territories through non-military means.

China invented the uniquely Chinese concept of CNP after Deng Xiaoping recognized the ability of globalization to transform traditional understandings of national power. In the late 1970s, Deng noted that non-military factors - namely economic strength - have become an essential determinant of a country’s position within the international hierarchy during an era prone to peaceful international relations.⁵⁸⁰ As he once explained, “In measuring a country’s national power, one must look at it comprehensively and from all sides.”⁵⁸¹ This reality motivated Deng to create a comprehensive national development strategy, known as the “Four Modernizations.” The strategy sought to enhance not only China’s military might, but also its agricultural,

⁵⁷⁵ Zhang “Chinese Strategic Culture” 83.

⁵⁷⁶ Rosecrance “Power and International Relations” 33.

⁵⁷⁷ Rosecrance “Power and International Relations” 33.

⁵⁷⁸ Rosecrance “Power and International Relations” 33.

⁵⁷⁹ Xuetong “The Rise of China in Chinese Eyes” 35.

⁵⁸⁰ United States, Dept. of Defence, Office of the Secretary of Defence, Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People’s Republic of China 2000 2000, 03 April 2007
<<http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2000/china06222000.htm>>

⁵⁸¹ Zhang “Chinese Strategic Culture” 83.

industrial, scientific, and technological power.⁵⁸² The former Chinese ruler also believed that a stronger military depended on enhancing the nation's economic, technological, political, and social capabilities.⁵⁸³ Deng's acceptance of a new definition of national power encouraged Madhu Bhalla to state, "As a concept, CNP emerges neither from Marxism-Leninism nor from contemporary western political theory, but from the Chinese neo-realist understanding of power and its concern with strengthening and maximizing the relative power of the Chinese state".⁵⁸⁴

CNP analyses are accomplished both qualitatively, through general debates on the current and possible future strengths and weaknesses of a country, as well as quantitatively, through formulaic calculations.⁵⁸⁵ These quantitative assessments involve eight categories, according to Samuel Kim, with each category receiving a different coefficient depending on their importance to CNP. With the total value of these factors equalling 1.00, Chinese analysts rank the categories in the following order: "domestic economic activities (0.28), science and technology (0.15), foreign economic activities (0.13), social development (0.10), military (0.10), government regulation and control (0.08), foreign affairs (0.08), and natural resources (0.008)."⁵⁸⁶ Despite slight differences in the way CNP is defined and calculated - both amongst Chinese think tanks as well as amongst foreign analysts - the general concept bases national power on a broad spectrum of political, economic, scientific, military, historical, and societal factors.⁵⁸⁷

While the PRC may have recently adopted the CNP concept, the Chinese strategic culture has long valued accurate and comprehensive assessments of a nation's overall strength. This stemmed from the fact that ancient strategists viewed such calculations as vital in predicting a state's ability to defeat another prior to declarations of war.⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸² Michael D. Swaine, The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policymaking (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 1998)7-8. 18 Jan. 2008 <http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR782-1/MR782.1.chap3.pdf>

⁵⁸³ Swaine The Role of the Chinese Military 8.

⁵⁸⁴ Madhu Bhalla, "Domestic Roots of China's Foreign and Security Policy," International Studies 42.3&4 (2005): 217.

⁵⁸⁵ United States. Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2000

⁵⁸⁶ Kim "China's Path to Great Power Status" 41.

⁵⁸⁷ Angang Hu, "The Rising of Modern China: Comprehensive National Power and Grand Strategy," Strategy & Management 3 (2002) 2-3. 03 Nov. 2007 <<http://irchina.org/en/xueren/china/pdf/mhh3.pdf>> ; Craig "Chinese Perceptions" 12.

⁵⁸⁸ Mark McNeilly, Sun Tzu and the Art of Modern Warfare (New York : Oxford University Press, 2001) 86.

According to Wu Chunqiu, of China's Academy of Military Science, the works of Sun-tzu and other ancient Chinese strategists embodied "...primitive, simple, and unsophisticated national power thought...closely related to issues of war."⁵⁸⁹ Sun-tzu particularly believed that victory depended on accurately assessing an enemy's power relative to one's own before the commencement of hostilities. Two quotations within Sun-tzu's *Art of War* articulated this point. The first stated, "Know the enemy and know yourself, in a hundred battles you will never be in peril."⁵⁹⁰ The other advised:

*Now if the estimates made in the temple before hostilities indicate victory it is because calculations show one's strength to be superior to that of his enemy; if they indicate defeat, it is because calculations show that one is inferior. With many calculations, one can win; with few calculations, one cannot.*⁵⁹¹

Such calculations depended on a nation's politics, military affairs, economics, geography, and "subjective guidance," notes Michael Pillsbury.⁵⁹² Sun-tzu believed that a state's ability to accurately forecast the consequences of hostilities ensuing between itself and another power were essential in directing its leadership to implement the domestic and foreign policies necessary to advance their national interests.

Although preparing for future armed conflicts is obviously important, especially in light of the volatile territorial issues related to Taiwan and the South and East China Sea, the greater relevance of Sun-tzu's teachings to the PRC derives from his emphasis on waging non-military warfare. Unlike the traditional Western notion that nations wage wars solely on military battlegrounds, Sun-tzu and other ancient Chinese strategists regarded warfare as taking place within military, diplomatic, economic, intelligence, and political fields. Sun-tzu emphasized attacking an opponent through such non-military means, especially the field of diplomacy, since he regarded peace and war as difficult to distinguish from one another because "both are part of the same ongoing conflict" for interstate dominance.⁵⁹³ He emphasized waging war through these non-military domains as the preferred strategic choice for rulers, since it would allow states to achieve

⁵⁸⁹ Pillsbury China Debates the Future Security Environment.

⁵⁹⁰ Samuel B. Griffith, The Art of War (New York : Oxford University Press, 1971) 84.

⁵⁹¹ McNeilly Sun Tzu and the Art of Modern Warfare 86.

⁵⁹² Pillsbury China Debates the Future Security Environment

⁵⁹³ Michael Handel, Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought (New York : Frank Cass, 2001) 33-34.

bloodless victories by undermining an opponent's power before hostilities broke out. As he famously pronounced, "To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."

This principle of achieving non-violent victory over an opponent is central to the CNP concept, according to Wu Chunqiu, and highly applicable to a Chinese state intent on furthering its realpolitik aims within a generally peaceful and globalized world. Wu describes the modern significance of Sun-tzu's principle in the following statement:

*Victory without war does not mean that there is no war at all. The wars one must fight are political wars, economic wars, science and technology wars, diplomatic wars, etc. To sum up in a word, it is a war of Comprehensive National Power. Although military power is an important factor, in peacetime it usually acts as a backup force, and plays the role of invisible might.*⁵⁹⁴

The pertinency of Sun-tzu's principles in the current era of globalization explains why the PRC has experienced a "revival of interest in Sun Tzu and other classical Chinese military thoughts..." ever since China opened itself to the international community in the late 1970s.⁵⁹⁵ Globalization's development of an interstate setting that discourages aggression and forces nations to compete in non-military fields provides an environment highly conducive to wage a war of comprehensive national power. This unorthodox concept allows China to adopt a dualistic strategy of using the status-quo practices within the economic, diplomatic, and political domains to pursue its realist driven goals of challenging the U.S. hegemony and revising the present international rules and structure. The use of such warfare is the dominant reason why Chinese elites view a strategic opportunity in the current dynamics of globalization. A war of CNP allows China to advance its antagonistic, revisionist aims while preserving its image as a peaceful and status-quo power, the latter of which is vital to maintaining its economic development.

The PRC views this contrastive war of CNP through globalization as an effective way to challenge the U.S. unipolar world, as it promotes multi-polarity and constrains American foreign policies. It is true that many members of PRC think tanks believe that the world will remain under U.S. hegemony for the initial periods of the new millennium; a growing number of analysts, however, now perceive globalization as decreasing the

⁵⁹⁴ Zhang "Chinese Strategic Culture"80.

⁵⁹⁵ Lai "Learning From The Stones" 22.

duration of U.S. unipolarity and creating a multi-polar world faster than previously anticipated. Beijing is now beginning to describe globalization, especially economic globalization, as interconnected with multi-polarity and views both concepts as proceeding in parallel with one another. This process will help democratize the interstate structure, according to PRC scholars, and give China a greater say in international affairs.⁵⁹⁶ Hu Xin, of the PLA International Relations Academy's International Research Institute, believes that while the U.S. will maintain its dominance for several decades, the world's unipolar structure will transform with the rapid rise of China, the EU, Russia, Japan, and India.⁵⁹⁷ Fareed Zakaria notes this growing multi-polarity in a recent article in *Foreign Affairs* magazine:

*On every dimension of power other than military power – industrial, financial, social, cultural – the distribution of power is shifting, moving away from U.S. dominance. That does not mean we are entering an anti-American world. But we are moving into a post-American world, one defined and directed from many places and by many people.*⁵⁹⁸

Such multipolar trends diminish American CNP, according to Chinese analysts, and reduce its influence over the international community.⁵⁹⁹

The PRC government has repeatedly commented on multi-polar trends throughout its recent official publications. In a 2005 Chinese White Paper entitled “China’s Peaceful Development Road,” the PRC government stated, “Further development of multi-polarization and economic globalization has brought new opportunities for world peace and development....”⁶⁰⁰ China’s 2006 National Defence White Paper also noted, “World peace and security face more opportunities than challenges. The world is at a critical stage, moving towards multi-polarity. Progress is expected in addressing the serious

⁵⁹⁶ Foot “Chinese strategies” 82-83.

⁵⁹⁷ Kondapalli “The Rise of China” 12 .

⁵⁹⁸ Fareed Zakaria, “The Future of American Power: How America Can Survive the Rise of the Rest,” *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2008), 20 May 2008
<<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20080501facomment87303-p80/fareed-zakaria/the-future-of-american-power.html>>

⁵⁹⁹ Craig “Chinese Perceptions” 13.

⁶⁰⁰ People’s Republic of China, State Council Information Office, *China’s Peaceful Development Road*. Beijing: State Council Information Office, 22 Dec. 2005. 12 May 2008
<<http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/152684.htm>>.

imbalances in the international strategic alignment.”⁶⁰¹ Finally, in his speech to the 17th Party Congress in October of 2007, Hu Jintao proclaimed:

*The progress towards a multipolar world is irreversible, economic globalization is developing in depth, and the scientific and technological revolution is gathering momentum...The international balance of power is changing in favour of the maintenance of world peace, and the overall international situation is stable.*⁶⁰²

The ability of globalization to reduce America’s CNP is most evident in the economic and political realms of international relations. Through these domains, China, in its war of comprehensive national power, has the ability to adopt a passive stance, where it simply observes the multi-polar trends of globalization continue to undermine the U.S. unipolar world order; and a proactive stance, where it can actively seek to restrain U.S. power and alter its status-quo rules. Within the economic realm, global trends suggest that America’s CNP is in a state of decline. According to Peter Hays Gries, “The world system may be unipolar in the military domain, but it is multi-polar in the economic realm...”⁶⁰³ In fact, America is not even the world’s largest economic entity; that distinction goes to the European Union (EU), which has a GDP of \$14.45 trillion, compared to America’s \$13.86 trillion (2007 estimates).⁶⁰⁴ Future projections of world economic power paint an ominous picture for the current hegemon. A 2007 publication by Goldman Sachs entitled “BRICs and Beyond,” argues that the economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China, referred as BRICs, will likely overtake the G7 nations (U.S., Japan, Italy, France, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Germany) in GDP by 2032.⁶⁰⁵ Goldman Sachs also predicts that individual countries will threaten America’s economic superiority in the future. By 2050, it estimates the GDP of India to equal that of the United States.⁶⁰⁶ More surprisingly, the investment firm projects China to overtake

⁶⁰¹ People’s Republic of China China’s National Defence in 2006

⁶⁰² Hu Jintao, “Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive for New Victories in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in all Respects.” The Seventeenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Beijing. 15 Oct. 2007. 2 Nov. 2007
<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2007-10/25/content_6204667_11.htm>

⁶⁰³ Peter Hays Gries, “China Eyes the Hegemon,” Orbis 49.3 (Summer 2005): 407.

⁶⁰⁴ United States. Central Intelligence Agency. World Factbook. 15 May 2008. 20 May 2008
<<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ee.html#Econ>>

⁶⁰⁵ Goldman Sachs. BRICs and Beyond (New York: Goldman Sachs, 2007) 138. 18 May 2008
<<http://www2.goldmansachs.com/ideas/brics/book/BRIC-Full.pdf>>

⁶⁰⁶ Goldman Sachs BRICs and Beyond 138.

America in GDP by 2027 and then to achieve a GDP that is 84% larger than that of the U.S. by 2050.⁶⁰⁷

While global economic trends appear advantageous to Chinese elites in their desire to challenge the U.S. hegemony, they also perceive an opportunity to use China's economic influence to constrain American power and proactively alter its status-quo norms. Basing their views on liberal interdependence theory, Chinese analysts perceive an ability to manipulate American policies through Sino-U.S. commercial relations by creating mutual interests between the PRC and American constituents. This perception is not unique to China, as many countries now strive to develop intimate and powerful economic relations with the superpower for the same reason. For example, Shen Jiru of CASS argues that the U.S. was unable to punish Germany, Russia, and France for their opposition to America's pre-emptive war against Iraq because of its economic interconnectedness with these global powers. In his words, "The advance of economic globalization means that the interests of different countries are interwoven ever more closely, and this has become a powerful material force constraining U.S. hegemonism."⁶⁰⁸ Like these powers, China has sought to increase its economic relations with various domestic actors in America (including corporations, government bodies, and influential citizens) to dissuade Washington leaders from adopting any bellicose policies that may jeopardize Sino-U.S. economic cooperation. According to Yong Deng:

By many accounts, Beijing long ago adopted a conscious strategy of developing constituencies in the United States, particularly in the business community, who will support engagement policies toward China even if the noneconomic aspects of the bilateral relationship sour. Given the de facto constraints on using a balancing strategy to check the exercise of U.S. power, interdependence presents the most viable alternative currently available to China to restrain U.S. hegemony.⁶⁰⁹

This strategy is very beneficial to Chinese interests as it both improves the economic development of the PRC while simultaneously constraining American hegemonic policies.

⁶⁰⁷ Goldman Sachs *BRICs and Beyond* 138.

⁶⁰⁸ Deng "China Views Globalization" 123.

⁶⁰⁹ Deng "China Views Globalization" 132.

China also uses economic relations to persuade some of American's most loyal allies to waver over issues critical to Chinese national interests, in a process reminiscent of the *lianheng* (divide-and-conquer) strategy adopted by the Qin dynasty. Such a case is evident with Chinese efforts to economically manipulate Australian policies on Taiwan. Sino-Australian economic relations have flourished in recent years, with the PRC overtaking Japan and the U.S. as Australia's largest trading partner in 2007.⁶¹⁰ During that year, the bilateral trading volume between both nations reached \$43.8 billion, which was 33.08% higher than the 2006 figure.⁶¹¹ Australia is also China's largest source of iron ore and alumina and second-largest source of coal.⁶¹² Beijing now uses its lucrative ties with Australia to encourage Canberra to remain neutral in the event of Sino-U.S. hostilities over Taiwan, or else suffer "maximum Chinese retaliation," according to Mohan Malik.⁶¹³ To further pressure the Australian leadership, China offers the prospect of further lucrative commercial deals and relies on the powerful pro-China lobby in Canberra to ensure Australia's neutrality.⁶¹⁴ As China becomes more vital to the Australian economy, politicians in Canberra will face incremental pressure to avoid siding with American military or diplomatic policies that anger the PRC and jeopardize its prosperous economic relations.

In the political realm, trends in globalization are diminishing American influence and advancing China's war of CNP by giving other nations greater input in international politics. The necessity in achieving multilateral cooperation to solve transnational, non-traditional threats, such as the spread of disease, organized crime, arms proliferation, and global warming, allows weaker nations to affect international outcomes. Peter Hays Gries comments on this challenge to American CNP in the following quote:

As Joseph Nye has noted, the paradox of America's power today is that while its military pre-eminence guarantees that nothing can be accomplished in the world without its participation, the complex interdependence of today's world ensures that the United States can

⁶¹⁰ David Uren, "China emerges as our biggest trading partner," *The Australian* 05 May 2007, 02 Feb. 2008 <<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,21674786-2702,00.html>>

⁶¹¹ Shiqiang Wu, "A Bright Future for the China-Australia Economic and Trade Cooperation," China Chamber of Commerce, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Australia, Canberra. 29 April 2008. 02 June 2008 <<http://au.china-embassy.org/eng/sgjs/sghd/t432890.htm>>

⁶¹² Wu "A Bright Future"

⁶¹³ Mohan Malik, "The China Factor in Australia-U.S. Relations," *China Brief* 5.8 (April 12, 2008): 6.

⁶¹⁴ Malik "The China Factor" 6.

*accomplish very little alone, either. This situation allows the less powerful to bargain with the powerful.*⁶¹⁵

Furthermore, the world is no longer solely dependent on American leadership, as multiple nations now compete for the world's support and attempt to shape the world order into a mould more compatible with their respective values. Parag Khanna, of the New American Foundation, believes that modern power politics revolves around three superpowers: the United States, the European Union, and China.⁶¹⁶ These superpowers compete for global influence by striving to win the loyalty of the "second world," which consists of approximately 40 strategic countries whose support could tilt the balance-of-power one way or the other. Parag believes that China and the EU will offer these second world countries different international ideals and rules from the American-dictated status-quo of the current world order. For example, the EU will emphasize supranational integration models to solve global disputes while China will promote its model of economic liberalization with continued authoritarian rule.⁶¹⁷ While this report disputes Parag's claim that the EU and China have already emerged as superpowers, it does believe that both entities will challenge the unipolar world in the economic and diplomatic realms within the near future if current trends persist.

Aside from these general trends, China is also proactively pursuing its unorthodox war by deepening its involvement in multilateral organizations to alter international norms and constrain American actions. By actively participating in multilateral institutes, the PRC gains the ability to reshape the established pro-Western, status-quo "rules of the game," according to UK's Chinese ambassador Zhai Peixin, to be more beneficial to Chinese national interests without appearing as a revisionist state.⁶¹⁸ This was the case with China's persistent efforts to win entry into the WTO, as it accepted massive concessions in order to gain the power to influence the accepted parameters of

⁶¹⁵ Gries "China Eyes the Hegemon" 407.

⁶¹⁶ Parag Khanna, "Waving Goodbye to Hegemony," *The New York Times Magazine* 27 Jan. 2008, 17 April 2008 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/27/magazine/27world-t.html>>

⁶¹⁷ Khanna "Waving Goodbye to Hegemony"

⁶¹⁸ Yongjin Zhang, "China Goes Global," *The Foreign Policy Centre* (2005): 30. 07 June 2008 <<http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/449.pdf>>; Wang "China's Grand Strategy and U.S. Primacy" 23.

international trading activities.⁶¹⁹ Once gaining entry into the organization, the PRC trade minister, Shi Guangsheng, criticized the “obvious defects of the existing multilateral trading system,” namely its failure “to reflect the interests and demands of developing countries in a more adequate fashion.”⁶²⁰ It has now used its position within the WTO to campaign for more equitable outcomes in any new trade agreements and to protect itself against having to further liberalize its domestic economic processes.⁶²¹

PRC officials also view multilateralism as an effective restraint on U.S. power. For example, Chinese participation in multilateral organizations provides Beijing with the ability to limit American influence in pressuring institutes to support its aims, as was discussed in the last chapter with the idiom “Xie Tianzi Yiling Zhuhou,” meaning “hijack the emperor to order the dukes about in his name.”⁶²² This ability derives from China actively encouraging member states to oppose belligerent U.S. policies, or simply preventing the organization from endorsing U.S. actions. This occurred in 1999 when China used its role as a permanent member of the UN Security Council to deny UN support for the NATO bombing campaign in Kosovo.

Perhaps a more apt demonstration of the Chinese war of CNP through multilateralism lies in Beijing’s view of ASEAN as “a counterweight to US power.”⁶²³ Numerous foreign analysts explain the newfound affection of ASEAN by Beijing as the result of a calculated Chinese strategy to use Asian regional organizations to alter regional norms to better suit PRC interests and reduce U.S. influence in Asia. According to Xu Jian, an analyst at the China Institute of International Studies (CIIS), “increasing regionalism (through Asian multilateral organizations) is an important way to restrain American hegemonism.”⁶²⁴ Chang Hoon Cha furthers this point by stating, “In a sense, multilateralism is treated as an instrument to transform old patterns of Asian-Pacific relations to a new one in the post-Cold War era.”⁶²⁵ This would explain why China has

⁶¹⁹ Ronald Keith, “China as a Rising World Power and its Response to ‘Globalization’,” The Review of International Affairs 3.4 (Summer 2004): 512.

⁶²⁰ Deng “China Views Globalization” 124.

⁶²¹ Deng “China Views Globalization” 124-125.

⁶²² Gries “China Eyes the Hegemon” 407.

⁶²³ Wang “China’s Grand Strategy and U.S. Primacy” 24; Christopher R. Hughes, “Nationalism and multilateralism in Chinese foreign policy: implications for Southeast Asia,” The Pacific Review 18.1 (March 2005): 130.

⁶²⁴ Gries “China Eyes the Hegemon” 408.

⁶²⁵ Cha “The New Growing Paradigm” 112.

actively supported regional multilateral organizations that exclude the U.S., such as ASEAN + 3 (which includes all ASEAN states, China, South Korea, and Japan) and the East Asian Summit, while downplaying the importance of organizations where the U.S. is included, such as the APEC forum and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).⁶²⁶ Without the presence of the U.S., China becomes the dominant nation within the regional body and is able to set the regional agenda of the organization.⁶²⁷

The enthusiastic pursuit of an East Asian Community (EAC) by the Chinese leadership further demonstrates China's desire to alter the existing status-quo and create a more favourable interstate system. When Malaysia proposed the ASEAN + 3 countries to form an East Asian Community at the 2004 ASEAN + 3 meeting, China immediately recognized the potential of such an organization to facilitate Chinese interests and weaken U.S. influence in East Asia.⁶²⁸ The U.S., Japan, and various ASEAN states viewed China's enthusiasm for the organization with great suspicion and trepidation. Some foreign affairs experts, such as Parag Khanna, viewed the EAC as offering China an important step towards restoring its place as the world's "Middle Kingdom."⁶²⁹ In light of such fears, the majority of ASEAN + 3 states agreed to include India, Australia, and New Zealand into the East Asian summit to discuss the proposed EAC body.⁶³⁰ Having failed to prevent these U.S. allies and, in terms of India, regional competitor into the summit, China sought to minimize their influence over the proposed community by dividing the East Asian Summit into two blocs. One bloc would consist of the core ASEAN + 3 states, which would have the power to shape the creation of the new EAC. The other bloc would consist of India, Australia, and New Zealand, which Beijing referred to as the "outsiders," who would have no control over the development of the EAC.⁶³¹ China eventually won only a partial victory. ASEAN agreed to deprive the "outsiders" of any power in the formation of EAC and ASEAN + 3 will become what the

⁶²⁶ Philip Saunders, "China's Global Activism: Strategy, Drivers, and Tools," Institute for National Strategic Studies (October 2006): 15, 21 April 2007
<http://www.ndu.edu/inss/Occasional_Papers/OCP4.pdf>

⁶²⁷ Wang "China's Grand Strategy" 24.

⁶²⁸ Mohan Malik, "The East Asian Summit: More Discord than Accord," YaleGlobal 20 Dec. 2005, 15 Nov. 2007 <<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=6645>>

⁶²⁹ Khanna "Waving Goodbye to Hegemony"

⁶³⁰ Gilbert Rozman, "Internationalism and Asianism in Japanese Strategic Thought from Meiji to Heisei," Japanese Journal of Political Science 9.2 (Aug. 2008): 223.

⁶³¹ Malik "The East Asian Summit"

Malaysian Prime Minister called “a vehicle for realizing the dreams of forming the East Asian Community.”⁶³² Unfortunately for the Chinese leadership, ASEAN also rejected China’s offer to host the second East Asian Summit and decided that ASEAN itself will host all subsequent summits and will be the dominant decider of how the EAC develops. Despite China’s failure to turn the EAC into a potential counterweight to U.S. power, its attempts to restrict both America and its allies from being involved in the formation of any regional interstate structure reflects a revisionist intent that remains within the status-quo practices of multilateralism.

China’s antagonistic use of multilateralism reflects a realist, instrumental outlook on multilateral organizations that is “substantively different from socialized acceptance of supranational rules and norms,” according to Yuan-Kang Wang.⁶³³ While accepting the liberal merits of multilateralism for cooperation and international responsibility, China predominately values participating in these organizations to further strategic national goals. This reflects how realists, according to Kenneth Waltz, believe that multilateral organizations primarily serve nationalist interest rather than international interest.⁶³⁴ Christopher Hughes notes that China’s instrumental use of multilateral organization in its war of CNP simply reflects the Chinese leadership’s acknowledgment that such bodies are a good way of safely balancing against American power. In his words, “...China has the opportunity to avoid Russia’s fate by extending its influence through a multilateralism that does not directly challenge the United States or ruffle the feathers of its neighbours.”⁶³⁵

China’s perception of a strategic opportunity in the current world order derives from globalization pacifying power politics and redefining the definition of national power to include the non-military aspects of CNP. This redefinition permits China to wage a war of comprehensive national power, where it can challenge the U.S. hegemony and alter international norms while behaving and appearing as a peaceful and status-quo power.

⁶³² Malik “The East Asian Summit”

⁶³³ Wang “China’s Grand Strategy and U.S. Primacy” 23.

⁶³⁴ Wang “China’s Grand Strategy and U.S. Primacy” 23.

⁶³⁵ Hughes “Nationalism and multilateralism” 133.

The Double-Edged Sword of Globalization

Despite the benefits of globalization, Chinese realists also regard the phenomenon as a double-edged sword capable of undermining its sovereignty and threatening its national security. The pacification of power politics has illustrated that the non-military factors of CNP represent sources of strength as well as points of vulnerability. A major security concern for the PRC leadership lies in globalization weakening Chinese sovereignty by reducing the government's ability to protect the nation from harmful international factors and malicious hegemonic behaviour. Chinese officials are highly sensitive to this Westphalian principle, as their historic victimization at the hands of foreign nations has created an aversion to external influences in Chinese domestic affairs.⁶³⁶ The nature of globalization, however, compels China to open itself to these malevolent forces. This fact exposes China to the same unorthodox tactics of the current war of comprehensive national power as their rivals. Its greatest rival, the United States, trumps China in virtually every category of CNP and can use its overwhelming power in these domains to penetrate China's borders and manipulate its domestic affairs. Globalization empowers the PRC by restricting the usefulness of America's supreme military strength; however, the superpower's other sources of influence still represent a powerful threat to Chinese interests. This fact exacerbates the ominous perceptions that the PRC holds towards the U.S. unipolar world order. While globalization may have mitigated some of the strategic concerns mentioned in the preceding chapter, it by no means has eliminated them. Now globalization compounds these fears with the revelation that American has the potential to threaten the PRC's rise through the non-military aspects of CNP. The U.S. may lack the strategic culture to perceive warfare as primarily occurring outside of the battlefield; however, Washington leaders are intelligent enough to come to the same conclusions as Beijing. This recognition of globalization's threat to the sovereignty and national security of the PRC limits the enthusiasm that Chinese elites have towards further acceptance of status-quo rules and practices.

The negative ramifications of economic interdependence provide an apt example of globalization's potential to infringe on China's sovereignty and threaten its national

⁶³⁶ Zhang "Self-Identity Construction of the Present China" 291.

security. During the Asian financial crisis of 1997-1998, a seemingly internal problem in Thailand sparked immense economic turmoil throughout the region. China emerged from this period relatively unscathed; however, the dire financial and political costs of the crisis for other Asian states, namely Thailand, Indonesia, and South Korea, demonstrated the threat that global economic forces pose to national security.⁶³⁷ The PRC leadership realized that the strength of their economy and their political stability depended largely on external factors that China, itself, could not control. The crisis also illustrated to Chinese analysts how the United States can use its economic power to coerce a state into adopting policies favourable to American aims. Such an illustration came following the decision of the International Monetary Fund, which Chinese elites see as an extension of the U.S., to force the struggling Indonesian and South Korean governments to implement policy concessions before securing monetary assistance.⁶³⁸

China's realization that economic globalization was having a direct effect on their domestic affairs reinforced the concerns surrounding the Asian financial crisis. Since the PRC opened its markets to the world in the late 1970s, thousands of Chinese state-owned enterprises (SOE) have closed or drastically downsized their operations due to their lack of competitiveness against foreign businesses.⁶³⁹ This has had a tremendous effect on older industrial cities with high amounts of SOEs, as millions of workers lost their jobs without pensions or welfare protection.⁶⁴⁰ An estimated 27.8 million factory workers lost their jobs between 1999 and 2004, and another 6 million between 2005 and 2006.⁶⁴¹ Unequal allocations of foreign trade and foreign direct investment to only one-third of Chinese provinces, mainly those on the eastern coast, have also exacerbated China's economic inequality.⁶⁴² According to Pranab Bardhan of *Yale Global* magazine, such disproportionate access to foreign trade has put China on course to become one of the most unequal countries in the world, despite having one of the best equality levels just

⁶³⁷ Deng "China Views Globalization" 119.

⁶³⁸ Saunders "China's Global Activism" 7; also see Zhang "China Goes Global" 29 for note on IMF being controlled by Western powers.

⁶³⁹ John W. Lewis, "Social Change and Political Reform in China: Meeting the Challenge of Success," *The China Quarterly* 176 (2003): 930.

⁶⁴⁰ Lewis "Social Change" 930.

⁶⁴¹ Lum, Thomas. United States. Congressional Research Service. CRS Report to Congress: Social Unrest in China. Washington : GPO, 8 May 2006. 5.

⁶⁴² Zhengyi Wang, "Conceptualizing economic security and governance: China confronts globalization," *The Pacific Review* 17.4 (2004): 531.

two decades ago.⁶⁴³ This inequality places the Communist party in a “zone of genuine danger,” in the words of Chinese police experts, as the public anger stimulated by the current levels of disparity gradually turns on the ruling government.⁶⁴⁴

China also faces commercial threats to its sovereignty from foreign powers. The immense economic interconnectivity between Asian countries and some Chinese municipalities and provinces is fostering a decentralization of PRC authority that could eventually reduce China’s internal stability. Such a situation may arise from a rapid integration of the economies of lower-level governments with bordering states, such as Myanmar and India, or with greater interdependence causing these local and provincial Chinese governments to adopt governance values that contradict those promulgated by the PRC.⁶⁴⁵ Further concerns include foreign corporations gaining control of vital domestic economic sectors and China’s accumulation of foreign debt and dependence on foreign capital and trade. This latter concern reduces the PRC’s ability to protect its domestic markets and citizens from fluctuations in the world economy.⁶⁴⁶ The Director of China’s Centre for Contemporary International Relations refers to the latter concern as part of China’s “reliance problems,” due to its dependence on external factors that are difficult, if not impossible to control. In his words, “China relies quite a bit on foreign resources, on foreign markets, on the international situation, and on the security and stability of the environment on China’s periphery, and on domestic stability too.”⁶⁴⁷ The ability of international commercial activities to violate Chinese sovereignty and create serious domestic hardships proved to the Chinese leadership that economics play a vital role in ensuring national security in the era of globalization. The PRC responded to this revelation by officially expressing a new concept of “national economic security” within the *Documents of the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China* in 2002.

Besides economic and financial issues, Chinese realists have further broadened their conception of national security to include other areas of CNP that they feel are potential points of vulnerability to both the PRC’s power and sovereignty. These

⁶⁴³ Pranab Bardhan, “Inequality in India and China: Is Globalization to Blame?” *Yale Global Online* 15 Oct. 2007, 12 March 2008 < <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=9819> >

⁶⁴⁴ Tanner “China Rethinks Unrest” 147.

⁶⁴⁵ Bhalla “Domestic Roots of China’s Foreign and Security Policy” 217.

⁶⁴⁶ Keping Yu, “Globalization and Autonomy in China,” Munk Centre for International Studies, Toronto, 23 Sept. 2005.

⁶⁴⁷ Craig “Chinese Perceptions” 17.

additional areas include China's political and cultural values, which Chinese analysts see as under threat from global interconnectivity and multilateralism. As Gui Xiang, of the Central Party College of the CCP, explains: "While we could keep a certain distance from foreign cultures in the past, in the globalization era, there is now no such 'pure land' on which we can be immune from the contamination of them due to the information revolution."⁶⁴⁸ America's current domination of global popular culture exposes Chinese citizens to all of its cultural and political values. The world-views and value systems that this popular culture instils in Chinese citizens may conflict with China's political order and cultural traditions, resulting in public unrest and domestic instability throughout the PRC.⁶⁴⁹ While China is concerned with foreign influences penetrating its borders, it is equally worried about negative messages from within China disseminating throughout the world. Tales of human rights abuses, government secrecy, and domestic turmoil (as seen with the Chinese military crackdown on Tibetan protests in March of 2008) weaken China's desired image as a responsible, peaceful, status-quo power. Failure to preserve this appearance threatens Chinese national interests by fuelling the China-threat theory, which subsequently deteriorates Chinese commercial relations and incites the U.S. to adopt hostile policies against the PRC.

Beijing also regards multilateralism as a double-edged sword capable of jeopardizing Chinese sovereignty and security. Chinese leaders view their nation's involvement in international organizations as an effective way to alter the world's status-quo, benefit from economic globalization, and promote itself as a responsible, cooperative power. This participation, however, means that it must abide by international norms and regulations that Western powers have already established to promote their own interests and that may undermine Chinese sovereignty and political objectives.⁶⁵⁰ These rules may not only counter the domestic political messages promulgated by the PRC, but they also bind Chinese foreign and domestic behaviour to a certain standard that it cannot violate without harming both its cooperative image and membership status. China is therefore just as prone to being restricted by multilateral organizations as the United States, and indeed American leaders, particularly of the liberal variety, do attempt

⁶⁴⁸ Zhang "Self-Identity Construction of the Present China" 287.

⁶⁴⁹ Yu "Globalization and Autonomy in China"

⁶⁵⁰ Yu "Globalization and Autonomy in China"

to use these international bodies to such an end.⁶⁵¹ Other foreign powers, such as the ASEAN states, are also actively attempting to entangle China in multilateral agreements with a so called “Gulliver strategy” to restrict its ability or desire to adopt malicious foreign policies.⁶⁵²

The recognition by the PRC leadership of globalization’s ability to threaten national sovereignty and interests demonstrates a broadening of the Chinese realpolitik conception of national security. With globalization mitigating power politics and redefining national power into CNP, Chinese analysts must now view national security in a comprehensive manner that includes non-military threats from economic, cultural, and diplomatic sources.

Summary

China, despite its ominous, strategic views of the American unipolar world order, perceives a strategic opportunity through globalization to implement a dualistic strategy that advances its national aims in a safe and prudent manner. The globalized dynamics of the interstate system pacify traditional power politics through economic interdependence and multilateralism. The ability of these liberalist values to promote peaceful international relations has altered the definition of national power to include non-military factors. This transformation offers Chinese realists an opportunity to advance their goals of challenging the U.S. hegemony and status-quo while maintaining the cooperative and benign image that it needs to continue its economic development. PRC officials conceptualize this contrastive strategy through the war of comprehensive national power, where internationally accepted practices allow China to alter the unipolar world and constrain American behaviour while still appearing as a status-quo power.

This opportunity allows China to satisfy national concerns stemming from its strategic culture, use of pragmatic nationalism, and threatening realist-inspired perceptions of American pre-eminence. According to China’s traditional realpolitik, *quan*

⁶⁵¹ Gries “China Eyes the Hegemon” 408.

⁶⁵² Robert G. Sutter, “China’s Rise: Implications for U.S. leadership in Asia,” East-West Centre Washington (2006): 27-28. 22 April, 2007
<<http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/stored/pdfs/PS021.pdf>>

bian decision axiom and its current realist mindset, the PRC needs to avoid conflict with the U.S. while simultaneously advancing its power relative to the hegemon. Its use of pragmatic nationalism further encourages China to maintain peaceful and cooperative relations with America and other great powers to continue its economic growth. Popular nationalism, however, pressures China to maintain this economic development while also adopting an assertive and antagonistic posture against America and other Western powers. Finally, its threat perceptions of the U.S., which derive predominately from realism, encourage China to protect itself from aggressive, hegemonic behaviour. The current strategic opportunity that Chinese elites perceive through globalization and its war of comprehensive national power provides China with the means to address all of these issues. By using the internationally accepted practices found in the CNP's non-military domains, China can deteriorate American power and therefore placate its strategic cultural, nationalistic, and realist demands. Since this strategy allows the PRC to maintain its peaceful and status-quo image, China can also weaken the China-threat theory and placate the fears of the international community towards its rise. This helps bolster the myth of China's traditional benevolence and preserve the commercial relations of the PRC with the U.S. and other regional powers, the latter of which is essential in maintaining the economic growth necessary to preserve the authority of the CCP.

This strategic opportunity, however, does not ensure that China will behave as a typical status-quo power, even if such behaviour does facilitate its war of CNP. Chinese elites view globalization as much as a security threat to its sovereignty as it is an opportunity to advance its interest. The globalized dynamics of the current interstate system and the rise of CNP jeopardize Chinese sovereignty by restricting its ability to protect its domestic affairs from foreign influence. Therefore, China still approaches status-quo behaviour, seen with its involvement in economic interdependence and multilateral institutes, with hesitation. Sometimes it may accept sacrificing sovereignty to facilitate its war of CNP while at other times the strategic costs of such behaviour may prove too great for China to tolerate. Furthermore, purely status-quo tactics in China's war of CNP cannot address all of the strategic concerns that the PRC leadership perceives in the U.S. unipolar world. As a result, China may behave as a typical status-quo and cooperative power one moment while at other times act as an antagonistic state that

implements overt revisionist and irresponsible Chinese foreign policies. The last chapter in this report will illustrate the effect of this contrastive mentality of the PRC leadership on the nation's external behaviour.

VI

THE EFFECT OF THE PRC'S DUALISTIC STRATEGIC MENTALITY ON CHINESE FOREIGN POLICIES

Introduction

The amalgamation of the three preceding contrastive and dualistic factors – including the Chinese strategic culture, the CCP's utilization of nationalism, and the ominous and opportunistic views of PRC elites towards the interstate system – create a dualistic strategic mentality amongst the PRC leadership. According to these factors, China must seek relative gains in power over the U.S., maintain its economic development and modernization, advance and defend its great power status, and undermine America's threatening hegemonic position. These factors create a Chinese strategic mindset that is generally antagonistic towards the U.S. hegemony and the status-quo norms and practices of the international community, yet is capable of adopting both status-quo and revisionist behaviour.

To address such contradictory motivations, China's strategic mentality adopts a proactive and pragmatic strategy to foreign affairs. This approach pragmatically weighs the costs and benefits of adopting status-quo or revisionist foreign policies against the advancement of Chinese national interests. Sometimes these pragmatic assessments encourage China to adopt peaceful and cooperative foreign policies, at the expense of its highly coveted sovereignty or various strategic interests, in a true reflection of China's intent to integrate into the international status-quo. In other situations, this pragmatism may encourage China to adopt benign and internationally-accepted practices, which may or may not violate its sovereignty and realist-inspired aims, to alter the international status-quo through its war of comprehensive national power. This allows China to preserve its cooperative image while achieving its revisionist and expansionistic aims. Finally, China's pragmatic assessments may determine that status-quo behaviour is

insufficient in addressing some of the various strategic concerns of the PRC. If these concerns outweigh the costs of damaging China's responsible and peaceful image, which includes a subsequent loss to its commercial relations, then Chinese elites are prepared to adopt overtly revisionist, uncooperative, and antagonistic foreign policies.

The following chapter will examine China's international, regional, and military behaviour and illustrate how China's external actions represent an ability to adopt status-quo, status-quo-yet-revisionist, and purely revisionist policies. In terms of its international behaviour, China has demonstrated its intent to integrate into the international status-quo and behave as a responsible power through its promulgation of the "peaceful rise" concept, embrace of the WTO, and relatively cooperative use of its position within the UNSC. Unfortunately, it is also demonstrated its uncooperativeness and antagonism towards the values and practices of the U.S. unipolar world through its relationships with international pariahs, including Myanmar, Iran, Sudan, and Zimbabwe. Regionally, Chinese behaviour demonstrates a desire to both cooperate and revise the international world order. The PRC earned a great amount of respect within Washington and other Asian capitals for its amicable approach to territorial disputes, the Asian financial crisis, the North Korean crisis, and the ASEAN organization. This conformist posture, however, contrasts with China's attempts to implement its war of CNP, where it actively seeks to undermine U.S. and NATO power and advance its influence in the southern and eastern regions of Asia through status-quo behaviour. Finally, China's military policies reflect a strong desire amongst Chinese elites to forcefully alter the international status-quo and expand Chinese influence within the Asian region. China's non-proliferation record, increased military diplomacy, and relatively modest military expenditures offer positive signs of status-quo behaviour. However, the aggressive and revisionist conduct of the Chinese military offsets any optimism regarding Chinese future intentions. Through its transfer of arms, lack of transparency, threatening actions by PLA naval vessels, clear preparations to attack Taiwanese and American forces, and apparent desires to project Chinese influence abroad, foreign analysts easily perceive China as a revisionist and menacing power.

The PRC's Two-Faced International Diplomacy

The international diplomatic behaviour of the PRC offers numerous examples of its benevolent intentions. The first such example stems from its vigorous promulgation of the “peaceful rise” concept. First articulated by Zheng Bijian, then Vice-President of the Central Party School of the CCP, to the Boao Forum for Asia in 2003, this concept of a peaceful rise publicly stated the PRC’s desire not to challenge the U.S. hegemonic position.⁶⁵³ The subsequent campaign to introduce this concept to the international community demonstrated both the fear of the China-threat theory amongst Chinese leaders and China’s departure from the old foreign policy strategy advocated by the late Deng Xiaoping. The former supreme ruler encouraged his successors to “observe developments soberly, maintain our position, meet challenges calmly, hide our capacities and bide our time, remain free of ambition, never claim leadership.”⁶⁵⁴ In general, it was a strategy of keeping a low profile; however, PRC elites now regard such passivity as ineffective in ameliorating fears of China’s rapid growth, especially since China’s power is unmistakable. As one Chinese scholar states, “We used to hide our power, deny our power. But then this became increasingly impossible as our strength increased. We had to find ways to reassure people, use power constructively, because our power became increasingly undeniable.”⁶⁵⁵ The peaceful rise campaign, which the PRC later rephrased as “peaceful development” for fear of threatening the international community, thus reflects the PRC’s adoption of a new proactive strategy to facilitate its economic and political interests by promoting itself as a responsible, cooperative power.

The pragmatic aspect of this proactive strategy is evident in China’s economic diplomacy through the WTO and its subsequent willingness to forego some of its highly coveted sovereignty. Globalization has created immense wealth for the PRC, with its GDP growing at an annual rate of 9.7% from 1978 to 2007, making it the world’s fourth-

⁶⁵³ Yongnian Zheng, “China’s ‘Peaceful Rise’: Concept and Practice.” *China Policy Institute* (Nov. 2005): 6, 22 April. 2006

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/shared/shared_cpi/documents/discussion_papers/Discussion_Paper_1_China_Peaceful_Rise.pdf>

⁶⁵⁴ Foot “Chinese strategies in a US-hegemonic global order” 84.

⁶⁵⁵ Lampton, David. “The Faces of Chinese Power.” *Foreign Affairs* (Jan./Feb. 2007) : 119.

largest economy.⁶⁵⁶ Increased trade has allowed per capita consumption to grow by a multiple of 4.4 and 4 for urban and rural Chinese citizens, respectively, and cut the number of rural residents living in poverty from 250 million to 20 million between 1978 and 2008.⁶⁵⁷ Such amazing success has encouraged China's pragmatic leadership to relax limits on national sovereignty and immerse itself in the WTO, regardless of the fears caused by the Asian financial crisis and the knowledge that the U.S originally designed the institute to facilitate its global economic order.⁶⁵⁸

Since joining the organization in 2001, China "has steadfastly reformed its domestic trading system, making it more compatible with the WTO rules and norms," according to Lai-Han Chan.⁶⁵⁹ PRC concerns over sovereignty continue to remain an irritant in Sino-U.S. and Sino-European relations, as it encourages Chinese elites to protect their domestic industries and markets through subsidies, tax policies, capital registration, and other trade barriers.⁶⁶⁰ Despite these problems demonstrating China's continued adherence to realist values and perceptions, China has made tremendous steps in liberalizing its economy and abiding by international norms. China's entry into the WTO "...is the clearest signal yet that officially China embraces the extant free trade regime," in the words of Alastair Iain Johnston.⁶⁶¹ Ronald Keith further notes, "Free trade is no longer automatically antithetical to state sovereignty..." in the eyes of Chinese elites.⁶⁶² China's WTO entry is the largest liberalization package in the WTO's history, with its accession commitments leaving it with the lowest protection of any developing country in the world.⁶⁶³ It desired membership in the WTO so intently that it was willing to accept terms that China expert Nicholas Lardy described as "so onerous they violate

⁶⁵⁶ Song Zhe, "China-EU Relations and China's Current Developments and Policies," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Brussels. 16 May 2008. 25 June 2008
<<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zwjg/zwbdt/436212.htm>>

⁶⁵⁷ Zhe "China-EU Relations"

⁶⁵⁸ Gerald Chan, China's Compliance in Global Affairs: Trade, Arms Control, Environmental Protection, Human Rights (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2006) 80.

⁶⁵⁹ Lai-Han Chan, "Rethinking global governance: a China model in the making?" Contemporary Politics 14.1 (March 2008): 9.

⁶⁶⁰ Wei Liang, "China: Globalization and the Emergence of a New Status-quo Power?" Asian Perspective 31.4 (2007): 131.

⁶⁶¹ Johnston "Is China a Status-quo Power" 15.

⁶⁶² Keith "China as a Rising World Power" 522.

⁶⁶³ Liang "China: Globalization and the Emergence of a New Status-quo Power" 134.

fundamental WTO principles.”⁶⁶⁴ The PRC leadership has countenanced a reduction in its state sovereignty by accepting these rules for the sake of its economic growth and the ability to gain a voice in how the WTO governs economic processes. These actions have impressed the U.S. to the point that former Secretary of State Colin Powell commented: China “is no longer an enemy of capitalism.”⁶⁶⁵ In terms of its economic behaviour, China is increasingly behaving within internationally accepted, status-quo boundaries.

China has also furthered its image as a responsible state through its role in the United Nations. The PRC leadership has reversed its long-held objections to UN peacekeeping activities as an infringement on sovereign nation’s domestic affairs. While sovereignty issues remain a concern for Chinese elites, they realize that further objection to these UN activities will deteriorate the cooperative image of the PRC. Pragmatism therefore dictates that China supports such peacekeeping activities; in fact, the PRC now stations 1,600 military personnel in ten countries to partake in UN operations, which is greater than any other UNSC member and makes China the thirteenth-largest contributor of UN peacekeeping forces.⁶⁶⁶ Within the UNSC, China has traditionally kept a low profile in order to avoid appearing as a threat to the American world order. The PRC only used its veto power four times from 1972 to 2005, and most related to the Taiwan issue.⁶⁶⁷ This sharply contrasts with the USSR/Russia, which has used its veto power 120 times, and the United States, which has used its veto power 76 times.⁶⁶⁸

China has recently abandoned this inconspicuous strategy in favour of a more proactive approach in the UNSC to communicate its cooperative intentions to Washington. For example, it no longer abstains on critical votes and voted in support of UNSC Resolution 1441 calling for weapons inspections in Iraq in November 2002.⁶⁶⁹ According to David Gompert, this was only the second time since China joined the UN in 1971 that it supported a Chapter Seven Security Council resolution, which permits the use of force.⁶⁷⁰ China also supported the UNSC 1373 resolution calling for cooperation in

⁶⁶⁴ Liang “China: Globalization and the Emergence of a New Status-quo Power” 134.

⁶⁶⁵ Johnston “Is China a Status-quo Power” 16.

⁶⁶⁶ Dreyer “China’s Power and Will” 662.

⁶⁶⁷ Cui “The Bush Doctrine” 407.

⁶⁶⁸ Cui “The Bush Doctrine” 407.

⁶⁶⁹ Gompert “China on the Move” 30.

⁶⁷⁰ Gompert “China on the Move” 30-31.

tracking down financing for terrorists.⁶⁷¹ While China did oppose U.S. and British efforts to enforce UNSC resolutions in Iraq through military means, it refused entreaties from France and Germany to take the diplomatic lead in opposing the Iraq war.⁶⁷² Wang Jisi saw this decision as the result of a calculated recognition by Chinese elites that the PRC would pay too high a price for its opposition and therefore adapted its position to avoid further antagonizing the Bush administration.⁶⁷³

As China displays this cooperative international behaviour, its dualistic strategic mentality simultaneously encourages PRC leaders to embrace policies that Western states, most notably the U.S., view as irresponsible, confrontational, and revisionist. This contrastive approach to foreign relations is evident through Beijing's use of the UNSC as a tool to protect key allies that the international community regards as repressive, authoritarian pariahs for their frequent abuse of human rights and/or menace to regional security. One pariah with particularly close ties to China is Myanmar, a poor South Asian state ruled by a military dictatorship. As demonstrated with its violent military crackdown on protests in September 2007 - where Burmese security forces shot and killed multiple citizens, including monks and a Japanese journalist - Myanmar refuses to abide by international norms on human rights and governance. Its domestic oppression appals Western states, but its strategic usefulness to China provides it with considerable political capital in Beijing.

Myanmar is geo-economically valuable to the PRC. Its location offers China the opportunity to revive the "Burma Road" and use the repressive regime as a conduit to send its goods to the growing economies of Southeast Asia and India, and therefore help develop China's poor south-western provinces.⁶⁷⁴ This conduit would also have immense strategic value by offering China an overland alternative to the Straits of Malacca and the South China Sea to transport its vital energy requirements into, and Chinese goods out of, the PRC.⁶⁷⁵ By-passing the Straits of Malacca would greatly improve China's energy and

⁶⁷¹ Gompert "China on the Move" 30-31.

⁶⁷² Saunders "China's Global Activism" 6.

⁶⁷³ Gompert "China on the Move" 16.

⁶⁷⁴ Poon Kim Shee, "The Political Economy of China-Myanmar Relations: Strategic and Economic Dimensions," *Ritsumeikan Annual Review of International Studies* 1 (2002): 3. 02 May 2008 <<http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/acd/cg/ir/college/bulletin/e-voll/1-3shee.pdf>>

⁶⁷⁵ David Walgreen, "China in the Indian Ocean Region: Lessons in the PRC Grand Strategy," *Comparative Strategy* 25 (2006): 62.

economic security by preventing foreign powers from impeding shipping lanes carrying vital energy and commercial resources to the Chinese mainland. Finally, good relations with Myanmar may also offer the Chinese navy access to the Indian Ocean. This would allow China's navy to protect the energy supply lines originating from Africa and the Straits of Hormuz from possible Indian and American aggression. The possible use of Myanmar as a base for Chinese naval forces has led Beijing to finance and construct several naval facilities for the Burmese military designed specifically to accommodate vessels that Myanmar does not possess, but China does.⁶⁷⁶

Such strategic value outweighs the detrimental impact that China's support of the Burmese dictatorship has on the image of the PRC as a cooperative and responsible state. As a result, China vetoed a U.S.-led UNSC resolution in 2007 demanding an end to the political repression and human-rights violations throughout Myanmar, despite the proposal receiving the support of nine out of the 12 UNSC members.⁶⁷⁷ While global criticism may eventually force China to adopt a more critical stance towards Rangoon, its realpolitik assessment of Sino-Myanmar relations will, for the time being, encourage a cordial approach to the dictatorship that is at odds with the international status-quo.

The PRC is adopting a similarly revisionist stance towards the government of Iran. This state is not only a violator of human rights, but it is also suspected of developing nuclear weaponry, a particularly inflammatory suspicion considering Tehran's malevolent rhetoric towards the U.S. and its key Middle Eastern ally, Israel. The Islamic Republic, however, is also a key supplier of energy to the PRC, which Chinese leaders depend on to fuel their rapid economic growth. Trade between Iran and the PRC has spiked in recent years, increasing from \$1.2 billion in 1998 to \$10 billion in 2005,⁶⁷⁸ and the state now provides 13% of all Chinese foreign oil imports.⁶⁷⁹ In the spring of 2008, China additionally moved forward with part of a \$70-billion plan for the China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec) to develop Iran's Yadavaran oil field in exchange

⁶⁷⁶ Walgreen "China in the Indian Ocean Region" 62.

⁶⁷⁷ Edith M. Lederer, "China, Russia Veto Myanmar Resolution," *The Washington Post* 14 Jan. 2007, 20 Oct. 2007 <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/13/AR2007011300296.html>>

⁶⁷⁸ Matthew E. Chen, "Chinese National Oil Companies and Human Rights." *Orbis* (Winter 2007): 48.

⁶⁷⁹ Michael Piskur, "Iran's Nuclear Plans Complicate China's Energy Security," *Power and Interest News Report* 13 March 2006, 15 Dec. 2006 <http://www.pinr.com/report.php?ac=view_report&report_id=456&language_id=1>

for a 51% stake.⁶⁸⁰ This lucrative relationship explains the PRC's contradictory behaviour in the UN. While signing on to three UNSC resolutions designed to punish Iran for non-cooperation with its suspected nuclear program, Chinese leaders are keen to emasculate said resolutions by opposing sanctions against Tehran in favour of continued dialogue.⁶⁸¹ This approach allows China to appear less antagonistic towards U.S. efforts to resolve the nuclear issue, while maintaining the favour of the Iranian leadership.

Chinese foreign policies in Africa provide another example of the revisionist aspects of the PRC's international strategy. Some foreign observers view China as a positive force in Africa, as it provides a massive influx of wealth into poorly developed, impoverished states in return for African energy and raw material. In 2006, Sino-African trade reached \$55.5 billion, and the continent received \$6.64 billion from Chinese enterprises in direct investments.⁶⁸² The provision of such badly needed resources enticed Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University to describe China's role in Africa as "extraordinarily positive and important...[Beijing] has a pragmatic approach. It gives fewer lectures and more practical help. The overwhelming feeling from African leaders is gratitude toward Chinese support."⁶⁸³ Such optimism, however, is misplaced when put beside China's support of oppressive dictators and despots throughout Africa in its pragmatic search for energy resources. As Peter Takirambudde, head of the Africa division for Human Rights Watch, explains, "Wherever there are resources, the Chinese are going to go there...They see no evil. They hear no evil. That's very bad for Africans."⁶⁸⁴

Such irresponsible behaviour is most evident with China's relationship with the Sudanese government. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon calls Sudan's war-torn Darfur region the site of "the largest humanitarian crisis in the world," with over 200,000

⁶⁸⁰ Philip H. Gordon, "It Would Benefit Beijing to Be Tougher on Tehran," *The Brookings Institution* 09 July 2008. 11 July 2008 < http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0709_iran_gordon.aspx > ; Chen "Chinese National Oil Companies" 48.

⁶⁸¹ Gordon "It Would Benefit Beijing to Be Tougher on Tehran"

⁶⁸² "Chinese-African trade cooperation leaps to new high." *China Daily* 11 July 2007. 20 May 2008 < http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2007-11/07/content_6237952.htm >

⁶⁸³ Dreyer "China's Power and Will" 658.

⁶⁸⁴ Craig Timberg, "In Africa, China Trade Brings Growth, Unease," *Washington Post* 13 June 2006, 02 March 2008 < <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/06/12/AR2006061201506.html> >

killed and more than 2 million displaced by the fighting.⁶⁸⁵ In May 2007, President Bush called the Sudanese government's complicity in the bombing, murder, and rape of innocent civilians as genocide and stated how "the world has a responsibility to help put an end to it."⁶⁸⁶ Despite these egregious human rights violations, China has established an intimate relationship with Sudan due to the African nation's immense natural resources. The PRC is now the largest investor in Sudan's energy industry, amounting to at least \$3 billion, and receives 60% of all Sudanese oil exports.⁶⁸⁷ These economic interests in Sudan have caused Chinese leaders to resist efforts to resolve the Darfur conflict through the UN, especially through UN-peacekeeping operations, in an attempt to appease the Khartoum regime.⁶⁸⁸ The U.S. administration accuses China of both applying too little pressure to the Sudanese government to end the conflict and using its UNSC veto power to block sanctions against the African state.⁶⁸⁹ PRC officials have recently altered their position on Darfur due to mounting international criticism threatening to tarnish the Beijing Olympics in August 2008. China now provides modest pressure on Khartoum and no longer blocks UNSC resolutions authorizing peacekeepers to operate within Darfur.⁶⁹⁰ Such a change in policy offers a clear example of China's pragmatic assessments at work. Unfortunately, China continues to supply the Sudanese regime with Chinese-made weapons, which Sudan uses to carry out its genocidal campaign.

These examples demonstrate China's ability to both cooperate and challenge the U.S.-led world order. Washington is sincerely impressed with the economic liberalization and general adherence to economic international norms by the PRC. It is also pleased with some of Beijing's behaviour throughout the UN, whether that includes its contribution to UN peacekeeping operations, its formerly passive UNSC veto record, and

⁶⁸⁵ "Ban Ki-moon calls on African Union show unity of purpose in bringing peace to Darfur," UN News Centre 29 Jan. 2007, 16 Nov. 2007

<<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=21365&Cr=sudan&Cr1>>

⁶⁸⁶ George W. Bush, "Fighting Genocide in Darfur," The White House, Washington, 29 May 2007, 02 Feb. 2008 <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/05/20070529.html>>

⁶⁸⁷ Stephanie Hanson, "China, Africa, Oil," Council on Foreign Relations 6 June 2008, 20 June 2008 <<http://www.cfr.org/publication/9557/>>; Peter Brookes, "Into Africa: China's Grab for Influence and Oil," The Heritage Foundation 9 Feb. 2007, 04 Nov. 2007 <<http://www.heritage.org/research/africa/HL1006.CFM>>

⁶⁸⁸ Chen "Chinese National Oil Companies" 43.

⁶⁸⁹ Yitzhak Shichor, "China's Darfur Policy," China Brief 7.7 (5 April 2007): 5.

⁶⁹⁰ Hanson "China, Africa, Oil"

its desire to not overly confront the U.S. with its second war in Iraq. The American leadership, however, is concerned with the revisionist and irresponsible behaviour that China has demonstrated through its intimate relationships with international pariahs. In its quest to placate domestic nationalists through the maintenance of economic growth and acknowledge the strategic calculations of realists in Beijing, China has adopted foreign policies, most notably in Myanmar, Iran, and Sudan, which are antithetical to its image as a responsible, status-quo state.

Chinese Regional Diplomacy: A Good Neighbour Eager to Wage a War of CNP

China has vigorously promoted a “good neighbourliness” policy as part of its peaceful-rise/development campaign to cement its image as a responsible and cooperative power within the Asian region. Bolstering this image is the realization by Asian leaders that China has settled 17 out of 23 territorial disputes between 1949 and 2005, with the PRC accepting major compromises and receiving less than 50% of the disputed area.⁶⁹¹ Ongoing disputes remain with Japan, Taiwan, and several Southeast Asian countries over maritime territory in the East and South China Sea, and boundaries between India and China still haven’t been resolved. Although these disagreements remain a concern for all states involved, regional actors are impressed with China’s historic willingness to compromise on its territorial claims.

The generous response of the PRC to the Asian financial crisis in 1997-1998 further wooed the respect of Asian governments. Aside from viewing the crises as a demonstration of the disastrous potential of globalization, Chinese leaders also regarded the tumultuous period as an opportune moment for China to project itself as a cooperative and responsible power. In sharp contrast to the perceived American indifference to the spreading chaos, China proactively responded to the crisis by refusing to devalue the renminbi and pledging \$4 billion in low-interest loans and aid packages to all affected

⁶⁹¹ M. Taylor Fravel, “Regime Insecurity and International Cooperation: Explaining China’s Compromises in Territorial Disputes,” *International Security* 30.2 (Fall 2005): 46.

nations, with another \$2 billion offered to Thailand and Indonesia specifically.⁶⁹² Chen Quansheng and Liu Jinghua describe the PRC's decision not to devalue the renminbi as "grabbing with two hands." On one hand, China hoped the non-devaluation of the renminbi would demonstrate its economic power, while on the other hand it sought to impress its neighbours by demonstrating China's desire to act as a cooperative and benevolent state.⁶⁹³

The PRC is also playing a key role in mitigating the North Korean nuclear crisis. In late 2002 and 2003, the American administration sought China's assistance in encouraging North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons program. Despite trepidations regarding Washington's true desires on the Korean peninsula, Chinese officials eventually pressured Pyongyang into attending a trilateral meeting in Beijing between North Korean, American, and Chinese diplomats in April 2003.⁶⁹⁴ Following this meeting, China took an active role in hosting the six-party talks in August 2003, which additionally included Japan, Russia, and South Korea, and acted as a helpful mediator between North Korea and the U.S. The Bush administration was so impressed with Beijing's efforts that former Secretary of State Colin Powell described Sino-U.S. relations in 2003 as "the best they have been since President [Richard] Nixon's first visit" to China in 1972.⁶⁹⁵ China has continued this proactive approach to the six-party talks, especially following the North Korean detonation of a nuclear device in October of 2006, which embarrassed the PRC leadership and weakened its image as a responsible power. With North Korea now offering positive signals of its willingness to denuclearise, seen with its disabling of sensitive parts of the Yongbyon nuclear complex and the public destruction of its 60-foot cooling tower, China appears prone to become what former deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick called a "responsible stakeholder."⁶⁹⁶

Beijing also aims to placate the fears of Southeast Asian states by demonstrating its cooperative nature through active participation with ASEAN. Since 2002, China has deepened its relationship with ASEAN by signing key agreements, including the Joint

⁶⁹² Deng "China Views Globalization" 119; Kim "China's Path to Great Power Status" 63.

⁶⁹³ Kim "China's Path to Great Power Status" 63.

⁶⁹⁴ Bonnie Glaser, "North Korea: The Beginning of a China-U.S. Partnership?" *The Washington Quarterly* (Summer 2008): 169.

⁶⁹⁵ Glaser "North Korea" 170.

⁶⁹⁶ Sang-Hun Choe, "North Korea Destroys Tower at Nuclear Site," *The New York Times* 28 June 2008 03 July 2008 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/28/world/asia/28korea.html>>

Declaration on Cooperation in the Field of Nontraditional Security Issues, the Declaration on Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. The latter two agreements mark an “unprecedented step” for the PRC, according to David Shambaugh, as they formally commit Chinese leaders to abide by the ASEAN principles of non-aggression and non-interference.⁶⁹⁷ By signing these two documents, China renounces the use of violence to resolve both the maritime territorial disputes in the South China Sea and any other issue that may arise with ASEAN nations.⁶⁹⁸ Such Chinese diplomatic activity with ASEAN marks what David Shambaugh believes are “fundamental compromises that China has chosen to make in limiting its own sovereign interests for the sake of engagement in multilateral frameworks and pursuit of greater regional interdependence.”⁶⁹⁹

Despite these examples of Chinese benevolence, many foreign observers identify regional diplomatic manoeuvring by the PRC as indicative of its attempt to challenge and revise the international status-quo through its war of CNP. For example, foreign observers can interpret China’s above cooperation with ASEAN more as an indication of how Beijing has learnt to wield the double-edged sword of multilateralism in advancing its aims then as a true sign of its cooperative intentions. Chinese officials remain uncomfortable about sacrificing their sovereignty by participating in multilateral organizations and becoming entangled in their various rules, such as the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. However, these analysts and leaders now realize that giving up some of their sovereignty is a small price to pay for the ability to influence a major organization that can help create a regional environment amicable to Chinese interests. The preceding chapter discussed the numerous revisionist activities of China through ASEAN; however, the former chapter overlooked the use of socialization as an aspect of China’s war of CNP. The ASEAN states welcome Chinese engagement as a way to pursue their “Gulliver strategy” and socialize the PRC into accepting pre-existing norms. These states miss the fact that socialization can work both ways - a reality that China now accepts and exploits. For example, China has used its influence on ASEAN to restrict its members

⁶⁹⁷ David Shambaugh, “China Engages Asia: Reshaping the Regional Order,” *International Security* 29.3 (Winter 2004/05): 75.

⁶⁹⁸ Foot “Chinese strategies” 85-86.

⁶⁹⁹ Shambaugh “China Engages Asia” 76.

from interacting with Taiwan and supporting a two-China policy.⁷⁰⁰ By persistently promulgating this desire for ASEAN to ignore the island-state, and berating those countries that fail to meet Chinese expectations, the PRC has successfully implanted the norm of Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan. Foreign observers viewed this success with ASEAN's unequivocal endorsement of the one-China policy at the 2004 ASEAN summit.⁷⁰¹ While America also supports a one-China policy, which makes the above Chinese actions technically fall within status-quo behaviour, Washington leaders regard Taiwan's de facto independence as the norm. China therefore hopes to revise the status-quo position of Taiwan's unofficial independence through its war of CNP by socializing ASEAN states into distancing themselves from interacting with the island. By increasingly isolating the Taiwanese government, both politically and economically, Chinese elites hope to reaffirm their sovereignty over the island through non-revisionist behaviour.

China's articulation of the "new security concept" (NSC) in Asia further illustrates the Chinese war of CNP in the Asian region. First introduced at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1996, this concept is status-quo in the sense that it identifies the need to develop "mutual trust and ties of common interest" to promote genuine cooperative security.⁷⁰² However, NSC is predominately a revisionist theory aimed at confronting the American hegemonic rule and alliance system by calling for "equality" and the "democratization of international relations" (guoji guanxi de minzhuhua).⁷⁰³ According to China's Information Office of the State Council, the purpose of NSC is:

*...to conduct dialogue, consultation, and negotiation on an equal footing...to solve disputes and safeguard peace. Only by developing a new security concept and establishing a fair and reasonable new international order can world peace and security be fundamentally guaranteed.*⁷⁰⁴

Peter Hays Gries views such a public call to democratize and revise the international order as "...part of China's strategy of soft counterhegemony."⁷⁰⁵ The NSC called for an

⁷⁰⁰ Medeiros "Strategic Hedging" 156.

⁷⁰¹ Khoo "Correspondence" 204.

⁷⁰² Foot "Chinese strategies" 85.

⁷⁰³ Peter Hays Gries, "The Koguryo Controversy, National Identity, and Sino-Korean Relations Today," *East Asia* 22.4 (Winter 2005): 13.

⁷⁰⁴ Shambaugh "China Engages Asia" 69.

⁷⁰⁵ Gries "The Koguryo Controversy" 13.

end to America's multilateral and bilateral military alliances, including not only NATO but also U.S. defence pacts with Australia, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, and Thailand. China regards these military ties as unnecessary relics of the Cold War that undermine rather than enhance international security.⁷⁰⁶ Asian governments ultimately rejected the concept, which forced Beijing to tone down its rhetoric. Nevertheless, the NSC does represent an official articulation of the PRC's desire to democratize and alter the international order in order to limit the power of the United States and circumvent Washington's well-established alliance networks.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) represents the "spiritualization" of the new security concept, according to numerous Chinese scholars, and represents another conduit for China's war of CNP.⁷⁰⁷ This multilateral organization originates from the Shanghai Five, which was a multilateral organization consisting of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan that Beijing launched in 1996 to expand its influence in Central Asia.⁷⁰⁸ According to David Walgreen, its primary mission was to ensure Central Asian security while demonstrating a commitment to "encourage pluralism and discourage 'hegemonism.'"⁷⁰⁹

Renamed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001 after the inclusion of Uzbekistan, this organization promulgates a "Shanghai Spirit" that represents a model for a new world order of regional cooperation to Chinese elites. The Shanghai Spirit articulates how nations should form partnerships, not alliances, with one another in their pursuit of common interests that never target a third party and urges nations to solve security issues through mutual trust and negotiations.⁷¹⁰ One of the main goals of SCO, according to its website, is to help the world (or perhaps Asia) "...move towards the establishment of a new, democratic, just, and rational political and economic international

⁷⁰⁶ Shambaugh "China Engages Asia" 70.

⁷⁰⁷ Chien-peng Chung, "The Shanghai Co-operation Organization: China's Changing Influence in Central Asia," *The China Quarterly* (2004): 991.

⁷⁰⁸ Independent Task Force, "U.S.-China Relations: An Affirmative Agenda, A Responsible Course," *Council on Foreign Relations* (2007): 43, 05 Jan. 2008

<<http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/attachments/ChinaTaskForce.pdf>>

⁷⁰⁹ Walgreen "China in the Indian Ocean Region" 61.

⁷¹⁰ Chung "The Shanghai Co-operation Organization" 991.

order.”⁷¹¹ Chinese academic Ma Ying views the tenets of the Shanghai Spirit as a powerful force that:

*confronts ‘hegemonism’ and ‘power politics,’ respects the right of states to develop their politics, economics and society in the [sic] own way, opposes the use of humanitarian or human right excuses to interfere in states’ internal affairs, and supports the solidarity of SCO member states in their struggle to build a new ‘multi-polar’ international political and economic order.*⁷¹²

The United States is fully aware that these calls to democratize the international world order, and criticisms of alliances that target third parties, are a clear challenge to both American hegemonism and its intricate alliance systems.

While China uses the SCO to help safeguard its economic and energy interests in Central Asia and to protect its western provinces from terrorist and separatist activities, it also views the organization as a way to challenge U.S.-NATO encroachment in the area. Chinese officials are concerned with the increasing American presence in Central Asia, as it now has military bases in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan; the U.S. airbase in Kyrgyzstan is only 300 kilometres from the border with Xinjiang.⁷¹³ China fears that the proximity of these American and NATO forces will reduce its influence in the region, provide Washington with a greater ability to manipulate regional affairs in its favour, and threaten PRC security. In fact, Xing Guangcheng, a director at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, believes that Chinese officials are concerned that America and NATO members will use their position in Central Asia to undermine Chinese stability by secretly supporting nationalist separatist activities in Xinjiang.⁷¹⁴ PRC analysts also consider the American advances into Central Asia as part of a strategy to encircle and contain China.

Beijing therefore responded to the American-NATO invasion and occupation of Afghanistan by encouraging the SCO to enact a charter calling for all members to guard against power politics and unilateralism.⁷¹⁵ During President Jiang Zemin’s visit to Iran in 2002, the Chinese leader publicly opposed the stationing of American troops in Central Asia, and the SCO later issued a statement calling for a final timetable for the withdrawal

⁷¹¹ The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Brief Introduction to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, 01 April 2008 < <http://www.sectSCO.org/html/00026.html> >

⁷¹² Chung “The Shanghai Co-operation Organization” 992.

⁷¹³ J. Peter Pham, “Beijing’s Great Game: Understanding Chinese Strategy in Central Eurasia,” *American Foreign Policy Interests* 28 (2006): 64.

⁷¹⁴ Pham “Beijing’s Great Game” 64.

⁷¹⁵ Chung “The Shanghai Co-operation Organization” 994.

of U.S. troops from its members in 2005.⁷¹⁶ In an attempt to balance against NATO's improving relations with Central Asian states through initiatives like the Partnership for Peace program, China has held a number of joint military exercises under the aegis of the SCO.⁷¹⁷ One such exercise, dubbed "Peace Mission 2005," involved Russian and Chinese forces, with all other SCO members acting as observers. This exercise involved over 10,000 army, navy, and air force personnel and, as Moscow's *Pravda* newspaper explains, derived in part from the mutual unease between Russia and China over U.S. power in the region; such a motivation conflicts with the SCO's stance on not targeting a third party.⁷¹⁸ The SCO later followed this exercise with the "Peace Mission 2007" operation, where military forces from all SCO members took part in a mock attempt to take back a town from militants.⁷¹⁹

The above examples of Chinese regional behaviour aptly demonstrate the effect of China's dualistic strategic mentality on the foreign policies of the PRC. On one hand, Chinese officials are intent on demonstrating their ability to behave as a cooperative, status-quo nation; while on the other hand, they are willing to challenge the established structure, values, and norms of the world order, albeit through peaceful and status-quo means. The vigorous and cooperative diplomacy of Chinese officials have bolstered the image of China as a responsible power eager to become a positive force for peace in Asia. Its ability to peacefully resolve most of its territorial disputes, generous response to the Asian Financial Crisis, impressive mediation of the North Korean crisis, and cooperative relationship with ASEAN has successfully ameliorated the China-threat theory amongst neighbouring states. This cooperative image, however, contrasts with numerous examples of China maintaining a position that is antagonistic and revisionist towards the U.S. and its interstate system. Such threatening views of China derive from its promulgation of the new security concept, and its confrontational use of ASEAN and the SCO. All of these cases demonstrate the PRC's desire to balance between a cooperative and aggressive foreign policy that simultaneously accepts and challenges both America and the current status-quo of the world order.

⁷¹⁶ Wang "China's Grand Strategy and U.S. Primacy" 25.

⁷¹⁷ Pham "Beijing's Great Game" 64.

⁷¹⁸ Pham "Beijing's Great Game" 64.

⁷¹⁹ Adam Wolfe, "Peace Mission 2007 and the S.C.O. Summit," *Power and Interest News Report* 10 Aug. 2007, 08 Dec. 2007 < http://www.pinr.com/report.php?ac=view_report&report_id=672&language_id=1 >

Chinese Military Policies – Clearly Revisionist

An observation of China's military policies offers some promising signs that the PRC leadership is sincere in becoming a cooperative member of the current interstate system; however, the U.S. and its allies will mostly view its military actions with great apprehension. On the positive side, China has drastically improved its approach to international non-proliferation and arms control initiatives since the 1990s. No longer does China regard such foreign agreements and accords as a foreign attempt to constrain the regional and global influence of the PRC and undermine its global business activities.⁷²⁰ Instead, the Chinese leadership now immerses itself in 16 of the world's 22 international organizations, treaties, agreements, and export-control regimes on non-proliferation, as well as numerous bilateral non-proliferation commitments.⁷²¹ These include the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, and the Zangger Committee; China additionally agreed to abide by the guidelines of the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Australia Group.⁷²² The Chinese government has also passed a series of laws on export controls to strengthen its non-proliferation policy; its 2003 Non-proliferation White Paper, for example, moves China's official position on non-proliferation very close to that of the West.⁷²³ The PRC continues to provide sensitive dual-use assistance to countries like Pakistan and Iran; however, its "non-proliferation practices have substantially improved" in recent years, according to David Gompert.⁷²⁴ In her statement before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, Patricia McNerney commented, "In many ways, [China] has demonstrated its interest in becoming a responsible non-proliferation partner."⁷²⁵

⁷²⁰ Gompert "China on the Move" 31.

⁷²¹ Pei "Assertive Pragmatism" 19.

⁷²² Gompert "China on the Move" 31.

⁷²³ Pei "Assertive Pragmatism" 19.

⁷²⁴ Gompert "China on the Move" 31.

⁷²⁵ Patricia McNerney, "China's Nonproliferation Practices," U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, Washington, 20 May 2008, 02 June 2008 <<http://www.state.gov/t/isn/rls/rm/105084.htm>>

China also signed a number of non-armament agreements, such as the Outer Space Treaty, the Seabed Arms Control Treaty, and the Antarctic Treaty.⁷²⁶ One of the most constraining agreements signed by the PRC was the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), as it limits China's ability to modernize the warhead designs of its nuclear weapons.⁷²⁷ The PRC leadership decided to join the CTBT despite internal protests from PLA and Chinese military analysts that the treaty would undermine PLA capabilities and "...potentially lock China into a position of strategic inferiority."⁷²⁸ According to William Chang, this decision stemmed from pragmatically weighing the costs to China's military - and therefore its strategic interests - against the benefit of maintaining its responsible image. In the end, China decided that the protection of its military prowess was not sufficient to warrant the damage to the nation's responsible, cooperative, great power image that would occur with a rejection of the treaty. As outlined in a statement from Ambassador Sha Zukang, China's chief arms controller in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, following the signing of the treaty: "China's international stature and image as a responsible great power were at stake, and that China's political and diplomatic manoeuvrability and progress demanded a constructive position on the CTBT. Supporting the CTBT would support China's great power image."⁷²⁹

Further signs of Chinese cooperative military behaviour lie in the PRC's vigorous military diplomacy in recent years. From 2002 to 2004, the PLA sent high-level military delegations to over 60 countries and played host to over 130 delegations of military leaders from over 70 countries.⁷³⁰ The most high-profile example of these was Defence Minister General Cao Gangchuan's 5-state visit to North Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, and South Korea in April 2006. Beijing used General Cao's tour to promulgate the peaceful nature and benign future intentions of the PRC, which helps "keep the backyard in order," according to one senior Chinese diplomat.⁷³¹

⁷²⁶ Chang "China and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Negotiations" 40.

⁷²⁷ Johnston "Is China a Status-quo Power" 18.

⁷²⁸ Chang "China and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Negotiations" 40.

⁷²⁹ Chang "China and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Negotiations" 40.

⁷³⁰ People's Republic of China. State Council Information Office. China's National Defence 2004. Beijing : People's Republic of China, Dec. 2004. 14 Oct. 2007 < <http://www.china.org.cn/white/20041227/index.htm> >

⁷³¹ You Ji, "China's Enhanced Military Diplomacy: General Cao's Asian Tour," China Brief 6.9 (26 April 2006): 4.

Finally, it is important to note that the international fears surrounding the amount of investments the PRC government is putting into its military may prove unwarranted upon closer analysis. Since 1989, the Chinese military budget has risen by double-digit amounts every year except 2003 (where it still rose by 9.6%).⁷³² In March 2008, Beijing announced that its military expenditures would increase by 17.6%, amounting to \$59 billion allocated to the Chinese armed services for the year. It is not surprising that numerous Western scholars and government leaders would view this massive increase with apprehension. Responding to the growth of Chinese military investments, Donald Rumsfeld stated, “Since no nation threatens China, one must wonder: why this growing investment? Why these continuing large and expanding arms purchases;” the underlying implication being that China has malignant intentions for the future.⁷³³ June Teufel Dreyer reiterated these concerns by stating, “Since no foreign power showed interest in invading the PRC, the country faced no external threat that would justify these costs.”⁷³⁴

These military figures, however, are deceptive. Despite the massive increases in China’s military expenditures, its defence spending as a proportion of overall government spending has remained constant at roughly 8% over the past 15 years, according to M. Taylor Fravel.⁷³⁵ Data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute’s 2008 Yearbook cites the rapid economic growth of China as easily offsetting the rising military expenditures, as they only amount to 2.1% of China’s GDP.⁷³⁶ The PRC refutes this statistic and believes the amount is even lower, at 1.4%.⁷³⁷ Such moderate statistics allow foreign observers to view Chinese military expenditures in a far-less-threatening manner, especially when compared to the expenditures of other status-quo powers. Britain, for example, spends 2.4% of its GDP on its armed services, while America allocates 4% of its GDP to its military.⁷³⁸ China’s moderate military expenditures, when compared to its GDP, are in stark contrast to the former USSR, which invested 20% of its GDP on

⁷³² Dreyer “China’s Power and Will” 652.

⁷³³ Klare “Revvng up the China-threat”

⁷³⁴ Dreyer “China’s Power and Will” 652.

⁷³⁵ M. Taylor Fravel, “China’s Search for Military Power,” *The Washington Quarterly* (Summer 2008): 137.

⁷³⁶ Petter Stalenheim, “SIPRI Yearbook 2008: Armaments, Disarmaments, And International Security,” *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute* (2008). 04 July 2008 < <http://yearbook2008.sipri.org/05> >

⁷³⁷ “Q&A: China’s Military Budget,” *BBC News* 4 March 2008, 12 April 2008 < <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7277382.stm> >

⁷³⁸ “Q&A: China’s Military Budget” *BBC News*

defence.⁷³⁹ This kind of direct military balancing against the United States is highly undesirable to the PRC leadership, as it would divert much-needed financing away from China's economy and incite possibly disastrous counterbalancing efforts on the part of the U.S. and its allies.⁷⁴⁰

Aside from these examples of China adopting a cooperative and peaceful approach to the current interstate system, the majority of Chinese military policies and behaviour reflect an overtly revisionist and militant posture by the PRC leadership that is out of line with internationally acceptable behaviour. One instance of this irresponsible and/or confrontational attitude of the PRC lies in its transfer of weapons to states that America deems capable of threatening regional stability, including Cuba, Myanmar, Sudan, and Syria. Chinese arms shipments to Iran are of particular concern to Washington analysts. According to Patricia McNerney's testimony before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, Chinese companies continue to sell conventional military equipment to Iran, which then sends them to Shia militants in Iraq and Hezbollah terrorists in Lebanon.⁷⁴¹ She supports her statement by discussing a 2004 incident where a Misagh-1 shoulder-launched, surface-to-air missile was used in Iraq (which had Chinese components) and a 2006 case where Hezbollah terrorists fired a Chinese C-802 anti-ship cruise missile at an Israeli navy vessel, killing four sailors.⁷⁴² John J. Tkacik Jr., of the Heritage Foundation, concurs with her statements. He quotes a knowledgeable Bush administration official as saying that the Iranian Revolutionary Guard has transferred "vast amounts" of Chinese-made, large-calibre sniper rifles, "millions of rounds" of ammunition, rocket-propelled grenades, and "IED [improvised explosive device] components" into Iraq and to Taliban fighters in Afghanistan.⁷⁴³ Other U.S. officials have commented on the Chinese involvement in arms transfers to Iraqi and Afghan insurgents. U.S. Admiral Marx Fox told reporters in July 2007: "We have seen ordnance and weapons that come from other places, but we assess that they come through Iran. There are missiles that are actually manufactured in China that we assess come

⁷³⁹ Wang "China's Grand Strategy and U.S. Primacy" 18.

⁷⁴⁰ Wang "China's Grand Strategy and U.S. Primacy" 18.

⁷⁴¹ McNerney "China's Nonproliferation Practices"

⁷⁴² McNerney "China's Nonproliferation Practices"

⁷⁴³ John J. Jr. Tkacik, "The Arsenal of the Iraq Insurgency: It's made in China," The Weekly Standard 12.45 (13 Aug. 2007). 17 Jan. 2008

<<http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/013/956wspet.asp>>

through Iran as well.”⁷⁴⁴ Richard Lawless, the U.S. Deputy Undersecretary of Defence, also told the *Financial Times* in July 2007 that the U.S. is becoming increasingly alarmed by the use of Chinese armour-piercing ammunition by Taliban and Iraqi insurgents.⁷⁴⁵

There is an ongoing debate in Washington whether China is purposefully allowing its companies to sell arms to Iran, or whether they are acting on their own accord. According to Patricia McNerney’s statement before the Congressional Review Commission, it is difficult to determine the level of involvement in Chinese arms transfers due to the lack of transparency in the PRC decision-making apparatus and the level of decentralization in the Chinese economy. In her words, “We simply do not know enough about China’s export control regime, and cannot assess the level of control or awareness that Chinese officials have over increasingly free-wheeling companies....”⁷⁴⁶ John Tkacik Jr., however, believes that China is complicit in the arms transfers and views its exports as part of an insidious strategy to weaken U.S. power. This claim stems from a 2004 quote by Wang Jisi, who is Beijing’s top American analyst: “The facts have proven that it is beneficial for our international environment to have the United States militarily and diplomatically deeply sunk in the Mideast to the extent that it can hardly extricate itself.”⁷⁴⁷ Regardless of whether the PRC leadership is complicit in these arms transfers, the fact that its companies do provide equipment to militants, either directly or indirectly, provides a clear example of China’s irresponsible and/or overtly revisionist behaviour.

The lack of transparency over Chinese military expenditures is another issue that demonstrates China’s contrastive strategic mentality. Many foreign experts believe that China drastically understates its military expenditures in official statements, and that the PRC’s actual defence spending is at least two-to-three times greater than its official claims. In 2006, for example, China’s official estimates on military spending were between \$30 billion to \$35 billion dollars, but most independent analysts put the real

⁷⁴⁴ The Associated Press, “China denies reports that its missiles have ended up in Iraq,” *International Herald Tribune* 26 July 2007, 17 Jan. 2008 <<http://www.ihf.com/articles/ap/2007/07/26/asia/AS-GEN-China-Iraq-Missiles.php>>

⁷⁴⁵ Tkacik “The Arsenal of the Iraq Insurgency”; Demetri Sevastopuloin, “US takes China to task over Iraq and Afghan arms,” *Financial Times* 9 July 2007, 17 Jan. 2008 <<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/a4e0f544-2df3-11dc-821c-0000779fd2ac.html>>

⁷⁴⁶ McNerney “China’s Nonproliferation Practices.”

⁷⁴⁷ Tkacik “The Arsenal of the Iraq Insurgency.”

figure at \$50 billion to \$65 billion dollars.⁷⁴⁸ The Pentagon placed this value even higher, stating that it ranged between \$70 billion to \$105 billion per year. This happened again in 2008, where China placed its military expenditures at \$59 billion (\$57.299 billion according to the *China Daily*), but the U.S. Defence Department estimated the true figure to be between \$97 billion and \$139 billion.⁷⁴⁹ This figure is still dwarfed by America's own military expenditures; if we accept the Pentagon's high estimate of \$139 billion, then China still spends less on its entire military than the U.S. does on its navy (\$147 billion in 2007).⁷⁵⁰ What is a concern, however, is that China intends to disguise its growing coercive strength behind a façade of passivity by purposefully underestimating its true military expenditures. If actual Chinese military spending is simply a reflection of a growing Chinese economy, then why hide this statistic from the world? While there are various explanations for this behaviour, the fact remains that this lack of transparency leaves regional states, especially the U.S., dwelling on worst-case scenarios, especially in light of its surreptitious strategic culture.

The provocative actions of Chinese naval vessels are another demonstration of China's ability to behave as an antagonistic and threatening power. Despite its attempts to assert sovereignty over the disputed territory in the SCS through peaceful means, China has demonstrated its willingness to use force in protecting its claims. For example, in July 2007, Chinese naval vessels killed a Vietnamese sailor after a Vietnamese fishing boat entered disputed waters near the Paracel Islands.⁷⁵¹ According to Professor Carlyle Thayer of the Australian Defence Force Academy, "These Chinese actions are part of a general posture of staking out territorial claims and curtailing encroachment by Vietnamese fishermen...Vietnamese naval officers say that Chinese vessels have been adopting an intimidating posture for some time now."⁷⁵² This bellicose behaviour is also evident in China's approach to the disputed territory in the East China Sea. In November

⁷⁴⁸ Esther Pan, "The Scope of China's Military Threat," *Council on Foreign Relations* 2 June 2006. 20 Nov. 2007 < <http://www.cfr.org/publication/10824/>>

⁷⁴⁹ United States *Military Power of the People's Republic of China* 2008. 32.

⁷⁵⁰ Fravel "China's Search for Military Power" 137.

⁷⁵¹ Andrew Symon, "China, Vietnam churn diplomatic waters," *Asia Times* 20 Dec. 2007, 04 May 2008 <<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/IL20Ad01.html>>

⁷⁵² Roger Mitton, "Vietnam, China clash again over Spratlys –Chinese Navy Fires at Vietnamese Fishing Boats in Oil-Rich Region," *The Strait Times* 19 July 2007, 03 June 2008 <<http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/chinainstitute/nav03.cfm?nav03=62952&nav02=58211&nav01=57272>>

2004, the Japanese navy discovered a Chinese submarine infiltrating Japanese waters near the Sakishima islands, which is 75 miles south of the disputed Senkaku islands.⁷⁵³ The discovery prompted Japan to place its navy at its highest alert levels since the end of World War 2, chase the submarine back into Chinese waters, and demand an apology from Beijing.⁷⁵⁴ Nearly a year later, on September 9 2005, China deployed five warships to the disputed Chunxaio oil field in the East China Sea, with one Chinese destroyer aiming its weapons at an investigating Japanese surveillance aircraft.⁷⁵⁵

Chinese military relations with America also took a massive blow in October 2006. On the 27th of that month, a *Song*-class Chinese submarine surfaced within torpedo range of the U.S.S. *Kitty Hawk* aircraft carrier. State-controlled media reports in China stated that Rear Admiral Ding Yiping personally commanded the submarine in an attempt to test the vulnerability of U.S. aircraft carriers to Chinese submarine operations.⁷⁵⁶ Following the encounter, U.S. Admiral William Fallon warned that such a threatening act “could have escalated into something that was very unforeseen.”⁷⁵⁷ Vietnamese, Japanese, and American military analysts perceive these aggressive acts as highly ominous to regional stability and counterproductive to China’s image as a supposed status-quo, cooperative nation.

Perhaps the greatest example of the PRC’s military policy reflecting a revisionist and aggressive Chinese stance against the U.S. and its world order is the fact that China has organized its military specifically to defeat American forces in a Taiwan crisis. Taiwan currently enjoys de facto independence from the PRC and any plans to alter that status-quo by force are fundamentally revisionist, especially when it involves engaging and defeating American military forces. Beijing has seen a slight improvement in cross-strait relations in 2008, with the defeat of the pro-independence Taiwanese administration

⁷⁵³ “Japan protests to China over sub,” BBC News 12 Nov. 2004, 24 March 2007
<<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4005533.stm>>

⁷⁵⁴ James E. Fanell, “Big Trouble on the High Seas,” Hoover Digest 3 (Summer 2006), 02 Nov. 2007
<<http://www.hoover.org/publications/digest/4635601.html>> ; “Japan protests to China over sub” BBC News

⁷⁵⁵ Chietigj Bajpae, “The Emerging Cold War on Asia’s High Seas,” Power and Interest News Report 13 Feb. 2006. 14 May 2007 <http://www.pnr.com/report.php?ac=view_report&report_id=439>

⁷⁵⁶ Tkacik “China’s Quest for a Superpower Military” 9-10.

⁷⁵⁷ Tim Shipman, “April 1st – Sunday Telegraph – China is accused of fuelling Pacific arms race,” The International Institute of Strategic Studies 01 April 2007, 21 Feb. 2008 <<http://www.iiss.org/whats-new/iiss-in-the-press/press-coverage-2007/april-2007/china-is-accused-of-fuelling-arms-race/>>

of Chen Shui-bian in March and the opening of regular charter flights from the PRC to Taiwan on July 4th. Chinese officials, however, realize that their goal of national unification remains elusive, and they continue to maintain their policy of retaking the island by force if diplomacy fails. With nationalist sentiment growing in China - as seen with the Chinese uproar over the foreign criticism surrounding the Tibetan protests in March 2008 - the PRC government is aware that nationalists may lose patience with the diplomatic process and pressure them to act. The Chinese government views the preservation of its authoritarian rule as the greatest objective of the PRC; its survival outweighs maintaining economic growth and even engaging the United States in war. Therefore, if nationalistic rancour over Taiwan reaches a point that significantly threatens the authority of the CCP, then Chinese leaders will attack Taiwanese and American forces to take back the island.

The PLA leadership has devised an asymmetric strategy to defeat technologically superior American forces in a Taiwan stand-off by exploiting the vulnerabilities of U.S. power. After observing the performance of the American military in the 1991 Gulf War and the NATO Kosovo campaign, China devised a military doctrine for fighting “high-technology local wars.”⁷⁵⁸ This doctrine recognizes that a war with a post-industrial power, such as the U.S., will involve the opponent attempting to achieve near-total battlefield awareness, through heavy reconnaissance and communications systems. The opponent will also rely on long-range and precise weapons systems. The heart of the opponent’s strategy will depend on the use of information technology, which is pivotal for this new age of warfare. According to one Chinese general:

*Information equipment of all kinds is linked into wide-ranging networks, forming huge information systems with C4ISR [Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance] systems at their core, becoming the nerve centre of a modern armed force.*⁷⁵⁹

Chinese PLA analysts recognize the American C4ISR systems as one of the U.S. military’s greatest vulnerabilities and believe that attacks against them will allow a

⁷⁵⁸ Roger Cliff, “Entering the Dragon’s Lair: Chinese Antiaccess Strategies and Their Implications for the United States,” *RAND Corporation* (2007): 21. 03 March 2008
<http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2007/RAND_MG524.pdf>

⁷⁵⁹ Cliff “Entering the Dragon’s Lair” 22-23.

relatively weak Chinese military to defeat a technologically superior U.S. force during a crisis over Taiwan.

PLA efforts to develop capabilities to attack space-based C4ISR systems demonstrate this new Chinese military position. According to the Pentagon's 2008 annual report to Congress on the military power of the PRC, writings from numerous PLA analysts emphasize the necessity of "destroying, damaging, and interfering with the enemy's reconnaissance/observation and communications satellites" in order to "blind and deafen the enemy...."⁷⁶⁰ A prime example of this developing capability came on January 11 2007 when the Chinese military successfully conducted an anti-satellite (ASAT) operation by destroying one of its old weather satellites with a ballistic missile carrying a "kinetic kill vehicle."⁷⁶¹ This operation shocked leaders in Washington, as it demonstrated China's ability to attack satellites that America uses to achieve battlefield awareness, co-ordinate forces, and launch high-precision weaponry. Western states viewed this operation not only as irresponsible - since the debris from the collision may damage commercial satellites and threaten astronauts - but also as antagonistic and threatening. Gordon Johndroe, spokesman for the U.S. National Security Council, responded to the test with the following statement:

*The U.S. believes China's development and testing of such weapons is inconsistent with the spirit of cooperation that both countries aspire to in the civil space area. We and other countries [such as Canada, and Australia] have expressed our concern regarding this action to the Chinese.*⁷⁶²

In addition to Chinese "kinetic kill vehicles," the Pentagon also believes that China is developing kinetic and directed-energy (e.g., lasers and radio frequency) weapons to further augment its ASAT capabilities.⁷⁶³ Gary Payton, a senior Pentagon official, told *The Economist* that China routinely turns powerful lasers skywards in a demonstration of their ability to dazzle or blind U.S. satellites. "They let us see their lasers. It is as if they

⁷⁶⁰ United States. Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008 19.

⁷⁶¹ Giuseppe Anzera, "China's ASAT Test and its Impact on the United States," Power and Interest News Report 29 Jan. 2007. 22 March 2008

<http://www.pinr.com/report.php?ac=view_report&report_id=609&language_id=1>

⁷⁶² "Chinese anti-satellite test sparks concern," MSNBC 18 Jan. 2007, 20 March 2008

<<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16689558/>>

⁷⁶³ United States Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008 28.

are trying to intimidate us...space is no longer a sanctuary; it is a contested domain," he explains.⁷⁶⁴

Cyber-warfare is another tactic that Chinese leaders believe will undermine U.S. C4ISR systems and enhance their chances of victory in a Sino-U.S. war; in fact, some Chinese scholars refer to computer network attacks as "one of the most effective ways for weak militaries to fight strong militaries."⁷⁶⁵ Computer-based attacks are useful in disrupting the ground-based infrastructure for American satellites and command and control systems. Additionally, they also allow the PRC to steal military information from rich nations and therefore narrow the technological gap between the PRC and America, thus greatly facilitating China's self-strengthening reforms. In his March 2007 testimony before the U.S. Congress, U.S. Strategic Command Chief General James Cartwright stated, "America is under widespread attack on cyberspace."⁷⁶⁶ The U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission also reported in November, "Chinese military strategists have embraced...cyber-attacks" as a weapon in their military arsenal.⁷⁶⁷ These forms of assaults include hacker attacks, information pollution, virus attacks, information harassment, and surveillance methods.⁷⁶⁸ Data from the Department of Homeland Security indicates that these assaults occur with alarming regularity. In 2007, the department received reports of 12,986 direct computer-based assaults on federal agencies and more than 80,000 attempted attacks on Department of Defence computer network systems.⁷⁶⁹ One of the most brazen examples of cyber-attacks occurred in June 2007 when, according to the Financial Times, Chinese hackers broke into a Pentagon network that serves the Office of the Secretary of Defence and briefly shut it down.⁷⁷⁰

⁷⁶⁴ "Disharmony in the spheres." The Economist 17 Jan. 2008 : 26.

⁷⁶⁵ Cliff "Entering the Dragon's Lair" 54.

⁷⁶⁶ John J. Jr. Tkacik, "Trojan Dragons: China's International Cyber Warriors," The Heritage Foundation 12 Dec. 2007. 17 March 2008
<http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/upload/wm_1735.pdf>

⁷⁶⁷ Shane Harris, "Chinese Hackers Pose a Clear and Present Danger to U.S. Government and Private-Sector Computer Networks and May Be Responsible For Two Major U.S. Power Blackouts," National Journal Magazine 31 May 2008, 02 July 2008
<http://www.nationaljournal.com/njmagazine/cs_20080531_6948.php>

⁷⁶⁸ Cliff "Entering the Dragon's Lair" 54.

⁷⁶⁹ Tkacik "Trojan Dragons"

⁷⁷⁰ Greg Bruno, "Backgrounder: The Evolution of Cyber Warfare," The New York Times 27 Feb. 2008, 22 March 2008 < http://www.nytimes.com/cfr/world/slot1_20080227.html?pagewanted=print>

While it is difficult to discern the origin of these cyber-attacks, many victims, such as the U.S. Defence Department, view China as the main suspect. Germany, another target of Chinese cyber-warfare, has even publicly criticized Beijing for its aggressive behaviour. Hans Elmar Remberg, Vice President of Germany's domestic intelligence agency, openly accused China of sponsoring computer network intrusions "almost daily," and stated, "Across the world the PRC is intensively gathering political, military, corporate-strategic, and scientific information in order to bridge their [sic] technological gaps as quickly as possible."⁷⁷¹

Cyber-warfare can also cause serious damage to civilian infrastructures, which China may target in order to weaken American morale and cripple the U.S. economy during an outbreak of war. By utilizing computer network attacks, Chinese agents could theoretically hack into the control systems of the American power-grid and damage the network so badly that it would take months to repair, according to leading experts. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security acknowledges this threat after an experiment at the Department of Energy's Idaho lab proved that cyber-attacks have the ability to cause American power generators to self-destruct.⁷⁷² According to some U.S. government officials and computer-security experts, Chinese hackers have already successfully gained access to electric power plants in several cases and may be responsible for blackouts in Florida and some North-eastern states in 2003.⁷⁷³ If this is true, it will mark a significant development in China's cyber-warfare capabilities and pose tremendous concerns for America. Economist Scott Berg estimates that a massive cyber-attack against America's infrastructure would cost the U.S. \$700 billion dollars if the country lost power for three months. He explains:

*It's equivalent to 40 or 50 large hurricanes striking all at once. Its greater economic damage than any modern economy ever suffered...It's greater than the Great Depression. It's greater than the damage we did with strategic bombing on Germany in World War 2.*⁷⁷⁴

⁷⁷¹ United States Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008 4.

⁷⁷² Jeanne Meserve, "Sources: Staged cyber attack reveals vulnerability in power grid," CNN 26 Sept. 2007, 20 March 2008 < <http://www.cnn.com/2007/US/09/26/power.at.risk/index.html> >

⁷⁷³ Harris "Chinese Hackers"

⁷⁷⁴ Meserve "Sources"

Even if the above-mentioned U.S. government officials are wrong and China wasn't responsible for the 2003 blackout, they are certainly aware of the vulnerability of America's power grids to cyber-attacks and will adjust their strategies accordingly.

Finally, China has prepared for a possible Sino-Taiwanese war by investing in multiple military platforms to coerce or invade Taiwan, weaken the ability of the U.S. military to launch long-range attacks against China, and delay American reinforcements. To achieve the former objective, China has aimed 990 CSS-6 and 1,070 CSS-7 short-range ballistic missiles at Taiwan from garrisons across the strait; this armament has grown at a rate of more than 100 missiles per year.⁷⁷⁵ PLA analysts believe such weapons, in conjunction with computer network attacks aimed at bringing down Taiwan's power and communications grid, will break the will of the Taiwanese public and force them to capitulate before America can intervene.

To delay the U.S. military response and prevent it from launching long-range attacks, especially via aircraft carriers, the PLA has invested in military equipment that will project its power well beyond its borders. According to the Pentagon's annual report to Congress in 2008:

*PLA planners are focused on targeting surface ships at long range from China's shores. Analyses of current and projected force structure improvements suggest that China is seeking the capacity to hold surface ships at risk through a layered capability reaching out to the "second island chain." (i.e., the islands extending south and east from Japan, to and beyond Guam in the western Pacific Ocean).*⁷⁷⁶

China's 29 advanced diesel-electric submarines, including 12 super-quiet Russian-made *Kilo*-class subs and 14 Chinese-made *Song*-class and *Yuan*-class boats, represent one aspect of the Chinese attempt to threaten U.S. warships during a Taiwanese conflict.⁷⁷⁷ These naval assets are extremely dangerous to U.S. aircraft carriers, especially the *Song*-class submarine, which is armed with torpedoes specifically designed to sink carriers and is capable of defeating U.S. anti-submarine tactics, as evident with the targeting of the U.S.S. *Kitty Hawk* in 2006. China has also purchased four *Sovremenny*-class destroyers from Russia armed with highly capable SS-N-2 *Sunburn* supersonic anti-ship cruise

⁷⁷⁵ United States, Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008 2.

⁷⁷⁶ United States Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008 23.

⁷⁷⁷ Tkacik "China's Quest for a Superpower Military" 9.

missiles (ASCM).⁷⁷⁸ Further enhancements to China's power projection capabilities lie with its acquisition of Russian-made, fourth-generation fighters - the Su-27 and Su-30 - and the indigenously built Jian-10 multirole fighter, all of which are capable of mid-air refuelling.⁷⁷⁹ The last major component of China's force projection lies in its development of land-based anti-ship ballistic missiles - with a range in excess of 1,500 km - and land-attack cruise missiles.⁷⁸⁰ This weaponry is capable of attacking U.S. aircraft carriers from great distances and threatening American bases in Japan and Guam.⁷⁸¹

Besides their utility in a Sino-Taiwanese conflict, China may also use these power projection capabilities to extend its influence into other Asian regions, according to the U.S. Department of Defence. The Pentagon's annual report to Congress on Chinese military power cites numerous official PLA writings that indicate an interest in securing strategic areas beyond Taiwan. For example, China's 2006 Defence White Paper notes how "security issues related to energy, resources, finance, information, and international shipping routes are mounting."⁷⁸² Zhang Wenmu, an analyst at the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations, also urges the PLA to station naval forces at strategic locations to control sea-lanes and prepare for future sea battles, which he regards as the "ultimate way for major powers to resolve an international dispute...."⁷⁸³ The above-mentioned sea, air, and missile assets of the PLA already project Chinese influence well beyond its borders and could prove useful in conflicts that may arise in the South China Sea and over disputed maritime territory in the East China Sea.

Summary

The above examples of Chinese international, regional, and military behaviour aptly illustrate the effects of the PRC leadership's dualistic strategic mentality. By

⁷⁷⁸ Ronald O'Rourke, "China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities – Background and Issues for Congress," *Congressional Research Service* 16 April 2008. 24 May 2008
<<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33153.pdf>>

⁷⁷⁹ Tkacik "China's Quest for a Superpower Military" 14.

⁷⁸⁰ United States *Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008* 2.

⁷⁸¹ O'Rourke "China Naval Modernization" 3.

⁷⁸² United States *Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008* 29.

⁷⁸³ Holmes "China's 'Caribbean' in the South China Sea" 82-83.

pragmatically weighing the contrastive motivations stemming from China's strategic culture, political reliance on nationalism, and perceptions of the interstate system, China is prone to adopt both status-quo and revisionist behaviour towards the U.S. unipolar world. Sometimes, its pragmatic calculations encourage the PRC to accept pre-existing international norms, such as the current free-trade regime, and sacrifice its sovereignty and some of its strategic interests. At other times, China may abide by internationally accepted practices and sacrifice its sovereignty and strategic interests, in an attempt to revise the interstate system through its war of CNP. Finally, China is capable of adopting openly revisionist and threatening foreign policies if it believes that the strategic gains outweigh any subsequent damage to its cooperative and peaceful image, or if it feels that its strategic concerns are being sufficiently threatened. The result is a two-faced foreign policy that is overly antagonistic towards the current world order but willing to accept both status-quo and revisionist behaviour.

VII

Conclusion

Following years of victimization, counterproductive policies, and abject poverty, China is finally regaining its former status and glory as a powerful and wealthy leader in the Asian region. Its rise, however, challenges the current international order under the hegemonic leadership of the United States and prompts American policymakers to question its future intentions. Will China behave as an aggressive and antagonistic power eager to challenge the U.S. unipolar world and its international status-quo rules, practices, and structure; or will it emerge as a peaceful and responsible state willing to accept America's global leadership and established norms and values? This question is critical to the interests of the U.S. and the stability of the Asian region. If the PRC is intent on cooperating with America and accommodating to its established status-quo, then the U.S. has less of a reason to confront China and undermine its rise. On the other hand, if the PRC is a hostile and revisionist power bent on weakening America's predominance and rejecting the international status-quo, then the U.S. leadership may decide to adopt bellicose policies against China to thwart its growing strength. The latter option, if true, would have significant implications for the stability of the Asian region and beyond, as a confrontational relationship between the U.S. and the PRC would exacerbate security assessments within the capitals of all Asian states.

This report has attempted to further the discourse surrounding this question by investigating the nature of the PRC's strategic mentality and understanding how this mindset influences Chinese foreign policies. Specifically, it has examined the impact of three factors on China's strategic mindset: the Chinese strategic culture, the CCP's utilization of nationalism, and the PRC leadership's ominous and opportunistic views of the interstate system. By viewing the contrastive motivations proposed by these variables, this report asserts that China possesses a dualistic strategic mentality that is overly

antagonistic towards the U.S. unipolar world yet willing to adopt both status-quo and revisionist behaviour.

The foundation of China's dualistic mentality lies in the contrastive nature of its strategic culture. This culturally-established mental framework of the Chinese leadership possesses two ideological strands that subconsciously influence China's approach to foreign affairs. The first ideological strand is cultural moralism, which represents China's idealistic self-image as an inherently benevolent power forced to adopt peaceful foreign policies through its rulers' strict adherence to Confucian moral principles. Chinese officials and various foreign scholars frequently refer to this strand in an attempt to convey China's traditional passivity in the Asian region. While PRC officials may truly believe in their nation's innate benevolence, it is the second ideological strand of realpolitik that truly influences the traditional foreign policies of Chinese rulers. This strand motivates Chinese leaders to both respond to foreign threats with military force and to strive for dominance over the interstate system; however this doesn't mean that China will always adopt aggressive policies. According to its *quan bian* decision axiom, Chinese rulers adopt peaceful and accommodationist policies when their state is relatively weak, but will pursue their preferred militant behaviour once they developed the necessary material strength. Within this second strand, cultural moralism is either truly adhered to by Chinese elites, but their interpretation of Confucian principles promotes realpolitik behaviour, or rulers use the benevolent ideology merely as a façade to disguise their country's aggressive intentions. In either case, this strategic culture forms the underpinning of China's antagonistic and two-faced strategic mentality. Its realpolitik intentions are antithetical to the U.S. hegemony and its *quan bian* decision axiom entices Chinese rulers to disguise their malevolent intentions with status-quo behaviour until they have completed their self-strengthening reforms.

The reliance of the Chinese Communist Party on nationalism further moulds this contrastive strategic mentality. With the communist ideology fading in importance amongst the Chinese public, and in light of growing sources of domestic instability, Chinese elites have embraced nationalism as the last ideology capable of unifying the nation under their authoritarian rule. By fanning patriotic sentiment and linking patriotism with Party loyalty, the CCP has now based their legitimacy to lead on the

achievement of nationalistic goals for the rejuvenation of the Chinese state back to its former glory. According to pragmatic nationalists, who are dominant amongst the PRC leadership, the best way to transform China back into a great power is to focus the majority of its efforts on increasing economic growth. The Chinese leadership believes that the achievement of additional prosperity and modernization is essential to achieving the well-being and international influence befitting a great nation. By enhancing China's wealth, the CCP hopes to placate domestic nationalists and pacify the growing domestic instability appearing throughout the nation. Unfortunately, the rise of an unruly, bottom-up form of popular nationalism has forced Chinese elites to adopt a delicate balancing act between implementing cooperative and antagonistic foreign policies. Popular nationalists are highly sensitive to foreign behaviour that undermines the national prestige of the PRC and urge their leaders to respond to such actions with assertive and confrontational foreign policies. They reject the pragmatic attempts of their leaders to maintain amicable relations with disrespectful nations, like the U.S. and Japan, simply for economic reasons. Despite being an authoritarian state, the Chinese leadership is fearful of this basal movement's ability to undermine its legitimacy and appears increasingly susceptible to its wishes. The result is a two-faced strategic mentality that adopts antagonistic foreign policies to placate domestic nationalists while simultaneously striving to convince foreign trading partners that China is a cooperative power for the sake of economic development.

The final factor behind China's dualistic strategic mentality is its unique perceptions of the threats and opportunities present in the current U.S. unipolar world. In terms of the former perception, the PRC leadership views America as the greatest threat to its national security and foreign policy goals. This ominous view of the current U.S. hegemony predominately derives from China's realist/realpolitik perceptions of American pre-eminence, especially in terms of the theory of power transition. In general, Chinese elites believe that the U.S. is intent on furthering its dominance over the existing interstate system and constraining and undermining the growing influence and power of the PRC. American actions from 1991 to the present appear to substantiate China's strategic fears. During the 1990s, the U.S. demonstrated its pugnacious behaviour to the PRC with its active and continued facilitation of Taiwanese independence and leadership over the NATO bombing campaign in Kosovo. Both of these examples proved, in the

eyes of Chinese elites, that American is an aggressive hegemon intent on solidifying its global dominance and enfeebling China's rising power. The early years of the twenty-first century further exacerbated the strategic fears of the PRC leadership as the Bush administration and its post-9/11 policies, including its Bush Doctrine and invasion of Iraq, appeared highly threatening to Chinese national security. Beijing viewed the U.S. promulgation of the China-threat theory with particular apprehension. Its analysts deemed the concept as a deliberate attempt by the Bush Administration to undermine Chinese relations with Asian states and to target the PRC as a strategic rival in need of counterbalancing policies. American attempts to bolster its military alliances and relationships with Asian nations, including Japan, India, and various ASEAN states, only strengthens China's belief that the U.S. truly intends to constrain its influence. Such ominous views of American strategic behaviour logically creates a desire amongst Chinese elites to challenge the U.S. hegemony and attempt to revise the unipolar world to mitigate the hegemon's ability to threaten Chinese interests.

These threatening views of the American-led interstate system contrast with a perceived strategic opportunity amongst PRC elites to address all of the concerns and motivations originating from the aforementioned factors through status-quo behaviour. Economic interdependence and multilateralism has mitigated power politics and encouraged nations to maintain peaceful international relations. This pacification alters the definition of national power away from a purely military basis and towards a more comprehensive view of national strength, what China refers to as comprehensive national power. The strategic opportunity perceived by PRC elites rests on this concept, or more specifically, on the war of comprehensive national power concept. Through this unorthodox form of warfare, China can use non-military means that accord with internationally accepted practices and behaviour to undermine the U.S. hegemony and alter the status-quo while preserving its image as a cooperative power. This paradoxical strategy allows the PRC to address the revisionist, expansionistic, and confrontational aims originating from its strategic culture, popular nationalists, and threat perceptions. At the same time, it also addresses the demands of Chinese elites who wish to bolster the perception of China's historic benevolence and pragmatic nationalists who hope to maintain amicable relations with wealthy great powers that are essential to China's

economic growth. However, this strategic opportunity and war of CNP concept does not ensure that China will always behave as a typical status-quo nation, even if such behaviour advances some of its aims. Chinese elites view globalization as a double-edged sword that undermines its sovereignty by restricting the government's ability to protect its domestic affairs from foreign influence. Therefore, China continues to remain hesitant about fully embracing all of the internationally accepted practices and norms of the interstate system. This is especially true considering how the status-quo behaviour of China's war of CNP is insufficient to address all of the strategic concerns stemming from American hegemony.

These three factors amalgamate to form a dualistic strategic mentality that is overly antagonistic towards the U.S. unipolar world but is willing to adopt both status-quo and revisionist foreign policies. This report asserts that China's cooperative or antipathetic behaviour rests on a pragmatic assessment of the impact of such actions on national interests. The PRC leadership will adopt a status-quo and cooperative posture if such conduct produces benefits that outweigh the potential costs to Chinese sovereignty and strategic national interests. It will also embrace status-quo behaviour in order to pursue its contradictory war of comprehensive national power. This allows China to use internationally accepted practices, such as multilateral organizations or world-heritage status applications, to peacefully challenge U.S. power and advance Chinese influence in Asia without appearing as a typical hostile, revisionist state.

In other situations, however, China will adopt openly antagonistic, irresponsible, and revisionist policies when its strategic concerns outweigh the costs to damaging its status-quo image. Foreign observers view such behaviour in China's support and protection of various pariahs (like Myanmar, Iran, and Sudan), bellicose behaviour by Chinese naval vessels, and clear preparations for a military solution to Taiwan's separation from the mainland. Its support for these oppressive regimes rests on their economic and, in terms of Myanmar, strategic value to the PRC. Chinese elites recognize that their relationship with these states does damage its status-quo image and therefore weaken its commercial relations with other great powers. However, they perceive this effect as marginal when compared to the economic and strategic value in maintaining close ties to these regimes. The PRC also accepts openly revisionist policies towards

Taiwan, because the political and domestic ramifications of official Taiwanese independence would outweigh even open warfare with America.

China is transforming and advancing at an incredible rate, and it is unclear what the future holds for this emerging power. Shifts in China's domestic affairs, American foreign policies, or interstate dynamics may alter China's contradictory mentality and its antagonistic approach to the U.S. unipolar world. In the meantime, this report provides a greater understanding of the current mindset of PRC elites and aids analysts in comprehending the rationale behind Chinese behaviour in the present and short-term future.

VIII

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