

## WAR EAST AND WEST

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The culture of war represents a dynamic confluence of two powerful but opposed trends in international politics. Nothing is more ethereal, more remote and harder to measure than the power of culture in politics. Nothing is more real, more tangible and concrete than the harsh realities of massive destruction and mayhem on the field of battle. The two, culture and war, could not seem more remote from each other. Yet, in military and

diplomatic history it is precisely the interaction of cultural symbols and military realities in times of crises that has produced war dramas as the *leitmotif* of human wartime behavior.

To the reader perusing the pages of this article, our topic—culture and war in Chinese politics—must seem a bit odd. Although there are volumes on both topics, culture and war are not favorite subjects in American political science in the late twentieth century. As for political culture, despite the work of scholars such as Lucian Pye, it has been relegated to the sideline by the emphasis on presumed rationality and structuralism in international politics.<sup>1</sup> Especially in the last 15 years such studies have been out of vogue. For as Fritz Gaensler ably depicted the situation in a recent article,

Cultural explanations are not currently a prominent feature of mainstream political science research. In fact, although the concept of 'culture' enjoyed a certain popularity in the 1960s and early 1970s, and although one occasionally receives an indication of isolated pockets of continuing interest, cultural explanations have largely fallen into disfavor in recent years. They continue to appear in the literature, but as straw men—as explanations to be demolished in order to build 'better ones.' These latter explanations generally conceive of men as universal homo economicus and focus on material incentives associated with various alternative behaviors.<sup>2</sup>

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1. For typical work of Lucian Pye, see his *The Mandarin and the Cadre: China's Political Culture* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1988).

2. Fritz Gaensler, "Culture and Decision Making in China, Japan, Russia and the United States," *World Politics*, v.34, #1 (October 1986), pp. 78-79.

Nor have wars and battles fared much better in works in international relations. Despite the enormous importance of wars in shaping international politics in general and the twentieth century in particular, military institutions remain one of the most neglected topics in political science. Military analyses are generally seen as safely relegated to the sphere of military historians, despite their great impact on politics and close connection with the very essence of the state. As one scholar recently noted, "for the most part the army, despite its massive size and manifest power, is an institution that is regularly omitted from discussions of macro theory."<sup>3</sup> Academics generally feel highly uncomfortable with armies and security policy, despite its obvious importance. For example, a forthcoming study of Soviet politics finds that, despite the undeniable power and role of the Soviet army, less than 3% of all American political scientist specializing on the Soviet Union have ever written a single book dealing in any way with the Soviet army or Soviet security policy.<sup>4</sup>

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3. Richard Hamilton, *Who Voted For Hitler?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 443. While many theorists such as Gilpin, Keohane, Modelski, Organski, Thompson and Singer have an in wars in general, there is very little interest in the army as an institution or wars and battles per se.

4. See Jonathan R. Adelman, "A Study of Soviet Specialists Among American Academics" (unpublished). This neglect stems from a number of factors, including the liberal anti-military orientation of many scholars, the lack of prior study of such topics, and the structuralist and functionalist analytic framework of many academics.

Thus, political culture and the use of military force remain two of the more neglected topics in international affairs. Why, then, are we interested in devoting this paper to this seemingly irrelevant topic? Because, to put it simply, these topics have been vitally important in international politics. On the general level, we find, with Akire Iriye, that "the actors in world affairs can be viewed as powers and as cultures, that international relations are interpower and intercultural relations."<sup>5</sup> Power, then, in his view, "defines a nation's armed forces, its strategies, war-making potentials, including willingness to use force, and a political system that makes and imposes decisions on society." At the same time a nation is a culture whose boundaries are not simply defined geographically "but also by a consciousness of common tradition; the sharing of religious, artistic and literary roots; and informal mechanisms such as customs, ways of life and a myriad of symbols that impart specific meanings to those belonging to the entity." In this context, international relations involves the

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5. See Akira Iriye, *Power and Culture: The Japanese-American War 1941-1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981). As Iriye wrote, "War came fundamentally because Japan's military leaders and their civilian supporters decided to close the gap and put an end to the "cold war." They wanted to bring unity to their national experience, so that war would define all political as well as cultural activities. In so doing they were determined to part, once and for all, from an earlier definition of national life that had underlain Japan's external affairs since the Meiji Restoration." (p. 1). See also Kenichiro Hirano, "International Cultural Conflicts: Causes and Remedies," *Japan Review of International Affairs*, v.2, #2 (1988), pp. 143-164.

study of power-level interactions, cultural interchanges and the relationship between the two.<sup>6</sup>

For the purpose of this study, culture is defined as a process through which world views are generated, shared, and habitually enacted by a group of people in certain peculiar ways. The most important cultural elements in foreign policy decisionmaking are concepts of national images. Processes which resolve the choice of an image to define the role of the state in the world, its mission, and its concrete interests are intrinsically cultural. In this relation, the study of the symbolic and theatric (or dramatic) aspects of war is an important task, one which Iriye himself observes "historians have only begun to unravel the complex issues of methodology and analysis inherent in it."<sup>7</sup> We in this paper only seek to begin this difficult, but important, task he so well identifies by looking at both levels, at the level of military capability and the level of culture and their interaction.

## II. WESTERN CONCEPT OF WARFARE

Only in the middle of the twentieth century, with the successes of Chinese, Vietnamese and Afghan guerrilla warfare, did Western analysts begin to perceive the extreme ethnocentrism and

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6. *Ibid.*, p. vii.

7. *Ibid.*, p. vii.

limitations of Western views of warfare. But, most analysts still saw these cases as exceptions to the rule, rather than a call to reexamine the notion of a uniform Westernized notion of rationality. This remained true even when Western doctrines, as applied by the Americans and French in Vietnam and Russians in Afghanistan, proved inappropriate.

Various Western concepts of warfare have arisen in recent centuries. Here we will speak of three important ones, those of the two superpowers (United States and Soviet Union) and the general Western European experience of major states. These strategic styles refer to the way in which nations deal with issues of military power, making sense of their views of world and of their own roles there. Numerous factors, such as history, economics, geopolitics and culture, have impacted the development of individual styles. These styles are, as Rebecca Strode has indicated, frequently recurring patterns of behavior in the creation and utilization of military power.<sup>8</sup>

The Western European concept of warfare, which served to dramatize the notion of balance of power, arose in very specific circumstances. Europe consisted of a large number of nation states each claiming sovereignty and independence, precisely dividing territory and legitimacy in a rough balance of power system. Since balance of power was considered to be the legiti-

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8. Rebecca Strode, "Soviet Strategic Style," *Comparative Strategy*, V.3, #4 (1982), pp. 319-320.

mate guiding principle, warfare was actually the norm and not the exception in the massive reduction of 300 European states in 1600 to only two dozen by the beginning of this century.<sup>9</sup> The entire European system revolved around warfare, without which the notion of balance of power would have been meaningless and national leaders would have lost their national identities. Therefore, state budgets were dominated by military spending and much of the contours of the current system were shaped by warfare. Even in this century it took two massive world wars, centered in Europe, to finally resolve the German Challenge to the European status quo. And in the process these wars ironically helped destroy the Eurocentric base of international politics that had held sway for hundreds of years.

In this system of the continual reshaping and disappearance of states, wars were sharp, brutal and occasionally decisive. Very few states could imagine holding themselves aloof from wars which could threaten their very existence and had dominated their world views. Given the lack of any predominant state, and the ever shifting coalitions and power capabilities of dozens of states, wars dramatized the threat which was made sensible by the popular notions of balance of power. They often meant, both psychologically and physically, the very life or death of a given

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9. See Charles Tilly, editor, *The Formation of the Nation State in Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

state and its system. Sometimes, even larger states, such as Poland, could disappear for 120 years. Or, as in World War II, one state, Germany, could temporarily achieve such success as to threaten to annihilate the independent of all other states. The meaning of the state lay to a significant extent in the actual and perceived existence of a constant threat. The mission of the state in the world was symbolized through the collective process of generating hatred towards a real or imagined enemy.

Under these conditions, then, warfare was often the supreme act of the state. Although fighting on the battlefield was the penultimate in realism, wars became dramatic and symbolic due to the human belief that one's safety depended on the elimination of those possessing a different nationality. By the twentieth century, in the two world wars, it entailed the massive mobilization of all the human, natural and industrial resources of countries, entailing enormous cost and destruction in their wake. In this context the great warriors of European history, from Caesar and Charlemagne to Frederick the Great and Napoleon, became mythical heroes and often empire builders on a vast scale. The decline of heroism necessitated the demonstration of strength in the battlefield where the enemy was created artificially.

Under the conditions of Europe, where there were a number of great powers and no predominant one, the style of warfare was inevitably one of attrition and eroding slowly the power of the enemy. The war of attrition consumed so many resources



that it could be regarded as rational only if the notion of balance of power was considered legitimate. The destruction of enemy forces and the complete elimination of the enemy was usually not a realistic objective. Furthermore, over time there arose a concept of a number of equally sovereign and independent nation states under Christendom, each possessing legitimacy and territory within a balance of power system. Ironically, the psychological needs of a constant enemy could be guaranteed in this manner.

American history, of course, was quite different. Once the British were finally out of the way, the enemies in the nineteenth century were much easier—the Mexicans, the Indians and the Spanish. The spirit of adventurism and the wish to create a new civilization combined with these developments to eliminate any notions of limited war, which would acknowledge the legitimacy of rival civilizations. Wars of extermination and triumph, which dramatized American self-identity as a civilizer state, were profitable and possible against such weak enemies. This was especially true as the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans provided natural defense against more serious enemies. In the twentieth century, the Americans were able to avoid early (and possibly disastrous) participation in the two world wars, launching their major invasions of Europe only near the end of the war (September 1918 and June 1944) against weak and largely devastated German foes

in Europe.<sup>10</sup> Thus, for the Americans warfare has been highly successful, decisive and lucrative, launching the United States towards a dominant position in the world in the wake of the two world wars.<sup>11</sup>

For the Americans a detached view of warfare was possible, as its geographic remoteness from serious enemies and psychological revulsion at European balance of power politics allowed in both world wars a delaying of hard decisions and full mobilization until after the beginning of the war. Then the United States could mobilize its overwhelming economic and technological power to ensure victory. That the United States both times saw itself as saving the world fit perfectly into its self-identity as a civilizer state. Most of the time, war could be viewed as external to normal, peacetime pursuits. War was an abstraction as the United States was never a battleground but a safe haven from the scourge of war. Issues of devastation or mobilization of a questionable rear were simply irrelevant to the American language of war.<sup>12</sup>

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10. See Jonathan R. Adelman, *Prelude to the Cold War: The Tsarist, Soviet and U.S. Armies in Two World Wars* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publications, 1988).

11. See Charles Wegley, *The American Way of Warfare* and Jonathan R. Adelman, *Prelude to the Cold War: The Tsarist, Russian and U.S. Armies in Two World Wars* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publications, 1988).

12. For an excellent essay on the American and Soviet views of war, see Robert Bathurst, "Two Languages of War," in Derek Leebaert, editor, *Soviet Military Thinking* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1981), pp. 31-38.

For the Americans, who saw themselves as civilizers, a strategy of annihilation has been the predominant mode of warfare. In the twentieth century the preferred methods of operation in conventional warfare have been the application of massive air and naval power, backed by a relatively small army. This reflects both American power and the frequent weakness of its enemies. As Russell Weigley wrote about the American style of warfare,

In the history of American strategy, the direction taken by the American conception of war made most American strategists, through most of the time span of American history, strategists of annihilation. At the beginning, when American military resources were still slight, American made a promising beginning in the nurture of strategists of attrition; but the wealth of the country and its adoption of unlimited aims in war cut that development short, until the strategy of annihilation became characteristically the American way in war.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, we come to the Soviet style of war. The Soviet view of war historically has been quite different from the American. Soviet warfare dramatized the self-image of being a constant victim of imperialist invasions. Situated on the vulnerable periphery of Europe without easily definable and secure boundaries and generally lagging behind the economic developments in the West, Russia historically has been vulnerable to invasions from either direction. The early Mongol and Tartar

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13. See Russell Weigley, *The American Way Of War* (New York: Macmillan, 1973), p. xxii.

invasions were replaced in recent centuries by attacks by the Poles, Swedes, French and Germans. The German invasions in the two world wars were devastating affairs, especially that of World War II which imposed 20 million fatalities on the Soviet Union.<sup>14</sup> Impacted by pervasive insecurity about external threats and internal enemies (which forced Russia out of World War I), war has been personalized for the Soviet planners and never far from their minds. As Steve Kime has written on the Soviet view of war,

War is a countrywide preoccupation in the Soviet Union. Historical experience, a dominant political system heavily dependent upon perception of external threat and nuclear age geopolitics combine to make the threat of war and need for massive military forces persistent realities for the ordinary Soviet citizen. World war, even in the nuclear age, is thinkable. It is contemplated often.<sup>15</sup>

With their country both a real and potential battleground, the Soviet leaders have seen war, and the preparation for war, as a central fact of their existence. Whether or not the threat is real,

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14. See Jonathan R. Adelman and Cristann Gibson, editors, *Contemporary Soviet Military Affairs: The Legacy of World War II* (London: Unwin, Hyman, 1989).
  15. Steve Kime, "The Soviet View of War," *Comparative Strategy*, V.2, #3 (1980), p. 217. There is a large literature on the Soviet view of war. See for example, Derek Leebaert, editor, *Soviet Military Thinking* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1981), Peter Vigor, *The Soviet View of War, Peace and Neutrality* (London: Routledge, Kegan, Paul, 1975) and John Baylis and Gerald Segal, editor, *Soviet Strategy* (London: Croom Helm., 1981).

war preparation (as most dramatically in the 1930s) dramatizes the sense of being victimized, a national self-image of great influence in Soviet politics. Their continued economic lag and technological inferiority have created a very different language of war in the Soviet Union than the United States. In the Soviet language of war, war is personalized and the enemy is real and omnipresent as the country is surrounded by enemies ("encirclement"). World War II is very near in psychological time (if remote in reality) and mobilization of the population is a key to victory.<sup>16</sup>

Geography, historical experience and economic and technical constraints, then, have had a decisive impact on the Soviet (and Russian) self-image and, consequently, the style of war. A huge territory, prolonged period of expansion primarily to the south and east, and repeated technological lag behind Europe have been recurrent facts of Russian life. The Soviet style has repeatedly emphasized the creation of huge land armies suitable to fighting on poorly defined and defensible land boundaries of a huge empire. The commitment to self-defense is evident, but not necessarily efficient (and now being reexamined under Gorbachev). The self-image as a victim in world politics is dramatically expressed. Air and naval power traditionally (until recently) have

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16. See Robert Bathurst, "Two Languages of War," in Derek Leebaert, editor, *Soviet Military Thinking* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1981), pp. 31-38. Of course, as we enter the 1990s, it is entirely possible that the Soviet Union under Gorbachev may develop a rather different perspective on the world.

come a distinct second to vast land power, better for its quantity than its quality. The military style has been notably conservative, with a continuing preeminence of land power (right after Strategic Rocket Forces) unmatched in the American or European armies.<sup>17</sup>

Clearly, then, there were major differences in the American, Soviet and Western European experiences that produced different styles of war. The cultural image that we stress was an important factor in these differences, as were differences in geography, economics and politics. Arthur Alexander, in his fine study of Soviet weapons procurement, estimated the following figures as the proportional influence of specific classes of forces on aggregate defense expenditures, holding the others constant in each case:

- 1) history, culture and values 40%–50%
- 2) internal politics and environment 20%–30%
- 3) international environment, threat and internal capabilities 10%–30%
- 4) doctrine 5%–15%
- 5) organizations and decision making 10%–20%<sup>18</sup>

In the West, warfare may serve the same psychological function for different states of dramatizing the meaning of

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17. Rebecca Strode, "Soviet Strategic Style," *Comparative Strategy*, V.3, #4 (1982), pp. 319-332. She also sees militarism as a third aspect of this style, a judgement with which the authors disagree.

18. Arthur Alexander, "Decision Making in Soviet Weapons Procurement," in Douglas Murray and Paul Viotti, editors, *The Defense Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).

existence of the state. At the same time, different cultural experiences assign different meanings to war. Nevertheless, all such states—whether avid European pursuers of power, confident civilizers as the United States or distrustful historical victims like the Soviet Union—sought similar goals of destroying the enemy and liquidating the ideological threat posed by enemy states. The proclamation of the goal of “unconditional surrender” by the Allies in World War II was an apt summary of what was sought from the enemy.

### III. CHINESE VIEW OF THE WORLD

The American and European views of warfare derive from their historically limited and structurally determined conditions as derived over the past few centuries. To the Chinese, operating for over two millennia under very different geographic and historical conditions, these conceptions have always seemed very unusual and alien. Furthermore, if cultural images were important in driving the Soviet style of war in a very different direction than the American style of war, then what happens when we are dealing not with variants of European civilization but with a totally different civilization, in this case the Chinese one?

For the Chinese historically did not exist in a system, such as in Western Europe, where there were first hundreds and later scores of competing small states, fighting for their own survival

and claiming equality and sovereign independence within universal Christianity. Nor did they exist as a peripheral yet highly powerful state engaged in clashes on its border and continental expansion to the west and occasionally participating in central state conflicts, as the United States. Nor did they exist as a vast land empire, peripheral to the European theater yet repeatedly engaged in military conflict with it, as Russia and the Soviet Union. Western notions of nations, sovereignty and equality of states have simply been unknown to China before the nineteenth century.

Ever since the elimination of numerous competing small states by the Warring States period until 200 B.C. or so China has been a unified state. Unlike the United States or Europe, China has been relatively landlocked and isolated from its neighbors. To the east there has been the Pacific Ocean, to the north the inhospitable spaces of Siberia and the Arctic, to the west the great plains of inner Asia and to the south the mountainous and remote areas of Southeast Asia.

For China there was no international political system for she was the predominant power. China was never challenged by a rival universal state whose claims to culture needed to be taken seriously. In this way she was radically different from most other major ancient empires. The only rivals were the much smaller and culturally more primitive nomadic tribes of Central Asia whose claims were never taken seriously. For 30,000 years she



was the cultural center of the Far East.

China, as John Fairbanks well reminded us, developed its own Chinese world order over more than two millennia.<sup>19</sup> Chinese civilization began as an agricultural based cultural island spreading southward and attaining physical and cultural unity at the end of the Warring States period with the beginning of the Qin dynasty in 221 B.C. The dynasty had outposts in Korea, North Vietnam and Central Asia and sharply differentiated between the superior core and the inferior periphery. Within China there was hierarchy and anti-egalitarianism but no castes, with status levels determined by sex, kinship, age and social function. At the top stood the emperor, the Son of Heaven, who performed multiple military, religious, judicial and administrative roles in maintaining order within the cosmos. A symbol of unity, he ruled directly through a government bureaucracy and indirectly through the ruling elites in the villages.

Externally, much like the Romans, the Chinese saw the outside world as dark, empty and hostile. For the Chinese, Western values were meaningless. Not trade, but a career in the civil service was valued. Not the individual but the group was esteemed. Not war but peace was the golden mean. Not allegiance to a Jesus or liberal and capitalist values but integration in the

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19. See John K. Fairbanks, "A Preliminary Framework," in his edited volume, *The Chinese World Order* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 5-15.

universalist and benevolent rule of the Son of Heaven was esteemed.<sup>20</sup>

The relationship to non-Chinese is particularly crucial for our concept of the use of force. Non-Chinese could even rule China, as occurred during the Mongol (1279) and Manchu (1644) conquests. Non-Chinese rulers on the fringe of the empire could pay tribute to the Emperor, thereby becoming either exterior vassals or interior vassals. Tributary missions, which had important symbolic and economic functions, were received from Korea until 1894, Siam 1853, Burma 1875, Vietnam 1883 and Nepal 1908. Military force could be used not to conquer them but to bring them back into the proper relationship with the center. China had no overseas colonies.<sup>21</sup>

The Chinese saw foreign policy as an extension of domestic policy. For everyone there was a place in the Chinese world order. With the revelation of military weakness in the nineteenth century, the Qing dynasty would resort to many devices including the ceasing of contact, indoctrination of foreigners, playing barbarians against each other, buying off barbarians by honors or

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20. See Hsin-pao Chang, *Commissioner Lin and the Opium War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), pp. ix-2, for the clash between two cultures. See also Jack Beeching, *The Chinese Opium Wars* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1975), p. 20.

21. See Arthur Huck, *The Security of China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), pp. 18-30.

money or even by limited acceptance. The destruction of the myth of military superiority by the Mongols in 1279 and Manchus in 1644 had led to attempts to Sinify them and maintain the basic structure.

The fact that this would be impossible in the case of the Westerners would lead in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to significant revisions of Chinese concepts, a melding of old and new concepts. For the Chinese had seen their world as coterminous with civilization, with fringe powers as Japan, Vietnam and Korea fortunate to learn from and emulate them. The Western demand for equality and the force of arms was a massive shock to the body politic and recognized order of things. The basic Chinese view was well delineated by the Emperor Qien Lung to the British emissary Lord Macartney in 1793.

Our ways have no resemblance to yours, and even were your envoy competent to acquire some rudiments of them, he could not transplant them to your barbarous land.... Strange and costly objects do not interest me. As your Ambassador can see for himself, we possess all things. I set no value on strange and ingenious objects, and have no use for your country's manufactures.<sup>22</sup>

#### IV. CHINESE CONCEPT OF WARE

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22. Quoted in Jack Beeching, *The Chinese Opium Wars* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1975), p. 17.

In this context warfare acquired a very different meaning to landlocked China, far from other centers of civilization, than to the numerous European nation states competing against each other or to the United States eager to expand to the Pacific. Warfare has been preeminently civil war, except for the sporadic threats of invasion by numerically far inferior hordes of tribesmen from the north. And naval threats, common in the West where English naval predominance was so important, were rare in the Far East.

Nor did even the unification of China and the maintenance of that unity over 2,000 years result primarily from military campaigns, as in the West. For force alone would have been grossly inadequate to rule such a huge population dispersed over such a divided and often inaccessible huge territory as China. For as John King Fairbanks has written about this subject.

Brute force could never have sufficed to impose political unity upon such a diverse and historically-geographically divided subcontinent.... In short, the unification of China required much more than mere logistics or force of arms. It required political-military imagination and a genius for social organization, with military codicils of that capability.<sup>23</sup>

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23. John K. Fairbanks, "Introduction. Varieties of the Chinese military Experience," in Frank Kierman, Jr. and John K. Fairbanks, editors, *Chinese Ways in Warfare* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), p. 3.

Recent scholarship still finds the primacy of man a principle of modern Chinese military thinking.<sup>24</sup>

For the Chinese for over two millennia warfare has been related to domestic disturbances, probing raids or invasions by mobile northern nomads or the resistance of southern and south-western aborigines to the spread of Chinese society and polity. The only real threat came from the northern nomads—such as the Mongols and the Manchus—who constantly threatened and at times succeeded in occupying China. Yet, these nomads never numbered more than 1%–3% of the population of China and were incapable of fundamentally upsetting or transforming the Chinese way of life. In order to rule China they would have to rely heavily on Chinese and over the generations would become Sinified. Consequently, ignoring the existence of an external threat became not only a habit but an essential element in the Chinese pretension of superiority.

In this context, the traditional Chinese view of warfare was sharply different from that extant in the West. With no wealthy neighbors to annex or exploit and no commercial needs to satisfy outside of China, the rulers saw little positive value in warfare. This was reinforced by the likelihood of uncovering hidden disharmony through warfare. China was seen as a vast and self-sufficient empire with no need for anything from beyond its

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24. Chong-Pin Lin, *China's Nuclear Weapons Strategy—Tradition Within Evolution* (Lexington, Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1988).

long borders. Peace was seen as beneficial to all. Only with peace could there be prosperity and truly happy civil life. And, only with peace could the pretension of harmony under heaven be dramatized and enacted. Thus, domestic harmony and maintenance of the Middle Kingdom were the predominant concerns historically in China. As Charles Hucker has written,

In their pragmatic way, Chinese officials seem normally to have considered direct military solution suitable only in the last resort, when the nation's vital interests were at stake and pacification was impossible or would yield unacceptable results. Except in the case of notoriously bellicose Chinese leaders, pacification seems to have been greatly preferred as the normal means of coping with the disaffected.<sup>25</sup>

The historical and geographic necessities meshed nicely with the Confucian disdain of soldiers, which placed them very low on the social hierarchy and never lionized them. Indeed, the military did not develop as an autonomous profession within China. The early emergence of a civilian bureaucracy in China further promoted the demotion of military men in the universal schema. Confucian morality esteemed order and saw the superior man as a highly cultivated one who achieved his ends without violence by moral authority. For the emperor to resort to violence was a gross admission of his failure at the art of governance and had to

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25. Charles Hucker, "Hu Tsung-hsien's Campaign Against Hsu Hai," in Frank Kierman, Jr. and John K. Fairbanks, editors, *Chinese Ways in Warfare* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), p. 274.

be left as only a last resort.<sup>26</sup>

The strong civil bureaucracy sought to cope with military and political problems without permanent and purely military institutions. The military and war were not glorified and the military was confined to solely battlefield tasks, without even impact on military planning. Only in protracted war did the military attain some professional ethos, only to be lost in the demobilization after the end of the war. War was seen as an aberration. An army was hastily assembled when the threat arose. But, apart from scattered regional forces and a capital garrison there was little permanent structure. Often barbarians were used to control other barbarians on the frontier. The lack of standing, long lasting military forces was a major feature of the system. The long periods of peace, lack of a permanent military administration and low status of the military promoted the critical, suspicious attitude towards professional soldiers. Overall, then, the military was largely controlled and military skills little valued or praised in the heavily civilian Chinese governance system. The Confucian view, "War is destructive to people, an insect that eats up resources," held sway, except in times of emergency.<sup>27</sup> By so doing warlordism and barbarism, often characteristic of Western

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26. Chih-yu Shih, "National Role Conceptions as Foreign Policy Motivation: The Psycho-Cultural Bases of Chinese Diplomacy," *Political Psychology*, v. 9, # 4 (December 1988).

27. Gerald Segal, *Defending China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

states, were never legitimate and never conducive to the pursuit of power.

Ironically, of course, this antipathy to Western forms of warfare did not arise from a Chinese failure to develop the implements of war. For China invented the crossbow, cast iron and gunpowder. But, it also developed paper, government bureaucracy and civil service exams, which eventually created civilian supremacy over the military.<sup>28</sup> And, although the Chinese military was deemed inferior by civilian statesmen, still it occupied considerable resources of the state. For as Frederick Mote has cogently observed.

In the view of most Chinese statesmen throughout millennium of imperial Chinese history that ended only in this century, the military was, as it should be, peripheral to the great concerns of Chinese civilization. Yet, year by year it absorbed the largest portion of the traditional Chinese states' revenues, involved its statesmen in endless thought and policy debates and affected daily lives of countless millions.<sup>29</sup>

## V. CHINESE MILITARY THINKING

But, even if we grant the role of culture and war, another

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28. See Frank Kierman, Jr. and John K. Fairbanks, *Chinese Ways in Warfare* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), especially the first two chapters by Fairbanks and Kierman.

29. Frederick Mote, "The T'u-mu Incident of 1449," in Frank Kierman, Jr. and John K. Fairbanks, editors, *Chinese Ways of Warfare* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), p. 243.



question soon presents itself. Much of Chinese military history from 1839 until 1950 is a dreary story of failure piled on failure, from the Opium War to the Sino-French War to the two Sino-Japanese Wars. Is it really worth studying why China was so often defeated when the reason is obvious: technologically superior and economically advanced states always dispose of states lagging behind in technology and economical developments? Wars, after all, are won on the assembly line and China had precious few of them throughout the period. In this argument, the outcome was determined in advance by the gross disparity in the correlation of forces.

And, related to this is a second question. If the use of force has been a subordinate element in Chinese foreign policy for most of the last 140 years why study it? Or, in the words of Allen Whiting,

Moreover China's response to foreign penetration between 1840 and 1937 rarely included outright military resistance. Instead, reliance on alternative means, including diplomacy, international law, appeals to world opinion and passive non-resistance characterized an effort to preserve territorial integrity under conditions of increasing internal weakness of growing external threat.<sup>30</sup>

One quick response has to be this: If the outcome was evident, why was it started in the first place as in the Arrow War?

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30. Allen Whiting, *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence: India and Indochina* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1975), p. 244.

If the disparity of power was not initially evident, why was the war continued when it became obvious as in the Opium War? The Qing officials generally misperceived China's relative strength, or when China's military impotence was revealed, refused to make the obvious decision. When weakness was recognized, as in the later wars (Second Sino-Japanese War, Korean War, Sino-indian War), China entered the war anyway—and did surprisingly well even though the process of ending the war was not necessarily sweet.

In fact, “powerful” states do not always defeat “weak” states. Perhaps the events of the last quarter-century—especially the stinging defeats of the two superpowers in Vietnam (1965–1973) and Afghanistan (1979–1988) at the hands of seemingly third-rate military and economic powers—should induce some historical retrospection at the prospects of weak powers facing the armed might of great powers. After all, the two great superpowers were unable to achieve victory against vastly inferior foes despite all their enormous advantages.

But, such egregious failures have not been confined to the superpowers. In 1950 “weak” China, emerging from 13 years of warfare involving protracted war with Japan and then extended civil war, launched forces that devastated the American army in North Korea and forced the longest military retreat in American military history. From 1942–1945 the “weak” Red Army, heir to the great disasters of the first 18 months of World War II and

the Russian fiascos stretching from the Crimean War and Russo-Japanese Wars to World War I and the Winter War with Finland, destroyed the German Wehrmacht and marched into Berlin, Budapest and Warsaw. These two events were to have a profound impact on the history of international relations in the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>31</sup>

But, we need not be confined to this century to find similar cases. The list of failures of "powerful" armed forces in nineteenth century military escapades was not short. In 1842 the British were humiliatingly defeated in Kabul by Afghan tribesmen. When mounting Afghan pressure forced the British force of 4,500 men (including 700 British soldiers) out of Kabul in January 1842, only one lone British officer (Dr. Brydon) survived the march to tell the tale in Jellalabad. The American General Custer was wiped out along with his contingent from the Seventh Cavalry at the Little Big Horn in 1876. The British army was nearly exterminated (only 55 of 950 men surviving) by the Zulus, armed only with spears, at Isandhlwana in 1879. At Majuba in 1881 in the First Anglo-Boer War the British Army General Sir George Colley was killed and his force decimated by the Boers. In 1883 the Dervishes in the Sudan massacred an English-trained Egyptian garrison and killed British Colonel William Hicks at Kordofan and in 1885

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31. For a study of the emergence of these revolutionary armies, see Jonathan R. Adelman, *Revolution, Armies and War* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publications, 1986).

they repeated this maneuver, killing the famed British General Charles "Chinese" Gordon at Khartoum. In the most famous disaster the Italian army with 15,000 men was totally routed by Abyssinian tribesmen at Adowa in 1896. The British, meeting continual rebuffs in their wars against the Boers in South Africa (as at Magersfontein and Colenso), finally could win after three years only after sending in 250,000 troops and losing 22,000 British troops, a sum roughly comparable to the Boers.<sup>32</sup>

Chinese military thinking developed in a context very different than that of most Western thinking. Most European countries, including Russia, have had to face the likelihood of a real external threat to their very national existence. Thanks to the size and geography of China, no such threat existed. The ethnic homogeneity, huge population and physical size of China rendered a serious enemy occupation of the country very unlikely. As Gerald Segal concluded,

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32. See Hew Strachan, *European Armies and the Conduct of War* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1983), pp. 76-88, Cyril Falls, *The Art of War From the Age of Napoleon to the Present Day* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 82-83, Larry Addington, *The Pattern of War Since the Eighteenth Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), pp. 110-113 and William McElwee, *The Art of War: Waterloo to Mons* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), pp. 76-99, 215-232. For the Gordon and Hicks disasters, see Roy MacGregor-Hastie, *Never to Be Taken Alive* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985).

The second major threat, large-scale conventional invasion of China, seems to be a next to impossible task if geographical factors are considered. The land-war threat is the only one that could defeat China and that would require a full-scale invasion into what we have called core China. An enemy might seize outlying territory or the northeast, but to do so would not defeat China in economy or demographic terms.<sup>33</sup>

Combined with the fact that China was largely fortunate in its enemies—Russia was far away until the nineteenth century, India was inward looking and Japan was weak until the end of the nineteenth century—China did not have to fear large-scale invasion until the end of the Qing dynasty. Nor did it have to fear naval assaults either since not until the nineteenth century was China defeated by a sea power.

When faced with a military threat, Chinese leaders, as John Fairbanks has reminded us, developed several attitudes quite different than in the West. First, the leaders, far from esteeming violence and heroism, distinctly preferred non-violent solutions to confrontations, lest violence signal a lack of legitimacy and harmony. Military force was seen as one of only several means to destroy an enemy and was not the preferred means. War was seen as too important to be left to the generals, with the Emperor and the civilian bureaucracy trying to exercise general control.

Secondly, unlike in the West, there was a general preference

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33. Gerald Segal, *Defending China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 22.

for defensive warfare over efficient warfare. Offensive warfare was morally wrong since it implied that the emperor was not morally supreme and attractive to barbarians. Of course, preference for defense also reflected the weakness of the Chinese navy, the uncertain capabilities of the Chinese army, the natural strength of defensive fortifications as city walls, the weakness of available weapons, the huge population of China and its vast size. All these factors promoted a positive evaluation of defensive warfare as the most cost offensive form of warfare. Exhaustion of attackers and pacification of rebels would then fit nicely into this pattern whereby China would utilize its natural advantages against invaders. As a result, offensive warfare was rarely discussed and, when conducted, implied punishment of deviant behavior rather than expansionism.

There was no tie between militarism and commercial expansion in China, as in the West. The Chinese state was historically hostile to commerce, preferring to reap its revenues from land taxes and profits from manipulation of bureaucratic privilege. In this context, there was no strong state support for military expansion to benefit commerce and the state.<sup>34</sup> In addition, commerce implied the immoral pursuit of purely material interests.

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34. See John K. Fairbanks, "Introduction. Varieties of the Chinese Military Experience," in Frank Kierman, Jr. and John K. Fairbanks editors, *Chinese Ways in Warfare* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), p. 25.

Under these conditions, the Chinese style of war emerged, unsurprisingly, very different, from the various Western styles. First, and foremost, to paraphrase C.W.C. Oman, war became an art in the East while in the West it devolved largely to issues of harsh fighting.<sup>35</sup> This art evolved over 2,700 years of recorded warfare, the longest in the world. Second, several broad principles emerged, including "cooperation with a far country to strike a near country," "use barbarians to control barbarians," and "avoid strength, attack weakness."<sup>36</sup>

The Chinese historically have stressed psychological warfare over physical warfare and bloodshed. Perceiving themselves as the supreme moral symbol of under-heaven, the Chinese have emphasized the gaining of victory by strategem, not force. Actual fighting was never seen as the epitome of skill. The real target was the mind of the enemy commanders and soldiers, which needed to be undermined by psychological form of gungfu. The army, ideally, should be used, if at all, to administer a final blow to a vulnerable opponent. Cooptation, not annihilation, of the enemy was the ultimate goal. When massive killing occurred, the Chinese pretended that nothing had happened, lest the image of supreme moral leadership disintegrate. As Scott Boorman has

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35. Quoted in Edward Boyland, "The Chinese Cultural Style of Warfare," *Comparative Strategy*, v.3, #4, p. 346.

36. For an overview of the Chinese style of war, see Edward Boylan, "The Chinese Cultural Style of Warfare," *Comparative Strategy*, v.3, #4 (1982), pp. 341-362.

emphasized the role of psychology and strategem in Chinese warfare, contrasted to the game theoretic approach of Westerners,

Current strategic thinking in the United States places comparatively little stress on strategem or deception practices... (In) modern warfare, the argument runs, the risks... and the stakes are too high for operational planning to rest on the assumption that enemy intentions can be effectively manipulated.... The role of strategem in classical Chinese strategic theory is, however, unambiguous.... Successful deception is held to be a mark of high strategic merit. Moreover... exchanges of strategem and counterstrategem are expected to be the normal currency of conflict interaction... this concept of strategy through strategem goes beyond attempts merely to outwit the opponent by conveying false intentions; it involves the more sophisticated task of directly manipulating his perception of reality and in particular his perception of the values to him of various outcomes of the conflict. The aim, most particularly, is to manipulate his concept of his own objective and his own "face" to induce him—for whatever reason—to assign great psychological utility to courses of action favorable to one's own interest.<sup>37</sup>

Nowhere is the traditional Chinese view of war more clearly stated than in the work of Sun Tzu. His work is not merely of arcane interest for it has influenced many Chinese thinkers throughout the ages, including notably Mao Zedong.<sup>38</sup> For Sun

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37. Scott Boorman, "Deception in Chinese Strategy," in William Whitson, editor, *The Military and Political Power of China in the 1970s* (New York: Praeger, 1983).

38. For the standard modern translation and commentary on Sun Tzu, and also his relationship to Mao Zedong, see Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, translated by Samuel Griffith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963).



Tzu over two thousand years ago the key was to attack the enemy's strategy, to stress the disruption and neutralization of the plans and movements of the enemy commander and his soldiers. Sun Tzu stressed the evils of war and its great drain on the people. The major aim in war is not the physical destruction of the enemy through massive bloodletting, as it is for most Western warriors, but victory without engagement. Stressing deception and mobility, Sun Tzu opposed all protracted wars or sieges of cities. He emphasized the moral, intellectual and circumstantial elements of war. Weapons were to be used only reluctantly for "Weapons are ominous tools to be used only when there is no alternative."<sup>39</sup>

Perhaps the following statements by Sun Tzu best summarized his military philosophy,

1. Generally in war the best policy is to take a state intact; to ruin it is inferior to this. Li Ch'uan: Do not put a premium on killing.
2. To capture the enemy's army is better than to destroy it; to take intact a battalion, a company or a five-man squad is better than to destroy them.
3. For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.
4. Thus, what is of supreme importance in war is to attack the enemy's strategy.<sup>40</sup>

39. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 77. See also Thomas Phillips, editor, *Roots of Strategy* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Military Service Publishing Company, 1940) for his section on Sun Tzu and his work.

In so doing, Sun Tzu emphasized the following goals in terms of descending desirability: 1) attacking the enemy's plan in inception 2) disrupting the enemy's alliances 3) attacking the enemy 4) attacking the enemy's cities. This demonstrated his realism and moderation in shaping a philosophy that put a premium on psychology and symbolism and downgraded the actual brutal act of fighting itself.<sup>41</sup> Maneuver, avoidance or battle and indirect methods were all the hallmark of this ancient Chinese military thinker. While brutal killing did indeed occur even after the Warring State period, it was always regarded as solely punishment of rebels.

In the West political considerations determined the ends for military means but military means were the province for the technically expert military officers to resolve. In China, then, the military and political aspects were not separated and a generalist ideology pervaded the military, which was denied a Western-type professionalism. Political objectives pervaded the military for all wars were seen as civil wars where the enemy must be subject to political attack. In turn, all military officers and men were aware of the political goals of the state. In this circumstance, the civilian ethos of the state pervaded the usually temporary military structure. And, of course, Chinese military power usually remained fairly weak and only minimally com-

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41. *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

petent. Military officers were judged only by their ability to lead in

Military officers were judged only by their ability to lead in the battlefield. They were distinguished from superior civilian officers by dress, offices and lifestyles. While Western officers were increasingly expected to display professional attitudes and technical expertise, Chinese officers were largely chosen for physical presence and courage, horsemanship, skill with weapons, good judgement and firm discipline. Such professionalism did not flourish in China as military officers lacked military control necessary for such professionalism. Unlike civilian bureaucrats, military officers were often illiterate or poorly educated, low in status and lacking corporate identity (chosen for hereditary grounds in the Yuan or Ming dynasty, local patronage in the Tang and Sung dynasties). The Emperor saw the advantages of military efficiency as outweighed by the dangers of warlordism and expense of standing armies and chose accordingly.<sup>42</sup>

Given the dominant nature of Chinese power in the Far East and the power of huge and thick city walls against relatively weak technology (until the nineteenth century), simple weapons and tactics with improvised armies led by civilian officers (usually rank military amateurs) would suffice. A defensive pattern, symbolized by city walls and the Great Wall, were usually

42. Edward Dreyer, "Military Continuities: The PLA and Imperial China," in William Whitson, editors, *The Military and Political Power in China in the 1970s* (New York: Praeger, 1972), pp. 8-11.

adequate. And the goal also remained political—the acknowledgment of Imperial authority by the enemies, or at least the moral purity of the Chinese state in more recent years.<sup>43</sup>

Similarly, with no successful naval attacks on China until the nineteenth century, China did not need to maintain a large or modern navy. During the late Ming and Qing dynasties there were only individual squadrons scattered on the coast under the control of provincial Green Standard armies. All this, of course, saved China a great deal of money and strife with no strong standing army or navy. It also prevented recurrent warlordism and regional rebellion, a serious problem given the poor communications, large population and vast distances in Imperial China.

The destruction of land and people in warfare was seen as disastrous to the state. Military targets, not the Chinese economy, were the main goals of any war. Men, not machines, were to be the vehicles of success. Given that most war was civil war, the real issue was loyalty to the center, not the physical elimination of alien forces. Once the enemy had pledged fealty to the center, the war was over, political goals of peace and unification re-established and the normal order could be resumed. A rebel who surrendered relatively quickly could be expected to retain local control, as could a foreign tribe that recognized Chinese suzerainty. Maintaining the pretense of harmony and the image of the

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43. *Ibid.*

superiority of the emperor were the ultimate goals. This meant that a negotiated surrender was always possible, obviating the need for such Western concepts as "total war" or "unconditional surrender."<sup>44</sup>

When foreign neighbors were disloyal or unruly, punishment campaigns were in order. Here, again, unlike European colonial campaigns, the goal was not enslavement and colonization but the restoration of the correct tributary relationship. Thus, the qing invasions of south Asia and southeast Asia—attacks on Nepal, 1793, North Burma 1766-1770 and North Vietnam 1788-1789—were not matters of brutal conquest but chastisement to restore the proper tributary order.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The predominant Western explanation of the Chinese use of force has been a stress on a presumptive universal rationality. In the words of Allen Whiting, that could be echoed by numerous other scholars,

The logic behind the final decisions has been deduced upon the assumption that Chinese leaders calculated the expected costs, risks and gains associated with alternative courses of action. In brief, it has been assumed that Chinese Communist behavior is rationally motivated.<sup>45</sup>

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44. *Ibid.*

Although this sounds unexceptional, the problem is that, on a more mundane level, there remain many cases of Chinese decisionmaking that traditional Western political science concepts of homo economicus, rationality and pragmatism do not seem to easily explain. This has been true throughout Chinese history. Shock and surprise have often characterized Western reaction to Chinese events over the last 150 years since China was forcibly opened to the West in the Opium War (1839-1842). What Western concept of rationality can explain the Boxer Rebellion, the seemingly absurd decision by the Empress Dowager to declare war on all Western powers in June 1900 and to rely on the magic of the Boxers to drive the Westerners out of Beijing?<sup>46</sup> What Western view of war as a decisive struggle to liquidate a hated enemy can explain the 1939-1943 period of Guomindang passivity and repeated threats to make a separate peace with a rapacious Japan that had massacred millions of Chinese during the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945)?<sup>47</sup>

What other nation would resort to shelling Quemoy on alternate days at a fixed schedule in 1958 to assert its power,

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45. Allen Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu* (New York: Macmillan, 1960), p. ix. Whiting, of course, with his emphasis on Chinese perspective and signalling, is more attuned to the psychological approach than most scholars.

46. For detailed analysis of the Boxer case see the chapter in this volume.

47. For a detailed analysis of the Sino-Japanese War see Jonathan R. Adelman, *Revolution, Armies and War* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publications, 1985), chapters 8-11.

when such actions had no military rationale?<sup>48</sup> What Western nation, having destroyed the forces of its Indian enemy in a lightning campaign in the Himalayas in 1962 would unilaterally and totally evacuate all its forces shortly after the triumph—and not even advertise its victory at home? As Roger Hilsman, the Assistant Secretary of State during the Kennedy administration, has proclaimed with regard to these actions, “Could you imagine the difficulty we would have with the Pentagon in pulling back from territory that had cost that many casualties, no matter the political end it served?”<sup>49</sup> And, how many countries would publicly announce their attention to punish a major enemy during a trip by its leader to the United States and then go ahead and launch a major invasion of that country (Vietnam) in 1979?<sup>50</sup>

Clearly, then, Western concepts of rationality and pragmatism are not totally transferable to another culture. News of the Boxer Rebellion was met with incredulity in the West, which knew the enormous advantage that modern weapons possessed over the primitive “magic” of the Boxers. During the Sino-Japanese War no leader (except for Charles de Gaulle, a special case in his own right) so infuriated the Americans, from General Hurley who called him a “peanut” to President Roosevelt who simply

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48. See the relevant chapter in this volume for details.

49. Quoted in Allen Whiting, *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1975), p. 165.

50. See relevant chapter in this volume.

threatened to shut down Lend Lease, as Jiang Jieshi.<sup>51</sup> At the Wake Island conference in October 1950 General Douglas MacArthur calmly reassured President Truman that any major Chinese attack was inconceivable, and if it did come it would be smashed within a week.<sup>52</sup> The Chinese ritual shelling of Quemoy (replete with prior announcement of the time!) seemed absurd to the American mind in 1958. The Chinese attack on India in 1962 shocked both India and the United States. It seemed inconceivable that a country ravaged by natural disasters, domestic discontent and the Great Leap Forward, would possibly take the offensive, especially against an India backed by both superpowers. And, the Vietnamese case in 1979 seemed to deny the validity of Western doctrine stressing the importance both of secrecy and attainable military ends, especially against a battle hardened Vietnam rich with both weapons and Soviet military support.<sup>53</sup>

Without cultural and military variables, it becomes difficult to adequately understand Chinese politics. For moral politics has been a powerful element in China, whether in military events cited above or in such "irrational" events as the Great Leap Forward or Culture Revolution. China has represented historically

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51. See Jonathan R. Adelman, *Revolution, Armies and War* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publications, 1985), chapter 10.

52. Jonathan R. Adelman, *Revolution, Armies and War* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publications, 1985), p. 128.

53. See the relevant chapters in this volume for these three incidents.



not simply another country but another civilization for the last two millenia, one with its own distinctive history, politics and culture. Chinese politics has been highly ritualistic, whether under the Quing dynasty, Guomindang interlude or the Communists.<sup>54</sup> For as Lucien Pye recently wrote,

Many of the problems that arise in defending political culture in general terms evaporate when the subject becomes Chinese politics, for it simply impossible to deny the importance of attitudes, sentiments and subjective considerations in changing the society that is China. Indeed, cultural factors dominate public life in China more than in just about any other country.<sup>55</sup>

In China, a distinctive culture and style of war emerged under specifically Chinese conditions during the over two millenia of Imperial China. Under circumstances markedly different from those extant in the West, the Chinese fashioned their own views on war and culture in a mode markedly different from that of the West. Under the impetus of Western military, political and economic inroads in the nineteenth century, these views began to be modified.

The theoretical question we probe in the beginning of the

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54. Chih-yu Shih, *The Spirit of Chinese Foreign Policy: A Psychocultural View* (New York: MacMillan, 1990).

55. Lucian Pye, *The Madarin and Cadre: China's Political Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988), p. 30. See also Chih-yu Shih, *The Spirit of Chinese Foreign Policy: A Psychocultural View* (New York, Macmillan, 1990).

paper about how realistic war really is appears to have no certain answer. In Europe for many centuries war, as an enduring way of life, seemed absolutely realistic. However, is realism itself a mode of thinking? The myth of war lies exactly in the confusion of the effects of war with the intention of the fighters. That many suffer and few benefit from war is an undeniable fact. Is the purpose of war to achieve victory and expand power? If so, then one must ask why, if suffering is the norm in war, that winning a war means victory in a power struggle. War is clearly a dramatic engagement in the broader sense that the feelings of soldiers are ignored in order to realize artificial calculations made by politicians. These calculations, so incompatible with natural human feelings, are fundamentally cultural in origins. They are inherently thereby man-made and irrational, without regard for their military accuracy.

# 東西戰爭觀之比較

## 摘 要

中國與西洋的戰爭無論是方法，目標認定及戰爭意義上均截然不同。戰爭的意義是由不同的世界觀來決定，即世界觀的建構受文化影響至鉅。由西方理性原則的觀念來理解戰爭作為政策之工具，或維護國家安全，或增進國家權力，在中國是不充分的。中國近代的戰爭起自鴉片戰爭以迄懲越戰爭鮮有為佔領土地而發動者。且每每發動戰爭之時刻均為中國國力相對薄弱之際。歷史似乎顯示，中國人的戰爭行為以證明某一特定世界秩序之道德價值而動。此與西洋戰爭中假設戰爭係為爭權力而起、國家平等獨立、外在威脅永久存在的權力均衡體系迥異。戰爭作為均衡或自衛之工具，與戰爭作為懲罰或昭示立場的工具，在不同的文化背景與世界觀裡，同為理性的產物。

