

ANCIENT CHINESE PRECEDENTS IN
CHINA'S NATIONAL DEFENSE

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

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The purpose of this paper is to analyze the strategy embodied in China's 1998 White Paper titled China's National Defense and compare it with the strategic concepts contained in a number of military classics from ancient China. The assumption is that since China's political and military leaders state openly that their strategy is based on traditional Chinese strategic concepts, a study of ancient classics on strategy may provide a deeper understanding of the strategy embodied in China's National Defense. Such an understanding will be of value to United States military strategists as they deal with the China of today and tomorrow.

The results of this study did find ancient precedents in the strategy outlined by China's National Defense. The most prevalent strategic precedents include the concepts of: gaining popular support for the national government, pursuing economic development to satisfy the population, developing a strong military to deter/defeat internal and external threats, and preferring the use of peaceful means to solve conflicts rather than using military force.

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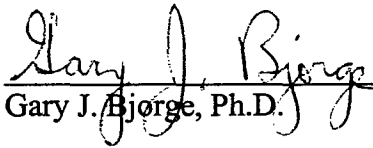
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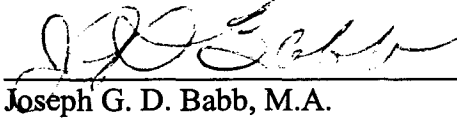
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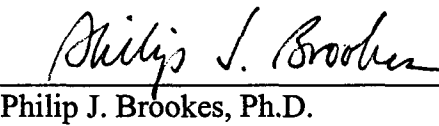
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ABSTRACT

ANCIENT CHINESE PRECEDENTS IN *CHINA'S NATIONAL DEFENSE* by MAJ Robert B. Geddis, USA, 125 pages.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the strategy embodied in China's 1998 White Paper titled *China's National Defense* and compare it with the strategic concepts contained in a number of military classics from ancient China. The assumption is that since China's political and military leaders state openly that their strategy is based on traditional Chinese strategic concepts, a study of ancient classics on strategy may provide a deeper understanding of the strategy embodied in *China's National Defense*. Such an understanding will be of value to United States military strategists as they deal with the China of today and tomorrow.

The results of this study did find ancient precedents in the strategy outlined by *China's National Defense*. The most prevalent strategic precedents include the concepts of: gaining popular support for the national government, pursuing economic development to satisfy the population, developing a strong military to deter/defeat internal and external threats, and preferring the use of peaceful means to solve conflicts rather than using military force.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In July 1998, for the first time, the People's Republic of China (henceforth referred to as China) published a White Paper that laid out China's national security strategy. The White Paper, titled *China's National Defense*, described how China is using diplomatic, informational, military, and economic forces to support her policies and strategies. As an official expression of Chinese strategic thought, *China's National Defense* provides a basis for understanding current Chinese national strategy.

Understanding China's national strategy is important because of China's growing political, economic, and military power. China has the largest population in the world, significant natural resources, and a growing economy. China's military force is composed of almost three million soldiers, sailors, and airmen, and China has the third largest nuclear arsenal in the world. China is also a permanent member of the UN Security Council. All of these factors combine to make Chinese-American relations a key element in United States national strategy. In fact, the October 1998 United States (US) National Security Strategy states, "A stable, open, prosperous People's Republic of China that assumes its responsibilities for building a more peaceful world is clearly and profoundly in our (US) interests."¹

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the strategy embodied in *China's National Defense* and compare it with the strategic concepts contained in a number of military classics from ancient China. The assumption is that since China's political and military leaders state openly that their strategy is based on traditional Chinese strategic concepts,²

a study of ancient classics on strategy may provide a deeper understanding of the strategy embodied in *China's National Defense*. Such an understanding will be of value to United States military strategists as they deal with the China of today and tomorrow.

The basic research question of this study is as follows: What is the national security strategy contained in *China's National Defense*, and does it have precedents in the writings of ancient Chinese strategists? Subordinate questions include: what similarities and differences exist between the strategic environments of China today and ancient China; what strategic concepts are advocated by ancient Chinese strategists that are consistent with or oppose the strategic concepts in *China's National Defense*; and is there a consensus among ancient strategists on certain strategic principles?

To pursue these questions, *China's National Defense* will be compared with eight existing works on ancient Chinese strategy that were written between the 11th century BC and 700 AD. These writings were selected because some of them are among the earliest Chinese works on strategy, which make them a natural historical start point, and also because, by enduring through the centuries, all of these works have shown their appeal to many generations of Chinese strategists.

Seven of the eight ancient texts on strategy that will be examined are compiled in a thousand year old collection titled *The Seven Military Classics*. Alastair Iain Johnston, a teacher of Chinese foreign policy and international relations at Harvard University, explains that the emperor of the Song Dynasty (960 – 1126 AD) ordered his officials to compile a text on organizational, strategic, and tactical principles that would offer practical instruction to deal with threats to the dynasty. The result was *The Seven Military Classics*.³ These classics are: *Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings*, Sun Zi's *Art of*

War, Wu Zi, The Methods of the Si Ma, Wei Liao Zi, Three Strategies of Huang Shi Gong, and Questions and Replies Between Tang Tai Zong and Li Wei Gong. According to Ralph D. Sawyer, an expert on Chinese history, these seven classics were codified around 1087 AD, and they were used in government examinations for military appointments. Sawyer also notes that these particular strategies were chosen because their value and utility allowed them to survive for many centuries since they were first written and employed.⁴ The eighth ancient text to be examined is Sun Bin's *Military Methods*. This work was often referred to in Chinese bibliographic listings as early as the Han Dynasty (206 BC to 220 AD), but the text disappeared until a copy was excavated in 1970.⁵ Sun Bin is considered to be a descendant of the ancient strategist Sun Zi.⁶ Examining these eight strategies and *China's National Defense* for common strategic links will hopefully provide a deeper understanding of *China's National Defense*.

The comparison of *China's National Defense* and the eight ancient Chinese classics will consist of two parts for each work. One part will examine the strategic setting of the time period in which the work was written, and the second part will examine the work itself to identify main strategic concepts. The strategic setting will be described by examining the internal sources of power and the international relationships of China (or of ancient Chinese states) that influenced the development of Chinese security strategy.

According to the United States Army Command and General Staff College, sources of power are a nation's geography, population, economy, national will, and national direction.⁷ The *geographical* source of power encompasses the location, size, climate, topography, and bounty of the land, including the raw materials from which a

nation can generate power. Geography can be both an advantage and disadvantage. For example, a nation bordered by mountain ranges may have a security advantage, or a nation that does not have forests, navigable rivers, or arable land may have an inability to support a large population. The *population* source of power represents the number of people residing within a nation, and also includes social structures, education levels, and cultural norms, all of which affect that population's ability and willingness to support the nation. The *economic* source of power is the collection of a nation's industries, natural resources, monetary systems, available labor, markets, transportation infrastructure, and interaction with trading partners. Economy defines a nation's ability to generate wealth. The remaining two sources of power, *national will* and *national direction*, encompass abstract ideas instead of physical characteristics. National will is the predisposition of a nation's population to support national policies and endure sacrifices. It is a function of history and culture, government systems, and societal organization. National direction is the national leadership's ability to provide a vision that unifies a nation's will, organizations, and government. If that vision is not in consonance with national values and culture, then national direction may be counterproductive.

Sources of power significantly affect a nation's strategy because they represent the strengths and weaknesses that a nation must account for as it devises its strategy. According to Mr. Bob Walz, a strategy instructor at the Command and General Staff College, a nation's strategy should maximize the advantages of a nation's sources of power and minimize the disadvantages of a nation's sources of power.⁸ Therefore, sources of power are key considerations when analyzing national strategies.

For each of the ancient works, not all of these sources of power and their components are addressed. For example, the geographic source of power is defined by location, size, climate, topography, and bounty of the land, but only the components of location, size, and topography are enumerated in this paper. There is little difference between information about the climates of the states of ancient China, and no information about the relative bounty of these states was discovered. Therefore, the components of climate and bounty are not discussed. Similarly for the population source of power, information on social structures, education levels, and cultural norms was also limited. Significant differences were not found, and thus these components were not addressed. Information about the economic source of power was not extensive either and was uneven. However, where it could be shown that economic factors had an impact on the strategic setting, they were addressed. The national will and national direction sources of power were not discussed because they encompass abstract ideas that are difficult to measure and those ideas were not evident in the historical works used in this study. In sum, if information about the sources of power and their components was found and it was clear that that source of power had had an impact on the strategic setting, then that information was presented in this study.

China's 1998 White Paper, *China's National Defense*, is the primary document for this study and is analyzed first. Works consulted to identify China's current sources of power and international relationships include: Dr. Joseph Needham's *Science and Civilisation in China, Volume 1*, Richard Bernstein's and Ross H. Munro's *The Coming Conflict with China*, John King Fairbank's and Merle Goldman's *China: A New History*, Andrew J. Nathan's and Robert S. Ross' *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress*,

Nicholas R. Lardy's *China's Unfinished Economic Revolution*, and a variety of other sources to include monographs by prominent analysts as well as articles from different news periodicals. Dr. Needham's *Science and Civilisation in China* is a seven-volume set that examined the history of China and her scientific achievements since China's earliest recorded history. Dr. Needham is recognized as an expert on China by scholars from both East and West, and has studied the language as well as lived and traveled in China for many years.⁹ Although his book is a historic work, part of Volume 1 describes China's terrain and its impact on China's society, and since terrain changes very little over time, Dr. Needham's descriptions still apply today.

The work by Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China*, is their assessment of current Chinese strategy, especially concerning the US, Taiwan, and Japan. As part of that assessment, the authors address the current political, military, and economic situations in China, both domestically and internationally. Richard Bernstein was a bureau chief for *Time* magazine in Beijing, and Ross Munro was a correspondent in Beijing as well as *Time's* bureau chief in Hong Kong.

As for the authors of *China: A New History*, John Fairbank was Francis Lee Higginson Professor of History and director of the East Asian Research Center at Harvard University, and Merle Goldman is a Professor of Chinese History at Boston University. This book is based on a manuscript written by John Fairbank just prior to his death that examined China's history from over four thousand years ago until the end of Mao Zedong's leadership in 1976. However, the parts of the book that provided the most utility for this study were the additions made by Merle Goldman. She updated Fairbank's manuscript with a chapter that examines the twenty years since Mao's death and her

description of the post-Mao era addresses the economic, political, and social changes in China that created the current situation.

Andrew J. Nathan's and Robert S. Ross' book, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress*, examines China's domestic and international situations and identifies China's most important security problems. The authors also analyze China's intentions for the future. Andrew Nathan is professor of political science at Columbia University, and Robert Ross is professor of political science at Boston College and research associate at the John King Fairbank Center for East Asian Research, Harvard University.

The work by Nicholas R. Lardy, *China's Unfinished Economic Revolution*, examines China's current economic reform strategy, which is focused on three areas: the banking system, state-owned enterprises, and government revenue. His book particularly looks at the banking industry, but as part of his examination, he provides an in-depth discussion of China's current economic situation, including international trade. Nicholas Lardy is a Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies of the Brookings Institution, a Professor of International Trade and Finance at Yale University, and was formerly Professor and Director of International Studies at Washington University.

The works used to identify sources of power and international relationships applicable to each of the ancient Chinese classics include: Dr. Needham's *Science and Civilisation in China*, Charles O. Hucker's *China's Imperial Past*, Ralph D. Sawyer's translations and analysis of *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* and Sun Bin's *Military Methods*, Alastair Iain Johnston's *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, Frank A. Kiernan, Jr.'s and John K. Fairbank's *Chinese Ways in Warfare*, and Arthur Waldron's *The Great Wall of China*. Again, the

work by Dr. Needham provides a terrain study that applies to each of the time periods in which the Chinese classics were written. However, this text also addresses prevalent economic, social, and military issues as well as the relationship between ancient Chinese nation-states and their neighbors.

The work by Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past*, provides a general history of China's civilization from its ancient beginnings to 1850 AD. The text includes analyses of China's political history, modes of governmental and socioeconomic organization, developments in religion and thought, and achievements in letters and arts. The book also includes maps that describe China's geography and depict the expansion of the Chinese civilization over time.¹⁰ Charles O. Hucker is Professor Emeritus of Chinese and of History at the University of Michigan.¹¹

The works by Ralph D. Sawyer's translations and analysis of *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* and Sun Pin's *Military Methods*, provide the texts of the eight ancient works that are compared to *China's National Defense*. In addition to providing translations, Sawyer's two books also present the historical background and main strategic concepts contained in each work. The historical backgrounds included analysis of geographic, economic, and social situations to include the relationships between ancient Chinese nation-states and their neighbors. Ralph Sawyer has studied at MIT, Harvard, and National Taiwan University, and for at least twenty years he has been an international consultant working throughout Asia.¹²

The work by Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, examined whether there existed a substantially consistent Chinese strategic culture, and if so, to what extent has that strategic culture

influenced China's use of military force against external threats historically. As part of that examination, Johnston provided his own assessments of the historical background and main strategic concepts for the same *Seven Military Classics* analyzed by Ralph Sawyer. Alastair Johnston was an Assistant Professor of Government and taught Chinese foreign policy and international relations at Harvard University when this book was published.¹³

The work by Frank A. Kierman, Jr. and John K. Fairbank, *Chinese Ways in Warfare*, is a compilation of seven case studies from different authors who wrote about China's military style and tradition from 632 BC to 1556 AD. These case studies were conceived at a conference sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies' Committee on Studies of Chinese Civilization and the East Asian Research Center of Harvard University.¹⁴ The authors presented research on battles, sieges, and campaigns,¹⁵ and they included examinations of the domestic and international influences affecting those battles and China's military strategy.

The work by Arthur Waldron, *The Great Wall of China*, is a study of China's Great Wall that explores the reasons why the Great Wall was built. As part of that study, Waldron examined evidence of wall building in China since the first millennium BC, and he investigated the strategic and political factors involved in developing national security strategies during those times. Arthur Waldron, at the time this book was published, was a professor at the US Naval War College.¹⁶

The second part of the comparison between *China's National Defense* and the eight ancient Chinese classics is to identify the main strategic concepts in each work. The strategic concepts of each work will be identified using a model taught at the US

Army Command and General Staff College. This model provides a method to describe a nation's security strategy with the use of a pyramid diagram shown below.

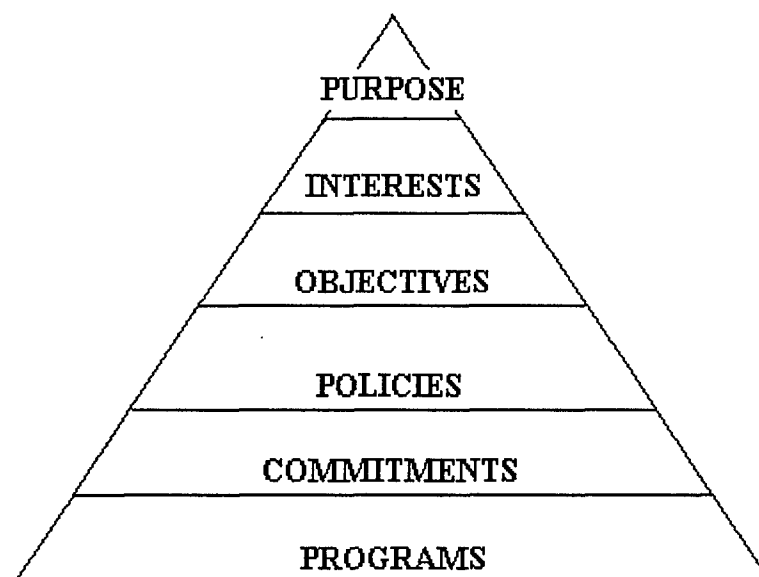


Figure 1. Pyramid Model for a National Security Strategy

At the top of the pyramid is the ultimate goal of a nation's strategy, called the *purpose*. For example, the *purpose* of the US national security strategy is arguably the preservation of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. According to the US Declaration of Independence, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are inalienable rights, and it is the purpose of governments to secure those rights.¹⁷ The next level of the pyramid, labeled *interests*, facilitates the nation's ability to achieve its *purpose*. If a nation can protect its national *interests*, then it will be able to achieve its strategic *purpose*. According to the US National Security Strategy: physical security of US territory, physical security of US citizens, economic well being, and protection of critical infrastructure are examples of US national *interests*.¹⁸ If the US can protect its land,

people, economic prosperity and infrastructure, then the US can better preserve life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The remaining levels in the pyramid are similarly nested. National *objectives* are established to achieve national *interests*, national *policies* support national *objectives*, etc. For example, "enhancing security" is a US national *objective*,¹⁹ which when achieved, will increase the nation's ability to protect its physical security. A national *policy* that will enhance security is the discouragement of production and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and the use of negotiations is a national *commitment* to execute that *policy*. Lastly, the establishment of periodic international WMD conferences can be a *program* to support the *commitment* of negotiations.

The pyramid model will first be applied to *China's National Defense* to identify the *purpose*, *interests*, *objectives*, and *policies* delineated by that document. Then, the eight Chinese classics will be examined to identify any *purposes*, *interests*, *objectives*, and *policies* that are similar to, or perhaps in direct opposition to, *China's National Defense*. The categories of *commitments* and *programs* will not be included because the eight Chinese classics do not provide that much detail in the strategic concepts they profess.

To assist the investigation of strategic concepts in *China's National Defense*, Bernstein's and Munro's *The Coming Conflict with China*, Goldman's portion of *China: A New History*, and Nathan's and Ross' *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress* will be consulted. All three previously mentioned works contain assessments of some of China's national strategic concepts. These assessments will be taken into account when identifying the strategic concepts in *China's National Defense*. To assist in the

investigation of strategic concepts in the eight Chinese classics, Sawyer's translations of *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* and Sun Bin's *Military Methods* and Alastair Iain Johnston's *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* will be consulted. Both previously mentioned works provide assessments of the strategic concepts contained within the eight Chinese classics that are involved in this study. However, Alastair Johnston did not examine Sun Bin's *Military Methods*.

After the sources of power and international relationships of modern China are examined, then the strategic concepts in *China's National Defense* are identified. All of those strategic elements are then compared to those in each Chinese classic to discover any common trends. If modern Chinese leaders are indeed being influenced by ancient Chinese strategic thought, then there should be strategic elements common among *China's National Defense* and all or most of the eight Chinese classics.

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction, and Chapter 2 examines the strategic elements in *China's National Defense*. Chapter 3 examines the strategic elements of the earliest four Chinese classics, and Chapter 4 examines the remaining ancient works. Chapter 5 identifies the common strategic trends among the ancient works, compares them with the strategic elements in *China's National Defense*, and presents conclusions.

¹*A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, 1998), 43.

²Examples of statements by the leadership in China, which link current strategy with Chinese history, can be found in the following sources: *China's National Defense* (Information Office of the State Council, People's Republic of China, 1998), 7; Jijun Li,

Traditional Military Thinking and the Defensive Strategy of China (Strategic Studies Institute, United States Army War College, 1997), 1.

³Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 46.

⁴Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 1-2.

⁵Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), xii.

⁶*Ibid.*, xii.

⁷Department of the Army, US Army Command and General Staff College, *DJMO Selected Readings Book Vol. I, Fundamentals of Operational Warfighting* (Fort Leavenworth: USACGSC, August 1988), L1-A-8 to L1-A-9.

⁸Bob Walz, strategy instructor at the US Army Command and General Staff College, interviewed by author, Fort Leavenworth, Ks., 28 Jan 1999.

⁹Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), book cover.

¹⁰Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 1.

¹¹*Ibid.*, back cover.

¹²Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), book cover.

¹³Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), book cover.

¹⁴Frank A. Kierman, Jr. and John K. Fairbank, ed. *Chinese Ways in Warfare* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1974), book cover.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁶Arthur Waldron, *The Great Wall of China: From History to Myth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), iii.

¹⁷*The Declaration of Independence* [database on line], Accessed 5 May 1999. Available from <http://www.nara.gov/exhall/charters/declaration/declaration.html>; 1.

¹⁸*A National Security Strategy for a New Century* (Washington D.C.: The White House, 1998), 5.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 6.

CHAPTER 2

ANALYSIS OF *CHINA'S NATIONAL DEFENSE*

This Chapter examines *China's National Defense* in two parts. Part one presents China's contemporary strategic setting, which includes China's sources of power (geography, population, and economy) and her international relationships. Part two will identify the strategic concepts (purpose, interests, objectives, and policies) contained in *China's National Defense*, using the pyramid model explained in Chapter 1.

Strategic Setting

The predominant geographic features in China are her large and numerous mountain ranges, which effectively compartmentalize the country. Looking at figure 2, the Tsinling Mountains are in the center of China and separate the country's two primary river valleys, the Yellow River valley and the Yangtze River valley. Smaller mountain ranges further subdivide China into separate areas such as the North China Plain in the east, the Ordos Plateau in the north, the Tibetan Plateau in the west, and the Yunnan Plateau in the south. China's mountain ranges make cross-country movement difficult which tends to isolate different portions of the country. As late as the mid-twentieth century, such isolation made it difficult for the central government to effectively control the whole country. China's central location on the Asian continent places her in a good position to influence other Asian nations, but it also exposes China to more external pressure since she shares borders with fourteen countries.

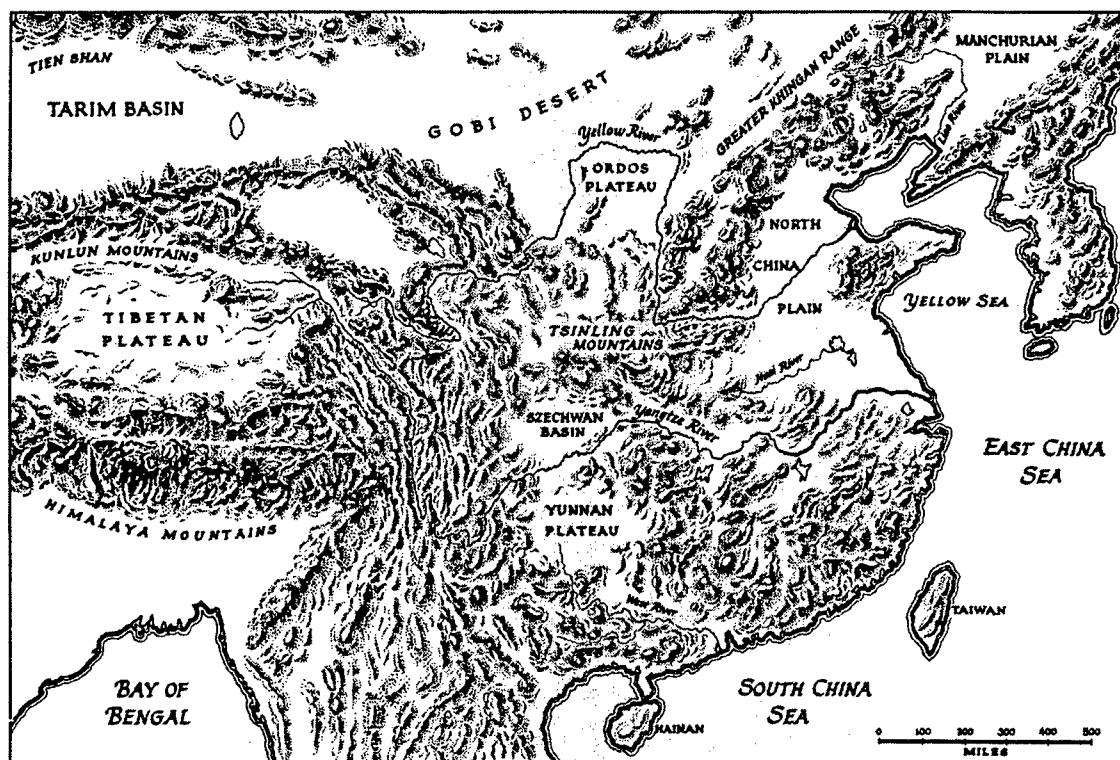


Figure 2. Principle Geographic Features of China. Source: Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 4.

China's population is the largest in the world (approximately 1.2 billion people)¹, and therefore provides China with a great source of manpower. However, that large population also creates some significant challenges. Since the 18th century AD, China's population growth began to out-pace China's ability to support that population,² and providing for such a large population requires an efficient economy. Also, certain minority groups threaten internal stability. China's population contains 56 different recognized ethnic groups.³ Most are small in number and the total minority population is only 8.1%⁴ of China's population. The other 92% belong to the Han group. The Han primarily occupy the eastern portion of the country, while the three largest minority

groups are located in northwestern, western, and southwestern China. These minority groups are the Tibetans in the Tibetan Plateau, the Uigurs in the Tarim Basin, and the Mongolians in the Gobi Desert and Ordos Plateau. In the case of all minorities, their cultural differences with the Han people and their geographic separation from the Han assist them in maintaining a separate identity. The location of virtually all of the minorities along China's borders makes the minority issue one of special sensitivity to the Chinese government.

China is primarily an agricultural country with over 50% of the labor force engaged in agriculture.⁵ However, since 1949 the government of China has placed great emphasis on industrial development. Industry and the service trade are now responsible for 80% of China's Gross Domestic Product.⁶ Since 1978, China's economy has experienced one of the highest growth rates in the world, but that growth is now slowing as state-run banks and businesses get deeper in debt and require government subsidies to remain solvent.⁷ To increase growth, China is privatizing some of her state-run enterprises, but that privatization causes layoffs and an increase in the number of unemployed workers. As of 1997, the unemployment rate was estimated at 8-10%⁸, which is about 120 million people (nearly one-half of the entire US population). Coupled with widespread underemployment in the countryside,⁹ this high urban unemployment rate contains the potential to create social unrest.

China's central government also faces external pressures. These pressures will be examined, starting with the island of Taiwan and then moving counterclockwise around the map in figure 3. Taiwan has maintained a separate, autonomous government since 1949, but China considers Taiwan to be a subordinate province and a part of China's

sovereign territory. Taiwan's leaders want to preserve their autonomy, short of formal independence, but free elections in Taiwan and the "independence" platforms of some political parties represent potential threats to China's authority. Subsequently, China has threatened to use force, if necessary, to prevent Taiwan independence.



Figure 3. Map of China. Source: "China." *Central Intelligence Agency Factbook* [database on-line], Accessed 3 February 1999. Available from <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ch.html>; Internet, 1.

China's threat to use force not only creates conflict with Taiwan but it also creates problems with the United States (US). Official US policy recognizes that Taiwan is part of China, but that policy also opposes China's use of force against Taiwan. This policy was tested in the spring of 1996 when China fired live missiles near Taiwan, and in response, the US sent two aircraft carrier battle groups to demonstrate the US commitment against China's use of force. Thus, China's relationship with Taiwan

involves a number of security concerns ranging from maintaining internal stability and government control to provoking conflict with the world's superpower.

In northeast Asia, China has strong suspicions about the intentions of her neighbors Japan, Korea, and Russia. China has a historical mistrust of Japan stemming from Japan's imperialistic ambitions toward China dating back to the nineteenth century and Japan's occupation of much of China before and during World War II. Currently, China disputes ownership of the Senkaku Islands with Japan (and Taiwan).¹⁰ Again, the US complicates the issue for China because the US maintains a security alliance with Japan, and any Chinese action against Japan would likely provoke a US response.

Korea is another place for potential conflict between China and the US. A communist North Korea now provides a physical buffer between China and the direct influences of a democratic and US supported South Korea. If Korea were unified under a government like the one now in power in the South, democracy and western influences on China's border could represent another threat to China's internal stability because western ideology might encourage the population to seek greater freedoms from China's communist controlled government. Additionally, the large Korean population living north of the Yalu River in China might be attracted to a freer and more prosperous unified Korea. China's political and historical ties to North Korea might also drag China into any renewal of hostilities on the Korean Peninsula.

China's relationship with the third northeast Asian neighbor, Russia, has historically been one of distrust. China and Russia have had numerous territorial disputes, and in the 1970's, China considered Russia (then the Soviet Union) to be the primary threat to Chinese security.¹¹ However, the breakup of the former Soviet Union

has reduced that threat as a weaker Russia focuses on her own internal problems. One of those problems is the need for revenue, and that situation has created an opportunity for China to buy large quantities of former Soviet military equipment at bargain prices. China has also announced a "strategic partnership" with Russia, which further indicates reduced tension between the two countries. Yet, Russia does possess a large nuclear arsenal that can threaten China's security.

North and west of China, the countries of Mongolia and the Islamic Stans (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan) each share borders with China and each have ethnic ties with minority groups inside China. Therefore, China's treatment of those minority groups affects China's relationship with these neighbors. There are 16 million Mongolians inside the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, which is located south of, and along the Mongolian-Chinese border. The Islamic Uigurs reside in the Xinjiang Uigur Autonomous Region, which covers China's northwestern territory that shares borders with all the Islamic Stans. Uigur dissidents are actively seeking autonomy from Beijing, and as much as Beijing wants to control the Uigurs, the government must measure its response to avoid conflict with the Stans. China has a growing need for resources, including oil, and the Stans offer a potential route for mid-east oil to be brought into China.

On China's southwest border, the country of India is a primary antagonist. This antagonism has developed due to historical border disputes, India's alignment with the former Soviet Union, and India's current nuclear weapons development. In 1962, India and China went to war over the demarcation of their common border, and during the Cold War, the former Soviet Union cultivated a relationship with India at a time when the

USSR was considered the primary security threat to China. In 1998, India successfully conducted nuclear weapon tests, which made India the second nuclear power along China's borders. To counter the new Indian nuclear threat, Pakistan (enemy of India, and friend to China) also successfully conducted nuclear weapons tests, making Pakistan the third nuclear power along China's border. India also dominates the domestic and foreign policies of the smaller countries of Nepal and Bhutan, which border China, forcing them to favor Indian concerns over China's interests.¹²

On China's southeast border, she enjoys a historically stable relationship with Burma¹³ and a normalized relationship with Laos,¹⁴ while Vietnam has been the primary antagonist. China and Vietnam fought an armed conflict in 1979, and both countries have existing territorial disputes over island chains in the South China Sea. A number of those island chains offer significant oil and natural gas resources, and China considers them to be sovereign territory. However, Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries, to include Malaysia, Brunei, and the Philippines dispute that claim,¹⁵ which creates another area of potential conflict for China.

"Potential conflict" is a phrase that represents China's current international relationships. Presently, there are no impending threats to China's physical security, but the potential for such threats does exist. Taiwan represents a potential threat to China's internal control and stated sovereignty, but Taiwan does not physically threaten the Chinese mainland. China and the US have potential conflicts over Taiwanese, Japanese, and Korean issues, but all countries involved express a desire to avoid such confrontations. Two of three nuclear powers along China's borders (Russia and India) have historical disputes with China, but both of those countries also state that their

nuclear weapons are for defensive purposes only. Finally, potential conflict exists between China's growing requirement for oil and China's relationship with the States in the west or the nations around the South China Sea.

Despite these potential conflicts, China is relatively secure from external threats as long as the current situation is maintained. However, the geographic, population, and economic situations discussed earlier indicate that China has significant internal challenges. External threats and internal challenges define China's strategic situation, and in the next section, the security strategy contained in *China's National Defense* is examined to identify China's stated plan to address that situation.

The Strategy

This part of the study looks at key strategic concepts within *China's National Defense*, and then uses them to construct China's national security strategy by placing them within the pyramid model described in Chapter 1. The results are shown below in figure 4. Following figure 4 is an explanation of the significance of the completed pyramid.

At the top of the model is the *purpose* of the strategy (become a great power), but the purpose is followed by a question mark because *China's National Defense* does not clearly distinguish China's ultimate goal. Actually, two potential purposes can be derived from the White Paper. The first possibility is found in the following quote: "Even when China becomes strong and powerful in the future, it will by no means take to the road of foreign aggression and expansion."¹⁶ Although the achievement of strength

Purpose:

Become a Great Power?

Interests:

Sovereignty, Unity, Territorial Integrity, and Security

Objectives:

Economic Development, Reunify w/ Taiwan, Regional Peace/Stability, Capable Military

Policies:

-
- Prioritize Economic Development over Military Development
 - Employ Military Expertise
 - Encourage Regional Economic Cooperation
 - Reduce Externally Imposed Trade Barriers
 - Promote Nuclear/Chemical Material Trade (Peaceful Purposes Only)
 - Peaceful Resolution
 - One China, Two Systems
 - Taiwan is an Internal Affair
 - Use Force if Necessary
 - Peaceful Means First
 - Defensive Military Strategy
 - Avoid Large Military Alliances
 - Arms Control & Disarmament
 - Expand International Military Contacts
 - Support International Peace and Security Efforts
 - Support International Disaster Relief & Emergency Rescue
 - Modernize Military, Quality vs. Quantity
 - Military Contacts

Figure 4. Pyramid Model of China's National Defense

and power is not stated as an objective, the quote reveals that strength and power are goals that China intends to achieve. The second part of the quote is a statement that China will not use that power against other nations. This theme is reinforced with the statement, "China does not seek hegemonism, nor does it seek military blocs or military expansion."¹⁷ What China will or won't do once she becomes a powerful state can only be the subject of speculation. For now, this statement fits her capabilities. The second potential purpose is derived from this quote: "It is the aspiration of the Chinese government and people to lead a peaceful, stable and prosperous world into the new century."¹⁸ It is not surprising that China would say it is seeking the universal goals of peace, stability, and prosperity. What is more important, and what matches the quest for strength mentioned in the first quote is that China's desire to "lead" the world indicates her intentions to be a world leader. Clearly, China wants her counsel to be sought and her voice to be heard.

The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress and *The Coming Conflict with China* support the assessment that China wants to become a great power. The authors of *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress* stated that, "It [China] intends to take its place in the next century as a great power."¹⁹ According to *The Coming Conflict of China*, "China's historical sense of itself, its basic material and human conditions, and its own assessment of its national interest combine to make a Chinese move toward Asian hegemony virtually inevitable."²⁰ This statement indicates that China wants to be a power, but it also counters China's claim that she will not seek hegemony. Since the above two sources state that China's ultimate goal is to become a great power, which matches the same implied goal in the White Paper, then "becoming a great power" is identified as the

purpose of China's security strategy. However, the question mark is a reminder that *China's National Defense* does not explicitly identify that purpose.

The US National Security Strategy also does not clearly identify the ultimate purpose (life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness) of US strategy. The highest national goals specifically identified within the US National Security Strategy are the physical security of US territory, the physical security of US citizens, economic well being, and the protection of critical infrastructure, which are identified as national interests (see Chapter 1). The highest national goals explicitly identified within the White Paper are the protection of China's sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, and security. According to *China's National Defense*, China has "always attached primary importance"²¹ to protecting these goals. Thus, following the pattern of the US National Security Strategy, China's goals of sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, and security will be considered national interests.

The national interest of sovereignty refers to China's ability to maintain independence of action. According to *Black's Law Dictionary*, sovereignty is, "the international independence of a state, combined with the right and power of regulating its internal affairs without foreign dictation; . . . [It is] The power to do everything in a state without accountability, -- to make laws, to execute and to apply them, to impose and collect taxes and levy contributions, to make war or peace, to form treaties of alliance or of commerce with foreign nations, and the like."²² The national interest of unity addresses the unified support of the Chinese people for the national government, and the interest of territorial integrity describes China's goal to maintain control over her lands.

The national interest of security refers to the protection of China's government, people, and lands from internal and external threats.

Various books about current Chinese strategy provide evidence to support these interests as primary goals of China. According to *The Coming Conflict with China*, "in the Chinese value system, sovereignty, national unification, and preserving the regime have always been higher than peace."²³ According to *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress*, China's "central interest" is "to defend itself against the initiatives of others,"²⁴ which addresses the defense of China's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and security. According to *China: A New History*, preservation of communist party control is a primary goal of China's leadership.²⁵ A connection can be made between this goal and the maintenance of national sovereignty.

The next levels in the pyramid model are *objectives* and *policies*. The identification of objectives and policies was somewhat subjective. After the interests contained in *China's National Defense* were identified, the objectives that support them were laid out and the policies designed to achieve each of those objectives were grouped together. Four broad objectives and their corresponding groupings of supporting policies emerged, and they can be found displayed in figure 4. The objectives were selected based on statements within *China's National Defense* that demonstrated a direct link between those objectives and the national interests of sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, and security. Works on current Chinese strategy were consulted for evidence to support or contradict the selection of those objectives. The results are outlined in the following paragraphs.

The first national objective is economic development. *China's National Defense* identified economic development as "becoming daily more important for state security,"²⁶ and according to *China's National Defense*, "developing the economy is the most important task for each country [in the Asia-Pacific region]."²⁷ Economic development will provide China with necessary wealth and prosperity to support her population, and a satisfied population is more supportive of the government. According to both *The Coming Conflict with China* and *China: A New History*, China's previous president, Deng Xiaoping, directly linked economic reform with the government's ability to survive and maintain control.²⁸ Therefore, economic development is directly linked with the national interests of sovereignty (government control) and security.

The next objective, reunification with Taiwan, directly impacts upon China's sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and security. According to *China's National Defense*, "Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese Territory. It is a lofty mission and a common aspiration of all Chinese people, including the Taiwan compatriots, to put an end to the cleavage between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits and realize the reunification with the Motherland."²⁹ The Nationalist government on Taiwan directly challenges the authority of the Chinese Communist Party and an independent Taiwan would threaten national unity. According to *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress*, "[China's] first objective is to restore and maintain territorial integrity. PRC [People's Republic of China] diplomacy seeks to reclaim the lost regions of Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan, to block outside support for separatist movements in Tibet, Xinjiang, and Inner Mongolia, and to deter invasion and military pressure on all fronts by building up the capacity for internal security and border defense."³⁰ Therefore, restoring "lost

regions” supports the national interests of territorial integrity and security. Reunification with Hong Kong has already been realized and reunification with Macao will be realized in 1999, so Taiwan is the sole remaining “lost region” that directly impacts upon China’s national interests.

The third objective, peace and stability in the region, protects China’s territorial integrity and security. According to the White Paper, “China needs and cherishes dearly an environment of long-term international peace, especially a favorable peripheral environment.”³¹ “Peace and stability in its [China’s] surrounding regions” is also specifically identified as an objective of “China’s Asia-Pacific security strategy”.³² A peaceful region reduces external threats to China, which supports the national interest of security, and a peaceful region also allows China to focus more effort towards the three other national objectives.

The last objective, establishing a capable military force, directly supports all of China’s national interests. According to *China’s National Defense*, China has a great desire for peace, but the establishment of a credible military force is necessary for state security. “Military factors still occupy an important position in state security. In the new international security environment, while stressing the settlement of disputes through political, economic and diplomatic means, most countries still regard military means and the reinforcement of military strength as important ways to safeguard their own security and national interests.”³³ The White Paper also states, “a country must have the capability to defend its sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and security by military means.”³⁴ According to *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress*, “China . . . remains in a position of strategic vulnerability in which it must maintain the capability to defend itself

in potential military confrontations”³⁵ Therefore, establishing a capable military force is a necessary objective to achieve national interests.

Underneath each of the four objectives in the model is a list of *policies* that support each objective. These policies were derived from statements within *China's National Defense*, and assessments from works on current Chinese strategy that link those policies with national objectives. The key policies for each objective will be addressed below as well as explanations for some of the abbreviated descriptions on the chart.

Five policies that support the objective of economic prosperity were identified in *China's National Defense*. The first of these is the prioritization of economic construction above military construction. According to *China's National Defense*, “China unswervingly pursues a national defense policy that . . . keeps national defense construction in a position subordinate to and in the service of the nation's economic construction.”³⁶ This is a policy that is referred to in at least five different places throughout the White Paper.³⁷ This quote also describes military construction to be “in the service of” economic construction, which refers to the second policy supporting economic prosperity, the employment of military expertise. According to *China's National Defense*, the military will actively support the development of China's economy by providing manpower and expertise, and the White Paper uses two pages to outline such military assistance.³⁸ For example, the military will improve China's infrastructure with construction projects; the military will help maintain and repair public facilities; and the military will provide science, technological, and medical support.³⁹ The remaining

economic policies address China's efforts to negotiate with foreign governments to improve trade relationships and increase revenue.

The next objective, reunification with Taiwan, is supported by four policies that are contained in the following passage in *China's National Defense*:

The Chinese government adheres to its stand for solving the issue of Taiwan according to the basic principle of 'peaceful reunification, and one country, two systems,' and resolutely opposes any attempt, by words or deeds, to split the country by creating an 'independent Taiwan,' 'two Chinas,' or 'one China, one Taiwan.' The issue of Taiwan is entirely an internal affair of China. Directly or indirectly incorporating the Taiwan Straits into the security and cooperation sphere of any country or any military alliance is an infringement upon and interference in China's sovereignty.

The Chinese government seeks to achieve the reunification of the country by peaceful means, but will not commit itself not to resort to force. Every sovereign state has the right to use all means it thinks necessary, including military means, to safeguard its own sovereignty and territorial integrity.⁴⁰

This passage demonstrates a policy that prefers peaceful reunification with Taiwan under a framework called "one China, two systems". That framework implies that China is willing to accept a different system of government within Taiwan as long as Taiwan remains part of the "one China". Another policy is to discourage foreign intervention by proclaiming that Taiwan's status is strictly an internal matter of China, and that any foreign interference will be viewed as a threat to China's sovereignty. According to *The Coming Conflict with China*, "From the formal Chinese point of view, Taiwan was a renegade province and therefore a domestic matter for China, in more or less the same way that a dispute between the federal government and the state of California would be for the United States."⁴¹ Finally, if peaceful attempts fail, and Taiwan pursues independence, then China reserves the right to use military force.

The third objective, regional peace and stability, is supported by a large number of policies. The first policy advocates a preference for peaceful means over violent ones, and this preference is advocated in at least six locations throughout the White Paper.⁴² According to *China's National Defense*, "China holds that conflicts and disputes among countries should be solved in a peaceful way through consultation, and opposes the use or threat of use of force, hegemonism and power politics."⁴³ The White Paper also states that, "China spares no effort to avoid and curb war, and to solve international disputes and questions left over by history through peaceful means."⁴⁴ Additionally, according to *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress*, "Chinese officials' position on most disputes around the world is that they should be solved by peaceful negotiations."⁴⁵

The next policy is the employment of a defensive military strategy, and like the policy of using peaceful means first, China's defensive strategy is referred to in many places (at least seven) throughout the document.⁴⁶ According to the White Paper, "The Chinese government firmly pursues a national defense policy that is defensive in nature."⁴⁷ *China's National Defense* denounces any desire for expansion, "Even when China becomes strong and powerful in the future, it will by no means take to the road of foreign aggression and expansion."⁴⁸ Also, the authors of *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress* view China's posture as defensive,⁴⁹ and according to the *Coming Conflict with China*:

China does not seek to use military force to occupy the territory of neighboring countries or to attack the United States. There is not Eastern Europe in the picture here, no satellite countries, no puppet governments, no tanks stationed on the territory of neighboring countries. Moreover, because Communist ideology – as opposed to the power of something still called the Communist Party – is dead in China, the country has none of the messianic impulses that made the Soviet Union

more threatening. China does not seek to spread its way of life to other countries.⁵⁰

However, the White Paper also describes China's defensive military strategy as a strategy of "active defense," which promises offensive action if China is attacked. "Strategically China pursues the defensive policy featuring self-defense and gaining mastery by striking only after the enemy has struck, and adheres to the principle: 'We will not attack unless we are attacked; if we are attacked, we will certainly counter-attack.'"⁵¹

A third policy is the avoidance of large military alliances. According to the White Paper, "History has proved that the concepts and systems of security with military alliances as the basis and increasing military might as the means could not be conducive to peace during the cold war. Under the new situation, especially, enlarging military blocs and strengthening military alliances run counter to the tide of the times. Security cannot be guaranteed by an increase in arms, nor by military alliances. Security should be based on mutual trust and common interests."⁵² Therefore, "China unswervingly pursues an independent foreign policy of peace, . . . , and refrains from forming alliances with any big power or any group of countries."⁵³ According to *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress*, this independent policy "means that China does not align itself with any other major power."⁵⁴

The remaining policies under the objective of regional peace and security address China's interaction with foreign countries to enhance security in the region. Arms control and disarmament represents a broad policy that denounces the use, production, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and *China's National Defense* dedicates an entire chapter to cover this topic.⁵⁵ Within that chapter, "China . . . solemnly

declare[s] its determination not to be the first to use . . . [nuclear] weapons at any time and in any circumstances”⁵⁶ The chapter also puts China on record as prohibiting the use of chemical and biological weapons⁵⁷ and promoting disarmament, the destruction of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons,⁵⁸ and the establishment of nuclear-free zones.⁵⁹ *China’s National Defense* also discusses space-based weapons and antipersonnel mines (APLs). China wants to prohibit weapons from being deployed into outer space and wants to have such weapons destroyed.⁶⁰ China favors imposing “proper and rational restrictions on the use and transfer of APLs in a bid to achieve the ultimate objective of comprehensive prohibition of such landmines”⁶¹ The remaining three policies under the objective of regional peace and stability represent China’s plans to engage other nations in dialogue, exchanges, and disaster assistance to foster more peaceful relationships.⁶²

The last objective, establishing a capable military force, is supported by policies of modernization and military contacts. According to *China’s National Defense*, modernization of her military is necessary for self-defense.⁶³ “The Chinese army strengthens itself by relying on science and technology, and strives to make the transition from a numerically superior type to a qualitatively efficient type, and from a manpower-intensive type to a technology-intensive type.”⁶⁴ Additionally, military contacts will be used to “serve the modernization of national defense and the armed forces,”⁶⁵ and military contacts will “stress technological exchanges in specialized fields.”⁶⁶

That completes the explanation of the pyramid strategy model (figure 4), which will form the basis for comparison with the eight Chinese military classics. Interestingly, the national objectives described by the model appear for the most part to support China’s

needs that were presented in the strategic setting portion of the chapter. Economic development helps China provide for a massive population and helps counter China's high underemployment and unemployment rates. Reunification with Taiwan will preserve China's sovereignty over the island. The objective of regional peace and stability will help maintain the relative security from external threats that China enjoys today. Finally, establishing a capable military force will give China the capability to defend itself from any internal and external threats and also pursue the forceful reunification of Taiwan with the Mainland.

¹"China." *Central Intelligence Agency Factbook* [database on-line], Accessed 3 February 1999. Available from <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ch.html>; Internet, 3.

²Jonathan Spence, "Paradise Lost." *Far East Economic Review*, 15 April 1999, 44. Jonathan Spence is the Sterling Professor of History at Yale University.

³Robert L. Worden, Andrea Matles Savada, and Ronald E. Dolan, ed., *China: A Country Study* (Washington D.C.: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1988), 84.

⁴"China." *Central Intelligence Agency Factbook* [database on-line], Accessed 3 February 1999. Available from <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ch.html>; Internet, 3.

⁵*Ibid.*, 7.

⁶*Ibid.*, 7.

⁷Nicholas R. Lardy, *China's Unfinished Economic Revolution* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 1998), vii.

⁸"China." *Central Intelligence Agency Factbook* [database on-line], Accessed 3 February 1999. Available from <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ch.html>; Internet, 7.

⁹*Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 10.

¹¹O. Edmund Clubb, *20th Century China, Second Edition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 502.

¹²Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress* (New York: W W Norton and Company, 1997), 120.

¹³*Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 106.

¹⁵"China." *Central Intelligence Agency Factbook* [database on-line], Accessed 3 February 1999. Available from <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ch.html>; Internet, 10.

¹⁶*China's National Defense* (Information Office of the State Council, People's Republic of China, 1998), 7.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁹Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress* (New York: W W Norton and Company, 1997), xi.

²⁰Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1997), 53.

²¹*China's National Defense* (Information Office of the State Council, People's Republic of China, 1998), 6.

²²Henry Cambell Black, *Black's Law Dictionary, 6th Edition* (St. Paul, Minnesota: West Publishing Company, 1990), 1396.

²³Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1997), 162.

²⁴Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress* (New York: W W Norton and Company, 1997), 14.

²⁵John King Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China: A New History* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1998), 408. Merle Goldman described the goal of Deng Xiao-ping's reform policies as to maintain communist party control.

²⁶*China's National Defense* (Information Office of the State Council, People's Republic of China, 1998), 2.

²⁷Ibid., 3.

²⁸Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1997), 45; John King Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China: A New History* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1998), 408.

²⁹*China's National Defense* (Information Office of the State Council, People's Republic of China, 1998), 5.

³⁰Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress* (New York: W W Norton and Company, 1997), 16.

³¹*China's National Defense* (Information Office of the State Council, People's Republic of China, 1998), 1.

³²Ibid., 5.

³³Ibid., 2.

³⁴Ibid., 8.

³⁵Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress* (New York: W W Norton and Company, 1997), xiv.

³⁶*China's National Defense* (Information Office of the State Council, People's Republic of China, 1998), 1.

³⁷Ibid., 1, 7, 8, 13, 14.

³⁸Ibid., 16-18.

³⁹Ibid., 17.

⁴⁰Ibid., 6.

⁴¹Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1997), 150.

⁴²Ibid., 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 24.

⁴³*China's National Defense* (Information Office of the State Council, People's Republic of China, 1998), 7.

⁴⁴Ibid., 7.

⁴⁵Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress* (New York: W W Norton and Company, 1997), 5.

⁴⁶*China's National Defense* (Information Office of the State Council, People's Republic of China, 1998), 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 21.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 6.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 7.

⁴⁹Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress* (New York: W W Norton and Company, 1997), xi.

⁵⁰Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1997), 18.

⁵¹*China's National Defense* (Information Office of the State Council, People's Republic of China, 1998), 8.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 4.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 7.

⁵⁴Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress* (New York: W W Norton and Company, 1997), 4.

⁵⁵*China's National Defense* (Information Office of the State Council, People's Republic of China, 1998), 25-34.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 27.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 28.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 27, 28.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 27.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 29.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 30.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 27-31.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 8.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 9.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 19.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 21.

CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF THE FOUR EARLIER CHINESE CLASSICS

In this chapter, the earliest four Chinese classics will be examined to identify any *purpose, interests, objectives, and/or policies* that are consistent with, or in direct opposition to, the strategic concepts in *China's National Defense*. The ancient works are *Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings*, *The Methods of the Si Ma*, Sun Zi's *Art of War*, and *Wu Zi*. Each ancient work will be examined separately. The strategic setting and international relationships will be presented first, followed by an examination of strategic concepts.

Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings

Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings is alleged to be a record of conversations between a strategic advisor referred to as the Tai Gong and two kings, King Wen and later his son King Wu. These kings were rulers of the Zhou people who comprised a subordinate state of the Shang Dynasty in the 11th century BC. With the assistance of the Tai Gong, both kings led a revolt and eventually overthrew the ruling Shang. King Wen is credited with developing the plan and initiating preparations for the revolt, and his son is credited with the successful overthrow of the government. The conversations between the two kings and the Tai Gong about preparing and executing this revolution are presented in *Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings*.¹

Strategic Setting

From approximately 1520-1030 BC,² the Shang Dynasty ruled only a portion of the territory controlled by China today. Non-Chinese “barbarians” occupied regions north and west of the Shang, and Shang kings often waged war against these nomadic people. Along the southern border were people of similar Chinese origin, but they were not yet under control of the Dynasty. The Zhou State was located in the western portion of Shang territory, centered on the Wei River valley. The approximate location is identified on figure 5, below.

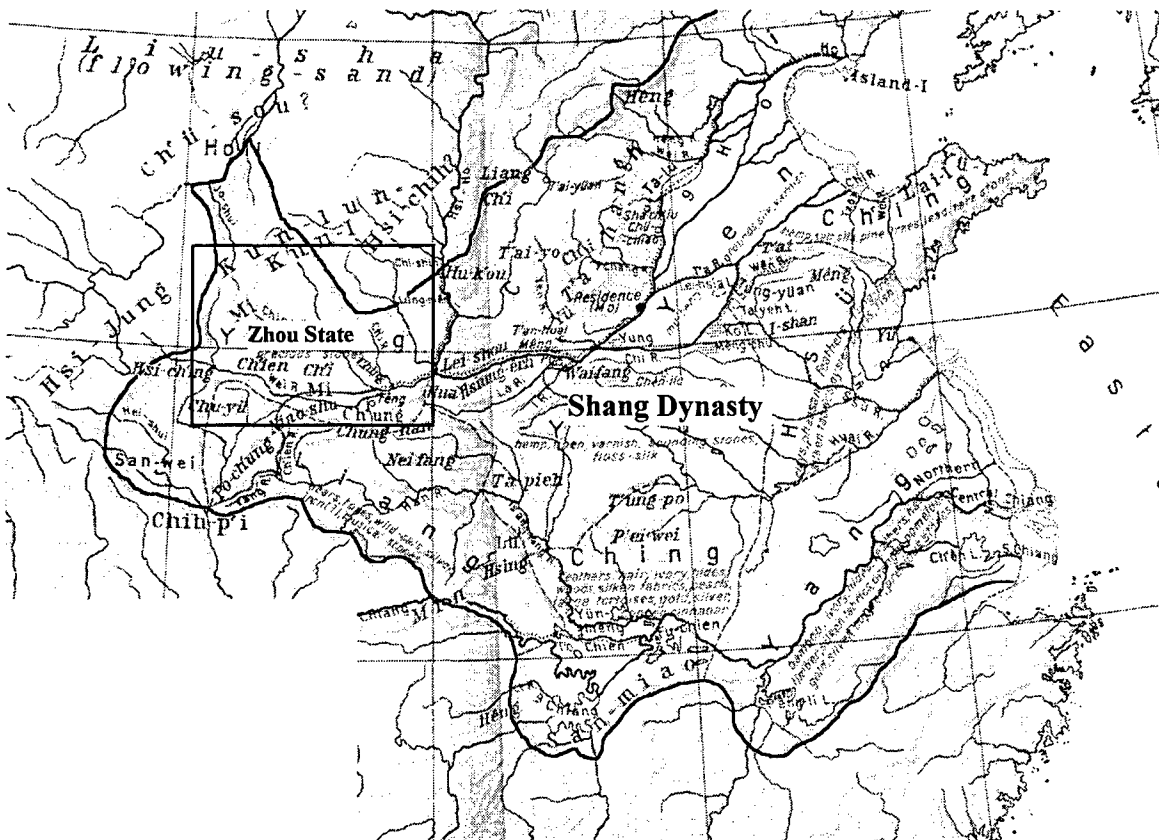


Figure 5. China, The Shang Dynasty, 1110 BC. Source: Albert Herrman, *Historical and Commercial Atlas of China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935), 10-11. The author of this thesis modified the map by outlining the Shang Dynasty and creating the Zhou State box.

The Zhou State had some significant geographical features, which isolated it from the Shang government. Figure 6, shows that numerous ridgelines stemming from the Tsinling Mountain Range separated the Zhou State (approximately the area of the black box) from the Shang centers of power, which were predominantly located on the North China Plain. As a result, the Zhou people were able to assimilate the achievements of the Shang as subjects of the dynasty, and yet develop their own material wealth without undue notice. Another strategic benefit of the Zhou State's location on the northwest

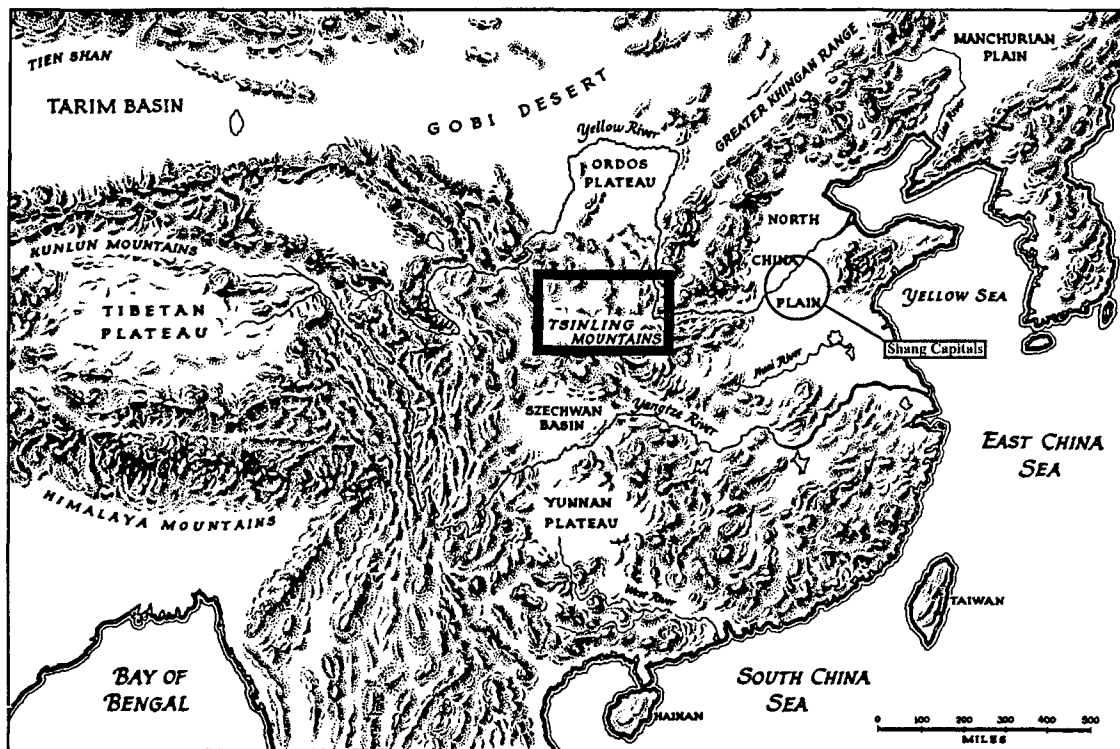


Figure 6. The Zhou State in Relation to the Shang Dynasty Capitals. Source: Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 4. The author of this thesis made the box and "Shang Capitals" modifications to the map.

frontier was that it frequently exposed them to "barbarian" attacks, which gave Zhou military forces many opportunities to improve their military skills.³

The Shang Dynasty was a monarchy that consisted of many family-run states, and family relations were used as a method of control over territory. For example, when the Shang emperor gave King Wen's father the Zhou territory, he was also given a Shang noblewoman for marriage to bind King Wen's father to the Shang family.⁴ There is some dispute about the type of society that existed at that time,⁵ but the Shang people relied on organized farming for their livelihood. The Zhou people were probably more pastoral when compared to inner Shang states, but they also depended on agriculture. This reliance on agriculture made arable land very valuable, and required a large population to work the land. According to Sawyer, Shang warfare objectives usually included "the imposition or reinforcement of royal suzerainty, the mass capture of prisoners, and the seizure of riches." Plunder increased the wealth of a state and prisoners were forced to work in agricultural or domestic tasks.⁶

At the time of the Zhou State's revolt, the Shang army probably outnumbered the entire Zhou population,⁷ but Shang forces were simultaneously engaged in northern, eastern, and southern areas of their empire. Zhou military forces had fighting experience from conflicts with "barbarians," and according to Sawyer, they had expanded their power base with numerous alliances with smaller states. Neither the Shang nor the Zhou military had a technological advantage.⁸

Compared to the strategic setting in China today, the Zhou State did not have similar geographic difficulties. In fact the isolation created by the Tsinling Mountains protected the Zhou people instead of dividing the people. Economically, land and

manpower for agricultural development were the primary means for wealth, and they were often objectives for warfare. Commerce was not as prevalent or relied upon as it is today. The Zhou State was also in a relatively constant state of war against “barbarians” from the north while China today has not had a major armed conflict for 20 years. However, one possible similarity is that the Zhou state was subject to impositions of the Shang hegemon, just as China today complains about actions of the United States, which it claims are often aimed at controlling China.

The Strategy

Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings contains a number of strategic concepts that are consistent with those found in *China's National Defense*, as well as some opposing ideas. Again, not all of the strategic concepts within the ancient works are discussed, only those that support or contradict the concepts found in *China's National Defense*. The strategic concepts that are similar are listed below without brackets, and the opposing concepts are written within brackets. The bold-type headings refer to the applicable categories on the pyramid model (figure 4) for the White Paper. For example, unity is a strategic goal that was found in *Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings*, which matches the similar goal found in *China's National Defense*. The bold-type heading of **Interests** shows that these goals can be found under the category of interests on the pyramid model (figure 4).

Interests:

Unity

Territorial Integrity

Objectives:

Economic Development
Regional Peace/Stability
Capable Military

Policies:

Peaceful Means First
[Offensive Military Strategy]
[Encourage Alliances]

The strategic concepts in *Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings* not only aim to achieve state security, but also are aimed at the overthrow of the Shang Dynasty. In order to achieve these goals, the Tai Gong first advised the Zhou kings to secure the allegiance of the population. Without the allegiance of the people, the Tai Gong said, the state will ultimately be defeated: "... the ruler must focus on developing wealth within his state. Without material wealth he has nothing with which to be benevolent. If he does not bespread beneficence he will have nothing with which to bring his relatives together. If he estranges his relatives it will be harmful. If he loses the common people he will be defeated."⁹ This passage reveals two goals that eventually led to the preservation of the state. The state must first gain wealth, and then use the wealth to satisfy the population. When the population is satisfied, then the state will not be defeated. Sawyer's assessment of the Tai Gong's strategy reinforces this point. "[*Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings*] proposes the government measures necessary for forging effective state control and attaining national prosperity, *Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings* is a strong proponent of the doctrine of the benevolent ruler, with its consequent administrative emphasis in the people's welfare. He advocates this fundamental policy because he believes a well-ordered, prosperous, satisfied people will both physically and emotionally support their

government.”¹⁰ A wealthy nation-state can create prosperous and satisfied citizens that will support their government and thus enhance unity. Wealth is consonant with the White Paper objective of economic development and unity is a goal that matches the same national interest in the White Paper

The Tai Gong also addressed how to preserve the state from external threats to state security, and he advised the kings on the concept of maintaining peace and stability in the region. The Tai Gong advised the Zhou kings to establish peaceful relations with neighboring states in order to reduce the threats along their borders. King Wen asked the Tai Gong, “How does one preserve the state’s territory?” The Tai Gong replied, “Do not estrange your relatives. Do not neglect the masses. Be conciliatory and solicitous toward nearby states and control the four quarters.”¹¹ King Wen’s question reveals a common national interest with *China’s National Defense*, namely, territorial integrity, and the Tai Gong’s answer reinforces the importance of gaining the support of the masses (unity). The advisor also reveals that if a state establishes peaceful relations with her neighbors then attack or intervention from those states will less likely occur, which matches the objective of “regional peace and stability” advocated in *China’s National Defense*.

Even if the state maintains peaceful relations with its neighbors, the establishment of a strong military force is still a requisite for external security. According to the Tai Gong, “warfare is the greatest affair of state, the Tao (method) of survival or extinction,”¹² and warfare logically implies the need for military force. Also, both Sawyer and Johnston believe that the Tai Gong identified a strong military as a foundation for state security. Sawyer states, “Important measures include always anticipating the possibility of hostilities by consciously planning to employ the normal

means of production for warfare . . . ,”¹³ and according to Johnston, the Tai Gong identified, “a primed and usable military capability as an indispensable source of security.”¹⁴ Developing a capable military force is also an objective of *China’s National Defense*.

A policy within *China’s National Defense* that supports regional peace and stability is “pursuing peaceful solutions first,” and the following statement from the Tai Gong implies a similar concept. He said, “If you can attain complete victory without fighting, without the great army suffering any losses, you will have penetrated even the realm of ghosts and spirits. How marvelous! How subtle!”¹⁵ This passage indicates that employment of the military is a less desired course of action when compared to a peaceful solution.

While advocating strategic concepts that are similar to those in *China’s National Defense*, the Tai Gong also proposes concepts that counter the White Paper. One is the use of alliances. According to the Tai Gong, alliances are necessary to defeat a stronger state. “To attack the strong with the weak, you must obtain the support of a great state and the assistance of neighboring states.”¹⁶ The Tai Gong goes on to advise the cultivation of such alliances by establishing good relations with neighbors. “To serve the ruler of a great state, to gain the submission of the officers of neighboring states, make their gifts generous and speak extremely deferentially. In this fashion you will obtain the support of a great state and the assistance of neighboring states.”¹⁷ Johnston reinforces this interpretation that the Tai Gong supports the establishment of alliances. He states that *Tai Gong’s Six Secret Teachings* teaches the use of diplomatic and political means “to buy the support of other states to assist in defeating the adversary when one’s own

military forces are inferior to those of the enemy.”¹⁸ The Tai Gong’s advocacy for the use of alliances directly opposes the policy in *China’s National Defense* in which China declares it will not seek to establish alliances with big powers or groups of nations.

A second concept that counters *China’s National Defense* is the advocacy of an offensive military strategy. One of the Zhou State’s objectives was to overthrow the Shang Dynasty, and this type of revolt required offensive action. An offensive strategy is also evident in the questions that King Wen asked the Tai Gong: “When we attack . . .,”¹⁹ and “What is the Tao (method) for aggressive warfare?”²⁰ According to Johnston, “The text [*Tai Gong’s Six Secret Teachings*] notes that attacking with speed and momentum results in the destruction of the adversary. And indeed the metaphors used in these cause-effect statements imply that the use of force should be preemptive.”²¹ He also assessed that according to the Tai Gong, “In general, defensive preparations are not linked causally to the defeat of the adversary or the security of the state.”²² All of these statements indicate a preference for offensive strategy, which runs counter to the defensive military strategy advocated in *China’s National Defense*.

Throughout the examination of each ancient classic there was difficulty separating offensive and defensive military concepts that were advocated at the strategic/national level verses the tactical/battlefield level. In the case of *Tai Gong’s Six Secret Teachings*, the Tai Gong’s question of “When we attack . . .” could easily apply to a battle as opposed to an overall offensive intent at the national level. However, since the objective of the Zhou State was to overthrow the Shang Dynasty and such an objective requires offensive action, then the offensive concepts found in the text can be thought to apply at the national/strategic level.

In summary, the strategic setting for *Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings* has significant differences with the strategic setting for *China's National Defense* to include: geography, the economic system, and war with "barbarians". Despite these differences, most of the related strategic concepts of *Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings* and *China's National Defense* are similar. The two concepts that are different (offensive military strategy, encourage alliances) can be attributed to the national goal of the Zhou State to overthrow the Shang Dynasty, which is not similar to any of the goals identified in *China's National Defense*.

Interests:

Unity
Territorial Integrity

Objectives:

Economic Development
Regional Peace/Stability
Capable Military

Policies:

Peaceful Means First
[Offensive Military Strategy]
[Encourage Alliances]

The Methods of the Si Ma

The Methods of the Si Ma is a strategic work associated with the ancient Chinese state of Qi, and the text was compiled during the reign of King Wei (378 – 342 BC). However, according to Sawyer, many scholars believe that earlier rulers of Qi, as far back as the mid-7th century BC, utilized the central content of this work. One of these rulers, Duke Huan, reportedly used these strategic concepts to become the hegemon of

the Zhou Dynasty. Another ruler, King Jing, supposedly used these same strategic ideas to regain lost territory, which was taken by a competing state called Qin. Later, when King Wei ruled Qi, these strategic ideas were compiled into *The Methods of the Si Ma*.²³

Strategic Setting

The Methods of the Si Ma were compiled during the Warring States period (403 – 221 BC) of China's history, but the strategic ideas within the text were likely employed during the earlier Spring and Autumn Period (722 – 481 BC). Therefore, both historical periods will be addressed in this section, followed by a discussion of the Qi state. China, during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, transitioned from dynastic control by the Zhou Dynasty to a melee among the many states within China. According to Sawyer, at one time during the Spring and Autumn period there may have existed as many as 150 such states, and all were eventually exterminated or annexed into a relatively few “survivor” states by the end of the Warring States period.²⁴ The state of Qi was one of those survivors.

As the Spring and Autumn period began, the Zhou Dynasty maintained control of subordinate states with family ties. As generations passed, these kinship ties weakened, and state lords could act more independently. States soon developed their own economic wealth and military power, which eventually surpassed those of the Zhou king. Society under the Zhou leadership was feudal, but that system deteriorated. As states became stronger, state rulers replaced the feudal, vassal system with administrative districts to exert more control over their territories. Peasants transitioned from serfs working the lands of the king, to farmers working the land of individual landowners. Land thus

became a transferable commodity and could significantly enhance a state's economic wealth. Agriculture was still the primary means for prosperity within states. Initially, diplomatic maneuvering and "polite gamesmanship"²⁵ with limited armed conflicts were the norm, but in the latter part of the Spring and Autumn period, diplomacy gave way to more intense warfare that resulted in the extermination or annexation of conquered states.²⁶

The Warring States period is marked by the continuation of intense warfare between states and the eventual consolidation of power by a few of the stronger governments (Qi, Chu, Qin, Wei, Han, Zhao, and Yan). Society was still feudalistic, but continued the transition to a more bureaucratic civilization. The population, agricultural development, and trade/commerce all had considerable growth, but agriculture was still the main industry. As mentioned above, land became an important factor for increasing a state's wealth, and thus the objectives of warfare changed to focus on the seizure of territory. More territory could support a larger population and increase wealth, which in turn could increase the strength of armies and increase influence of a state. Another characteristic of the period is the utilization of alliances, since states often formed alliances to counter the growing power of a threatening competitor.²⁷

The state of Qi was located on the peninsula containing the present day province of Shandong (figure 7), and the primary geographical feature of Qi was its location adjacent to the Yellow Sea, which provided a ready source of salt (from evaporating sea water) for trade and wealth.²⁸ According to Needham, the Qi state also had the "leading position"²⁹ in developing iron, and Qi's wealth with the development of iron may have contributed to the initial preeminence of the state during the Spring and Autumn period.

According to Hucker, the Qi state had a stable and strong economy as well as a sound military organization,³⁰ which made it a leader within the dynasty. Therefore, when the Chu state was threatening from the south, other states looked to Qi to counter that threat. Qi then organized a league of states and became the hegemon over the crumbling Zhou Dynasty. Qi would later lose this hegemony as power ebbed and waned between other states, but Qi survived as one of the strongest by the end of the Warring States period.

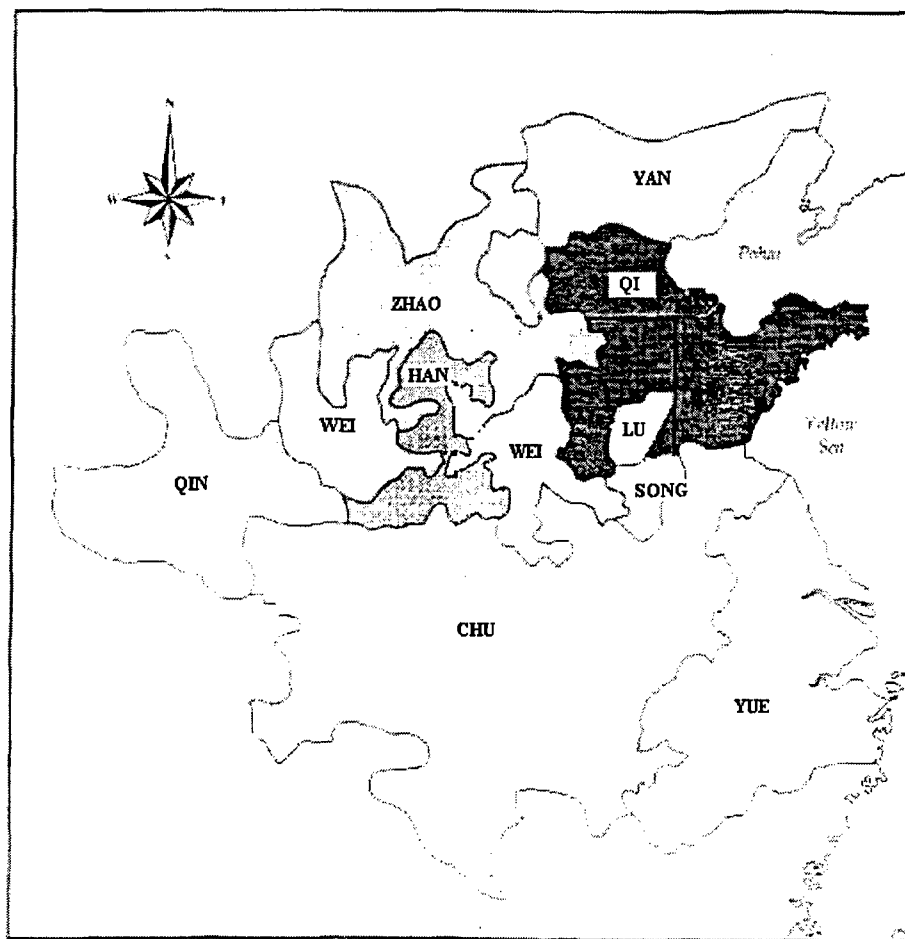


Figure 7. China, The Warring States Period, 350 BC. Source: Ralph D. Sawyer, *Sun Pin: Military Methods* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 15. Modifications were made to the map by the author of this paper.

The Strategy

The Methods of the Si Ma contains strategic concepts that both support and contradict strategic concepts in *China's National Defense*. They are listed below with similar concepts being listed without brackets, and the opposing concept being listed within brackets. The bold-type headings refer to the categories of the pyramid model (figure 4) in which the applicable strategic concepts can be found.

Objectives:

Capable Military

Policies:

Use of Force vs. an Internal Threat

Peaceful Means First

[Separate Military from Civil Affairs]

The Methods of the Si Ma primarily discusses the conduct of warfare as a tool for the state to achieve its goals. According to the Si Ma, when other methods failed to achieve desired results, then the state should rely on warfare. "In antiquity, taking benevolence as the foundation and employing righteousness to govern constituted 'uprightness.' However, when uprightness failed to attain the desired (moral and political) objectives, (they resorted to) authority. Authority comes from warfare, not from harmony among men."³¹ Three of the five chapters within *The Methods of the Si Ma* provide instructions for creating and utilizing military forces to conduct warfare.³² Thus, the Si Ma advocates the establishment of a capable military force, which is an objective that is also found in *China's National Defense*.

The need for a capable military force is further supported by the assessments of Sawyer and Johnston. Sawyer states that according to *The Methods of the Si Ma*, “warfare is vital to the state and essential to pacifying the realm,” and “the conscious exploitation of force is the foundation of political power.”³³ Johnston says that the text considers a state’s military capability as an “explicit cause of state security”, and “uses a simple deterrence calculus to argue that a state’s peacetime preparations for war are a source of security.”³⁴

The Methods of the Si Ma also addresses a number of national policies contained in *China’s National Defense*. Two of these policies are in agreement with the White Paper (using peaceful means first, and using military force against an unruly province) while one policy is in opposition (separating military forces from civil affairs). The peaceful means first policy can be seen in the following expansion of the passage quoted above to demonstrate the need for a capable military force. “In antiquity, taking benevolence as the foundation and employing righteousness to govern constituted ‘uprightness.’ However, when uprightness failed to attain the desired [moral and political] objectives, (they resorted to) authority. Authority comes from warfare, not from harmony among men. For this reason if one must kill men to give peace to the people, then killing is permissible. If one must attack a state out of love for their people, then attacking it is permissible. If one must stop war with war, although it is war it is permissible.”³⁵ In this quote, only after “uprightness” fails is military force even permitted, which supports the policy in *China’s National Defense* to use peaceful means before going to war.

The next policy that coincides with *China's National Defense* is the use of military force to subjugate a renegade province. Just as *China's National Defense* identified the use of military force as a possible method to reunite Taiwan, *The Methods of the Si Ma* described the use of military forces to subjugate renegade feudal lords. For example, "If any (of the feudal lords) had disobeyed orders, disordered the constant, turned his back on Virtue, or contravened the seasons of Heaven . . . the Prime Minister (would) charge the army . . . to apply the punishment of rectification."³⁶ Another example, "Through strategists they [rulers] constrained the feudal lords. With weapons and armor they forced the submission of the feudal lords."³⁷ Therefore, the use of military force was viewed as a necessary and effective means to subjugate opposition within the State.

One policy in *The Methods of the Si Ma* runs counter to *China's National Defense*, and that policy is that military forces should not be involved in civil affairs. According to *China's National Defense*, military forces will contribute to developing the state's economy through such actions as participating in local construction programs and providing military expertise for civilian services. According to *The Methods of the Si Ma*, mixing military and civil affairs will weaken a state. The text stated, "In antiquity the form and spirit governing civilian affairs would not be found in the military realm; those appropriate to the military realm would not be found in the civilian sphere. Thus virtue and righteousness did not transgress inappropriate realms."³⁸ The text also stated: "In antiquity the form and spirit governing civilian affairs would not be found in the military realm; those appropriate to the military realm would not be found in the civilian sphere. If the form and spirit (appropriate to the) military realm enter the civilian sphere,

the Virtue of the people will decline. When the form and spirit (appropriate to the) civilian sphere enter the military realm, then the Virtue of the people will weaken.”³⁹

Sawyer made note of the text’s distinct separation of civil and military affairs in the following comment. “In contrast to the unity of political and military functions that historically characterized the Shang and Early Chou [Zhou] eras, the contributors to the *Ssu-ma Fa* [*The Methods of the Si Ma*] stressed that the military and civilian realms should be radically distinguished because of their contradictory values.”⁴⁰

In summary, the strategic setting in which *The Methods of the Si Ma* was written and its strategic concepts have similarities and differences with the setting and the concepts of *China’s National Defense*. To examine these similarities and differences, the state of Qi will be used as the ancient model to illustrate this conclusion. Although other rulers and states were alleged to have used the strategic concepts within *The Methods of the Si Ma*, it was the State of Qi that actually codified those concepts.

Geographically, the Qi state was significantly different than today’s China. Qi was smaller, and instead of large mountain ranges compartmentalizing the state, the peninsula helped isolate and protect large portions of the state. Economically, Qi was dependent on agriculture but commerce was evident with salt and iron commodities. The State of Qi was the regional hegemon, with the strongest economy and military in the area. Despite these differences, *The Methods of the Si Ma* still reveal similar strategic concepts. The only policy that counters *China’s National Defense* is to separate the military from civil affairs.

Objectives:
Capable Military

Policies:

Use of Force vs. an Internal Threat

Peaceful Means First

[Separate Military from Civil Affairs]

Sun Zi's *Art of War*

Many scholars dispute the origin and time period in which a strategist named Sun Zi (also known as Sun Tzu) lived and wrote his *Art of War*. For Example, Sawyer cites two historical Chinese texts with different biographies of Sun Zi. The *Shi Ji* states that Sun Zi was born in the state of Qi, while the *Spring and Autumn Annals of Wu and Yue* say he was born in the state of Wu. The *Spring and Autumn Annals of Wu and Yue* also recorded that Sun Zi worked for the King of the state of Wu, which was extinguished in 474 BC.⁴¹ Therefore, according to that source, Sun Zi lived in the Spring and Autumn time period. However, Samuel Griffith (another translator of Sun Zi's *Art of War*) believes that based on textual content, the *Art of War* was likely written between 400 – 320 BC, which is the Warring States period.⁴² Johnston also recognizes that there is still room for debate about when Sun Zi lived.

As a result, the strategic setting for this strategy cannot be precisely addressed. Sun Zi and his *Art of War* are not clearly associated with any one state, and his existence is disputed between two different time periods in China's history. Therefore, the generalizations about the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States period (addressed in the previous strategy, *The Methods of the Si Ma*) provide the background for this strategy as well.

The Strategy

The strategic concepts within Sun Zi's *Art of War* that agree with and oppose the concepts in *China's National Defense* are listed below. The policy of encouraging alliances is enclosed by brackets because it opposes the policy in the White Paper, and the "?" after the policy of employing a defensive military strategy indicates that parts of Sun Zi's *Art of War* support the policy, while other portions of the text contradict the policy.

Objectives:

Capable Military
Economic Development

Policies:

Peaceful Means First
[Encourage Alliances]
Defensive Military Strategy?

Sun Zi's *Art of War* is primarily a discussion about warfare, and how it should be conducted to ensure the survival of a state. According to Sun Zi, "Warfare is the greatest affair of state, the basis of life and death, the Way (Tao) to survival or extinction."⁴³ This statement suggests that warfare is central to a nation's existence. Sawyer interprets the text to warn that "military preparations should never be neglected,"⁴⁴ and Johnston adds "that warfare is a common enough human experience that preparations for warfare, as well as the ability to conduct war successfully, are critical determinants of the state's survival."⁴⁵ Each of these statements demonstrates the need for a capable military force, which matches the same national objective in *China's National Defense*.

Sun Zi's *Art of War* also identifies the need for adequate resources to properly conduct warfare. Sun Zi said, "One who excels in employing the military does not conscript the people twice or transport provisions a third time. If you obtain your equipment from within the state and rely on seizing provisions from the enemy, then the army foodstuffs will be sufficient."⁴⁶ This passage indicates that people and provisions are both important resources, and a State that excels at warfare will ensure that people and provisions are not exhausted. Sawyer takes the position that according to Sun Zi, "The focus on all grand strategy must be the development of a prosperous, contented populace whose willing allegiance to the ruler is unquestioned."⁴⁷ A prosperous, contented population is more apt to support the government with adequate manpower and provisions to conduct warfare. Fostering prosperity is also consonant with the national objective of economic development in *China's National Defense*.

Sun Zi's *Art of War* identified one national policy that is in agreement with *China's National Defense*: use peaceful means first. Sun Zi said, "attaining one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the pinnacle of excellence. Subjugating the enemy's army without fighting is the true pinnacle of excellence. Thus the highest realization of warfare is to attack the enemy's plans; next is to attack their alliances; next to attack their army; and the lowest is to attack their fortified cities."⁴⁸ This passage establishes a hierarchy of methods for achieving victory over opponents. The highest, most preferred course of action is to win without fighting, and below that course of action are the less desirable military actions. According to Sawyer's interpretation, "The primary objective should be to subjugate other states without actually engaging in armed combat, thereby realizing the ideal of complete victory. Whenever possible this should

be achieved through diplomatic coercion, thwarting the enemy's plans and alliances, and frustrating its strategy. The government should resort to armed combat only if the enemy threatens the state with military action or refuses to acquiesce without being forced into submission through warfare."⁴⁹

However, Johnston has a different interpretation. He acknowledges that the above passage from Sun Zi is usually interpreted as a "nonviolent stratagem," but he points out that "one confounding problem is that Sun Zi does not explicitly elaborate the meaning of 'attacking the enemy's strategy (plans)' and 'attacking the enemy's alliances'."⁵⁰ Based on his analysis, Johnston argues that the term "attacking" can include the use of military force as well as the use of diplomatic means. He concludes that, "diplomatic actions and nonviolent political stratagem are only indirectly causally connected to the defeat of the adversary or the achievement of state security. The resolution . . . ultimately takes place within the context of applied violence."⁵¹ Despite the differences in interpretation, Sawyer, Griffith, and a majority of other scholars (a fact acknowledged by Johnston)⁵² believe that Sun Zi advocates using peaceful means before using military force. Therefore, the use of peaceful means first will be considered a national policy on which Sun Zi and *China's National Defense* are consistent.

Sun Zi's *Art of War* identifies one policy that contradicts *China's National Defense*, and that policy concerns the use of alliances. Sun Zi indirectly supports the establishment of alliances as demonstrated by the following excerpts. Sun Zi said: "one who does not know the plans of the feudal lords cannot prepare alliances beforehand."⁵³ "On focal terrain unite and form alliances [with nearby feudal lords]."⁵⁴ "On focal terrain I solidify our alliances."⁵⁵ Johnston explains the meaning of "focal terrain" as the "hub of

primary communications and transportation routes. It is thus strategically vital and the object of attention from many states. Thus if one governs or simply occupies focal terrain, the potential number of enemies is overwhelming. Under these conditions, it is best, argues Sun Zi, to establish close and friendly relations with other states.”⁵⁶ Though not directly stated, Sun Zi’s comments and Johnston’s explanation demonstrate that alliances are important tools in warfare and State survival.

Finally, Sun Zi’s *Art of War* addresses one other policy found in *China’s National Defense*, a defensive military strategy, but Sun Zi does not clearly show a preference between such a defensive strategy or an offensive strategy. Instead, Sun Zi appears to instruct that the situation determines which strategy is the best choice. “One who cannot be victorious assumes a defensive posture; one who can be victorious attacks.”⁵⁷ Sun Zi also describes a combination of offensive and defensive strategies to achieve success. “Those who excel at defense bury themselves away below the lowest depths of Earth. Those who excel at offense move from above the greatest heights of Heaven. Thus they are able to preserve themselves and attain complete victory.”⁵⁸ Defense is used to preserve, and offense is used to attain victory.

It is difficult to determine if Sun Zi is talking about national military strategy or battlefield operations. However, Johnston implies that Sun Zi’s guidance applies to both the national strategy and the battlefield. “For Sun Zi defense and offense, whether at the grand strategic or operational levels of strategy, are dialectically linked.”⁵⁹ Based on this statement and the fact that Sun Zi considers warfare to be a national consideration (“the greatest affair of the state”), Sun Zi’s instructions about offensive and defensive actions will be considered applicable to national strategy.

If a state is relatively weak and has no significant external threats, then a defensive strategy is preferred. According to Sun Zi, "One who cannot be victorious assumes a defensive posture In these circumstances by assuming a defensive posture, strength will be more than adequate, whereas in offensive actions it would be inadequate."⁶⁰ He also says, "If it is not advantageous, do not move. If objectives cannot be attained, do not employ the army. Unless endangered do not engage in warfare."⁶¹ Conversely if the state is strong enough and needs resources, then offensive action is preferred. Sun Zi advocates the seizure of enemy resources as a means to support the army and minimize the economic drain on the state. He stated, "the general will concentrate on securing provisions from the enemy. One bushel of the enemy's foodstuffs is worth twenty of ours; one picul of fodder is worth twenty of ours."⁶² As a result of Sun Zi's conditional support for both offensive and defensive strategies, a "?" is placed after "defensive military strategy" on the charts above and below.

In summary, the strategic setting and strategic concepts applicable to Sun Zi's *Art of War* have similarities and differences with the strategic setting and strategic concepts applicable to *China's National Defense*. Although Sun Zi's *Art of War* is not associated with any particular state during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States time periods, none of the states existing then had the same geographic problems that China faces today. Agriculture was still the primary source of economic wealth, and internationally, the consistent warfare between ancient Chinese states significantly differs from the relatively stable international relations enjoyed by the China of today. Despite these differences, most of the strategic concepts that were examined are consistent with related concepts in *China's National Defense*. It must be noted, though, that like *Tai Gong's Six Secret*

Teachings, Sun Zi supports the use of military alliances, and has conditional support for a defensive military strategy.

Objectives:

Capable Military
Economic Development

Policies:

Peaceful Means First
[Encourage Alliances]
Defensive Military Strategy?

Wu Zi

Wu Zi is the name of a famous historical figure in Chinese history who was born in the state of Wei near the end of the Spring and Autumn period in 440 BC.⁶³ Although a native of Wei, as a strategist and general he served three different states: Lu, Wei, and Chu. According to historical writings, he was never defeated and only rarely experienced a stalemate, and his victories included the conquest of superior, well-entrenched forces.⁶⁴ Since he served three different states, his strategy had to address three different situations, which will be discussed below.

The Strategic Setting

Different geographic features of each state highlight the different situations in which Wu Zi had to employ his strategies. The state of Lu (figure 7) was the smallest of the three and one of the smallest in the region, while the State of Chu was one of the largest states. The states of Wei and Lu were located along the Yellow River valley,

while Chu was in the Yangtze River valley further south. Each of the three states also had different neighbors, and therefore different potential threats along their borders.

Along with geographic differences, each state also possessed unique character traits. In his strategic work, Wu Zi described the characteristics for seven potential adversaries to include the states of Qi, Qin, Chu, Yan, Wei, Zhao, and Han. He described Qi as an “easily enraged, wealthy, oppressive, and divided state” and the state of Qin preferred to wage wars with brute force. Wu Zi characterizes the state of Chu as “weak, its territory was large, (and) its government was unstable,” and the people of Yan were “simple, honest, and industrious, and they prized bravery and righteousness.” Finally, the three states of Wei, Zhao, and Han were at peace and their governments were stable.⁶⁵ Again, these different characteristics highlight the variety of situations that Wu Zi faced.

One similarity between all the states was the government’s need to gain the support of the population. Sawyer points out that warfare at this time no longer depended on the nobility to fight; rather warfare was fought by the mass mobilization of a predominantly peasant army. Therefore, governments were essentially dependent on the support and allegiance of the people.⁶⁶ Thus all states needed to develop a strategy to gain and keep such support, but externally, strategies could vary depending on their location and the characteristics of enemy states.

The Strategy

Wu Zi contains a number of strategic concepts that agree with those found in *China’s National Defense*, but two policies offer only conditional agreement. The policies of using peaceful means first and employing a defensive military strategy are

marked with a “?” to signify that *Wu Zi* supports or opposes these policies depending on the situation. This conditional agreement will be explained later. Brackets enclose the policy of encouraging alliances because it opposes the policy in the White Paper.

Interests:

Unity

Objectives:

Capable Military Force

Policies:

Peaceful Means First?

Defensive Military Strategy?

[Encouraging Alliances]

Use of Force vs. an Internal Threat

During the Warring States period, it is apparent that states fought with each other for survival and perhaps even domination. In pursuit of these goals, *Wu Zi* instructed that a state should gain the support of the population, and that internal stability is the first thing to achieve before a state can embark on greater affairs. He stated:

In antiquity those who planned government affairs would invariably first instruct the hundred surnames and gain the affection of the common people.

There are four disharmonies. If there is disharmony in the state, you cannot put the army into the field. If there is disharmony within the army, you cannot deploy into formations. If you lack harmony within the formations, you cannot advance into battle. If you lack cohesion during the conduct of the battle, you cannot score a decisive victory.

For this reason when a ruler who has comprehended the Way (Tao) is about to employ his people, he will first bring them into harmony, and only thereafter embark on great affairs.⁶⁷

Both Sawyer and Johnston agree that *Wu Zi* identified “harmony” within the state as a requirement for state security. Sawyer notes, “*Wu Ch’i* [*Wu Zi*] therefore advocated enlightened Confucian policies that would provide the people with adequate material

welfare, gain their emotional support, and inculcate the basic virtues. When impositions are light and the government visibly expresses its concern for the people, the populace will respond and the state can withstand external challenges. Harmony – which can then be forged must be present in the state, the army, the formations, and among the men themselves.”⁶⁸ Johnston states, “One causal path in the text’s cognitive map – a route that is consistent with Confucian-Mencian notions of security – moves from the cultivation of the four virtues (the way, righteousness, propriety, and benevolence) within the state directly to the survival and flourishing of the state. Another route links enlightened internal policies to ‘victory in the battle’.”⁶⁹ Sawyer points out that the state can withstand external challenges once the state gains the support of the populace, while Johnston directly links four virtues within a state to the survival of that state. Harmony and internal stability are goals that can be equated with the national interest of unity, which concerns the population’s support for the government.

Wu Zi’s strategic work also addresses one of the national objectives of *China’s National Defense*, which is the establishment of a capable military force. In order to employ an effective offensive or defensive strategy, Wu Zi advised states to maintain a strong military force to address external security threats. “In antiquity the ruler of the Ch’eng Sang clan cultivated Virtue but neglected military affairs, thereby leading to the extinction of his state. The ruler of the Yu Hu clan relied on his masses and loved courage and thus lost his ancestral altars. The enlightened ruler, observing this, will certainly nourish culture and Virtue within the domestic sphere while, in response to external situations, putting his military preparations in order.”⁷⁰ According to Sawyer, although Wu Zi “was a strong proponent of benevolence and righteousness, Wu Zi

equally stressed military strength and preparation. Without an effective fighting force, the Confucian virtues would become hollow mockeries and evil would dominate the world.”⁷¹ Johnston added, “The argument is, in effect, that the ruler should cultivate virtue internally while applying martiality externally. Elsewhere Wu Zi contends that the cultivation of internal virtue to the neglect of the military instrument leads to the extermination of the state.”⁷² Therefore the establishment and maintenance of adequate military force is a necessary component for state security, and it is a strategic concept that matches the national objective in *China's National Defense* of establishing a capable military force.

Wu Zi's strategic work also discusses three national policies that were advocated in *China's National Defense* and one policy that contradicts the White Paper. The consistent policies are a preference for the use of peaceful means first, the use of a defensive military strategy, and the use of military force to maintain internal order (for example, reunification with Taiwan and “curbing armed subversion”⁷³). The contradicting policy is the establishment of alliances.

According to Wu Zi, the use of peaceful versus violent means and the use of offensive versus defensive military strategies, are dependent on the situation. For example, when considering the security situation facing the state of Wei, Wu Zi advocated a more violent and offensive strategy, but he also identified other conditions in which a defensive military strategy would be preferred.

The situation in the State of Wei was briefly described by the Marquis of Wu, who asked Wu Zi the following: “At present Ch'in [Qin] coerces me on the west, Ch'u [Chu] encircles me in the south, Chao [Zhao] collides with me in the north, Ch'i [Qi]

encroaches on us in the east, Yen [Yan] cuts off my rear, and Han occupies land to the front. Defending against the troops of six nations in all four directions, our strategic configurations of power is extremely disadvantageous. I am worried. What can be done about this?"⁷⁴ Wu Zi then advocated different strategies to address each of those threats. Against the state of Qi, "The Way (Tao) to attack them is to divide them into three, harrying and pursuing the left and right, coercing and following them for then their formations can be destroyed."⁷⁵ Against the state of Qin, "The Way (Tao) to attack them is to first entice them with profits for their soldiers are greedy and will abandon their generals to pursue them. Capitalizing on their misjudgment you can hunt down their scattered ranks, establish ambushes, take advantage of the moment, and then their generals can be captured."⁷⁶ Against the state of Chu, "The Way (Tao) to attack them is to suddenly strike and cause chaos in the encampments."⁷⁷ Against Yan, "The Way (Tao) to attack them is to strike and press them; insult them and then put distance between you; then race and get behind them so that their upper ranks will be doubtful and their lower ranks fearful."⁷⁸ Against the states of Zhao and Han, "The Way (Tao) to attack them is to press (points in) their formations, and when large numbers appear oppose them. When they turn back, pursue them in order to wear them out."⁷⁹

It is not clear whether Wu Zi's advice applies to the national strategic level or to battlefield operations. The phrases used by Wu Zi ("harrying and pursuing," "hunt down," "race and get behind them," etc.) seem to discuss battlefield maneuvers. However, the Marquis of Wu's question concerns the "strategic configurations of power," and the Marquis is "worried" about defending against six neighboring states.

Since Wu Zi's answers are in reply to strategic concerns, then his advice will be considered applicable to national strategy.

In his answers, Wu Zi implies that offensive or preemptive action is the appropriate action in five of the six situations described above: "divide" the Qi, "suddenly strike" the Chu, "strike and press" the Yan, and "press" the Zhao and Han. Only against the Qin does Wu Zi advise the initial use of a non-military method ("entice"), but that action only serves as a precursor for the subsequent use of military force. Johnston also concludes that Wu Zi's strategy preferred violent methods. "Wu Zi's strategic advice is highly flexible and contingent. In the process of defeating the adversary and resolving security problems no one strategy is ruled out. This flexibility, however, comes within the context of an overall preference for violent strategies – a preference rooted in causal arguments that suggest security threats cannot be resolved satisfactorily without the enemy's defeat and submission. We can conclude, then, that there is at least a preference for violent grand strategies over accommodationist ones."⁸⁰

Although Wu Zi may have preferred violent offensive action, he did identify situations when a state should employ a defensive strategy. He stated:

There are six circumstances in which, without performing divination, you should avoid conflict.

First, the land is broad and vast, the people wealthy and numerous.

Second, the government loves the people, the ruler's beneficence extends and flows [to all of them].

Third, rewards are trusted, punishments based on investigation, and both are invariably implemented in a timely fashion.

Fourth, people are ranked according to their military accomplishments; they award official positions to the Worthy and employ the able.

Fifth, their forces are massive, and their weapons and armor are all first rate.

Sixth, they have the assistance of all their neighbors and the support of a powerful state. In general in these situations you are not a match for the enemy, so without doubt avoid them.⁸¹

This passage suggests that when an opponent is strong, the State should avoid conflict with that opponent. This passage, combined with the advice to the Marquis Wu above, demonstrates that the situation determines whether the use of offensive and defensive military strategies is warranted.

The last paragraph of the passage quoted above demonstrates the contradicting policy between *Wu Zi* and *China's National Defense*. The statement, "have the assistance of all their neighbors and support of a powerful state," describes alliances, and those alliances enhance the strength of a potential adversary. That statement also implies that friendly alliances would enhance the strength of the Wei state. This concept counters the policy of avoiding large military alliances in *China's National Defense*, which considers such alliances to be security risks.

The fourth national policy addressed by *Wu Zi* is the use of military force to subjugate an internal threat and maintain internal order. *Wu Zi* identified five types of armies that can threaten a state: a "righteous army," a "strong army," a "hard army," a "fierce army," and a "contrary army". Enemies outside the State raise four of these armies while the "contrary" army represents an internal rebel force, which according to Johnston represented a war of "rebellion against the political and moral order."⁸² In order to meet this threat, *Wu Zi* instructed that a state must use "the tactical balance of power to subjugate them,"⁸³ which according to Johnston means the "flexible use of military force".⁸⁴ Based on these statements, *Wu Zi* supported the use of military force to subjugate internal rebellions and maintain internal order, just as the strategy in *China's*

National Defense advocates the potential use of military force if Taiwan should declare independence.

In summary, the strategic setting of the *Wu Zi* and its strategic concepts have both similarities and differences with the strategic setting of China today and the strategic concepts in *China's National Defense*. The geography of the three ancient States, Lu, Wei, and Qu, was significantly different than the geography of China today. Each ancient State was significantly smaller and their nations were not compartmentalized like China is today. Economically, the primary means of wealth was agriculture, and international relationships were marked by continuous warfare, while China today has not fought any of her neighbors for twenty years. Despite these differences most of the strategic concepts listed below are consistent with related concepts in *China's National Defense*. However, the concepts of peaceful means first and the use of a defensive military strategy are conditional based on the strategic situation, and *Wu Zi* encourages the establishment of alliances instead of avoiding them.

Interests:

Unity

Objectives:

Capable Military Force

Policies:

Peaceful Means First?

Defensive Military Strategy?

[Encourage Alliances]

Use of Force vs. an Internal Threat

Wu Zi is the last Chinese classic addressed in this chapter. The remaining four ancient works are examined in Chapter Four. Those works include *Wei Liao Zi*, Sun Bin's *Military Methods*, the *Three Strategies of Huang Shi Gong*, and *Questions and Replies Between Tang Tai Zong and Li Wei Gong*. The time period covered by these classics will continue with the Warring States period and eventually lead into the Tang Dynasty around 700 AD.

¹Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 23; Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 30-31; Colin A. Ronan, *The Shorter Science and Civilisation in China: An Abridgement of Joseph Needham's Original Text* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 20.

²Colin A. Ronan, *The Shorter Science and Civilisation in China: An Abridgement of Joseph Needham's Original Text* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 20.

³Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 6, 27; Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 30-31.

⁴Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 31.

⁵Debate exists because there is little archeological evidence to accurately determine societal structure. Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 30.

⁶Colin A. Ronan, *The Shorter Science and Civilisation in China: An Abridgement of Joseph Needham's Original Text* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 3, 29; Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 4.

⁷Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 23.

⁸*Ibid.*, 6.

⁹*Ibid.*, 47.

¹⁰Ibid., 31.

¹¹Ibid., 46.

¹²Ibid., 63.

¹³Ibid., 33.

¹⁴Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 87.

¹⁵Ibid., 53.

¹⁶Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 94.

¹⁷Ibid., 95.

¹⁸Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 135-136.

¹⁹Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 66.

²⁰Ibid., 68.

²¹Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 89.

²²Ibid., 136.

²³Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 112.

²⁴Ibid., 9.

²⁵Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 35.

²⁶Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 8-10; Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 35.

²⁷Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 10-12; Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 40, 61, 64, 68; Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 1 (Cambridge:

Cambridge University Press, 1975), 96; Colin A. Ronan, *The Shorter Science and Civilisation in China: An Abridgement of Joseph Needham's Original Text* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 32.

²⁸Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 93.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 93.

³⁰Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 36.

³¹Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 126.

³²*Ibid.*, 133-143.

³³*Ibid.*, 116.

³⁴Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 76.

³⁵Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 126.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 127.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 128.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 129.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 131.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 117.

⁴¹Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 153.

⁴²Samuel B. Griffith, trans., *Sun Tzu: The Art of War* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 11.

⁴³Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 157.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 154.

⁴⁵Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 95.

⁴⁶Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 159-160.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 154.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 161.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 154.

⁵⁰Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 104.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 140.

⁵²*Ibid.*, 104.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 169.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 178.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 181.

⁵⁶Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 140.

⁵⁷Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 163.

⁵⁸Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 163.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 141.

⁶⁰Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 163.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 184.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 159-160.

⁶³Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 191, 193.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 191-192.

⁶⁵Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 124-125.

⁶⁶Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 203.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 207.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 203.

⁶⁹Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 73.

⁷⁰Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 206.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, 202.

⁷²Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 74.

⁷³Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 7.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 210.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 210.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 210-211.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 211.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 211.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 211.

⁸⁰Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 126.

⁸¹Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 212-213.

⁸²Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 124.

⁸³Ralph D. Sawyer, trans., *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 208.

⁸⁴Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 124.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF THE FOUR LATER CHINESE CLASSICS

In this chapter, the remaining three ancient works from *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* and the ancient work Sun Bin's *Military Methods*, will be examined for national interests, objectives, and policies that are in agreement with, or in direct opposition to, the strategy in *China's National Defense*. The structure will be the same as in Chapter Three for each Chinese classic. The strategic setting will be presented first, followed by an examination of strategic concepts and a summary of what has been found.

Wei Liao Zi

The *Wei Liao Zi* is named after a historical figure named Wei Liao, who was considered a brilliant strategist, but there is debate about the actual time period in which he lived and for which state he provided advice. According to Sawyer, the opening chapter in *Wei Liao Zi* seems to depict Wei Liao's answers to King Hui of the state of Wei, during the fourth century BC (Warring States period). But Sawyer also acknowledges that another ancient Chinese text, the *Shi Ji*, describes a man named Wei Liao who advised the king of Qin in the third century BC.¹ Ultimately, Sawyer concludes that *Wei Liao Zi* was likely written in the fourth century BC, based on style and historical content of the text, and therefore represents Wei Liao Zi's advice to King Hui. So, the Warring States period and the State of Wei will be examined for the strategic setting of this strategy.

Strategic Setting

As mentioned in Chapter Three, the Warring States period was marked by intense fighting between a number of survivor states (see figure 7), and a state's survival depended on the ability to fight and defeat rivals. Land was equated with wealth because more land could produce more agricultural goods, which could support a larger population. A larger population could support a larger army, which increased the chances for victory on the battlefield. Victory on the battlefield ensured survival. Therefore, warfare was conducted to seize the territory and populations of rival states.

The state of Wei was situated in the center of China, surrounded by the states of Qin, Zhao, Qi, and Chu, while being split by the state of Han. Wei lacked natural defenses such as mountains and valleys, which allowed the surrounding states to apply constant pressure, and King Hui appears to have antagonized his neighbors and exacerbated the pressures they placed upon him.² As the state of Wei weakened under these pressures, the king sought for strategic answers to reverse this trend. The *Wei Liao Zi* codified Wei Liao's answers to King Hui's questions.

The Strategy

The *Wei Liao Zi* contains a number of strategic concepts that agree with those found in *China's National Defense*, and these strategic concepts are listed below.

Interests:
Security
Unity

Objectives:

Economic Development
Capable Military

Policies:

Prioritize Economic over Military Development
Modernize the Military
Peaceful Means First

According to *Wei Liao Zi*, state security (a goal that matches a national interest within *China's National Defense*) is dependent on two conditions, civil and martial strength. The work states, "The military takes the martial as its trunk, and takes the civil as its seed. It makes the martial its exterior, and the civil the interior. One who can investigate and fathom the two will know victory and defeat. The civil is the means to discern benefit and harm, to discriminate security and danger. The martial is the means to contravene a strong enemy, to forcefully attack and defend."³ Both Sawyer's and Johnston's interpretations of *Wei Liao Zi* also concluded that civil and martial strength are requirements for state security. According to Sawyer, agriculture and warfare were the "twin foundations of the state".⁴ Johnston observed, "the *Wei Liao Zi* appears to trace the security of the state back to both civil and martial causes."⁵

Wei Liao also demonstrated that the civil and martial conditions are integrally linked. A state needs strong interior development to produce a strong military that is able to protect the state. "When the land is broad and under cultivation, the state will be wealthy; when the people are numerous and well-ordered, the state will be governed. When the state is wealthy and well governed, although the people do not remove the blocks (from the chariots) nor expose their armor, their awesomeness instills order on All

under Heaven.”⁶ By taking appropriate steps to develop the internal well being of the state, there is sufficient strength to be victorious in battle against external threats.

According to Wei Liao, prosperity leads to the allegiance of the people, and allegiance from the people provides necessary support for the government. Therefore the government’s ability to provide for its people is fundamental for internal well being. Should a state fail to provide for its people, internal strength will be lost. Wei Liao stated, “In general, what is the Way to govern men? I say that without the five grains you have nothing to fill their stomachs, without silk and hemp nothing to cover their form. . . . Today, when their short, coarse clothing does not even cover their bodies nor the dregs of wine and husks of grain fill their stomachs, (the foundation) of government has been lost.”⁷ According to Sawyer’s assessment of *Wei Liao Zi*, agricultural development creates wealth and prosperity for the people, and a population that is well provided for is loyal to the state:

From Wei Liao’s viewpoint, a state’s prosperity depended mainly on fully developing and exploiting its agricultural resources. In order to increase productivity, new lands must be cultivated and energetic farmers nurtured Greater harvests rapidly provide the populace with adequate nourishment while creating economic wealth. When they are well fed, clothed, and sheltered, the people will be healthy, strong, and content and will naturally give their allegiance to the benevolent ruler who nurtured them. They will thus become loyal citizens capable of being inculcated with values, instructed in the virtues and demands of the state.⁸

Prosperity not only fosters the allegiance of the people, but it also strengthens unity within the state, and unity is another requirement for strong internal security. Wei Liao stated, “a state is victorious through being united. One whose strength is divided will be weak; one whose mind has doubts will be turned against.”⁹ Thus, *Wei Liao Zi* promotes

prosperity and unity, which match the national objective of economic prosperity and the national interest of unity from *China's National Defense*.

Once a state has the necessary prosperity and unity, then the state can build and employ a proper military force. According to Johnston, Wei Liao instructed that a military without the support of material wealth from the state is ineffective and will not be able to adequately secure the state. "Wealth and order are prerequisites for a large and powerful military organization that should pose, at the very least, a latent threat to potential adversaries."¹⁰ Therefore, economic prosperity is a prerequisite for military development, and this concept supports the White Paper policy of prioritizing economic development above military development.

Wei Liao discussed the development of the military to include generalship, building courage among the people, and employing modern weapons. According to *Wei Liao Zi*, the state should equip the military with modern weapons and equipment, and that the quality of weapons and equipment is directly related to victory against state enemies. "The quality of weapons is also positively related to the ability to defeat the adversary and capture his cities, and to the efficacy of the military instrument in general."¹¹ This policy is consonant with the modernization policy advocated by *China's National Defense*.

Concerning the employment of military forces, *Wei Liao Zi* appears to advocate the use of military forces as a last resort. Wei Liao described warfare as something to be avoided because it represents a contradiction to virtue and involves death, but he also recognizes that the military is a necessary means. He stated, "Thus the weapons are evil implements. Conflict is a contrary virtue. The post of general is an office of death. Thus

only when it cannot be avoided does one employ them.”¹² However, that does not mean military forces should be neglected. Wei Liao instructed that one way to prevent warfare is to create a military with “awesomeness,” or overwhelming power, which will deter any opposition. In today’s terminology, such a policy is often described as “peace through strength”. *Wei Liao Zi* has a whole chapter about developing military “awesomeness”.¹³ Johnston agrees that *Wei Liao Zi* demonstrates a preference for peaceful solutions and that such peaceful solutions were gained through military strength.¹⁴ This preference for peaceful solutions is in agreement with the White Paper policy of using peaceful means first.

In summary, the strategic setting and strategic concepts applicable to *Wei Liao Zi* have both similarities and differences with those applicable to *China’s National Defense*. Geographically, the Wei state is significantly smaller than modern China and does not have the same compartmentalization problem. Wei is also more vulnerable since her interior did not have significant terrain features for protection. The primary economic industry was agriculture, and Wei’s international relationships were characteristically warlike for the Warring States period. Despite these differences, all of the related strategic concepts in *Wei Liao Zi* are in agreement with the respective concepts in *China’s National Defense*.

Interests:

Security
Unity

Objectives:

Economic Development
Capable Military

Policies:

Prioritize Economic over Military Development

Modernize the Military

Peaceful Means First

Sun Bin's *Military Methods*

This work was written by a man named Sun Bin, who was allegedly related to the famous strategist Sun Zi.¹⁵ Sun Bin served as the strategist for King Wei of the state of Qi during the Warring States period,¹⁶ and his teachings were likely written during the first half of the third century BC.¹⁷ The events discussed in this work center around conflicts that existed among four of the dominant states of the period, Qi, Wei, Han, and Zhao (see figure 7).¹⁸

Strategic Setting

As discussed before, the Warring States period was marked by intense fighting between several dominant states that used warfare to seize territory and increase national wealth. Land was equated with wealth because more land could produce more agricultural goods, and more agricultural goods could support a larger population. A larger population could then support a larger army, which increased the state's chances for victory on the battlefield. Victory on the battlefield ensured state survivability. All states maintained armed forces and they could be considered peer opponents, since no one state had a particular technological advantage. The difference between victory and defeat often depended upon the competence of state rulers and their military leaders.

Sun Bin was a strategist for the state of Qi, and his book referred to battles against the state of Wei in order to help the states of Han and Zhao defend their territory. Qi shared borders with four of the dominant states, and was adjacent to the Yellow Sea in the east. The Yellow Sea and the interior mountains of the state provided Qi with abundant natural resources, and the mountains provide Qi with formidable defensible terrain. Natural resources such as salt and the development of iron were important commodities for trade, but Qi still relied on an agriculture economy. Qi had a long military tradition and a strong military force, which together with the mountainous terrain effectively deterred invasion.¹⁹

The states of Han and Zhao did not have geographic advantages like the state of Qi. Both states had fertile land for agriculture but little, if any natural barriers. Zhao had mountains along its northwest border, which protected the state from nomadic invasion, but its remaining lands were relatively flat. Unfortunately for Han, all its lands were relatively flat, which exposed Han to all of its neighbors.²⁰

The State of Wei was in the worst geographical situation. The state was composed of flat plains without natural defenses, and Wei also shared borders with five other states. Wei was also divided into two parts connected only by a narrow corridor through the Han State, and that corridor could be easily severed. As a result of the lack of natural defenses and the vulnerability of this connecting corridor, Wei was forced to rely on extensive fortifications and numerically superior military forces. King Hui of the Wei State was also an aggressive ruler who tended to confront neighbors rather than seek good relations.²¹

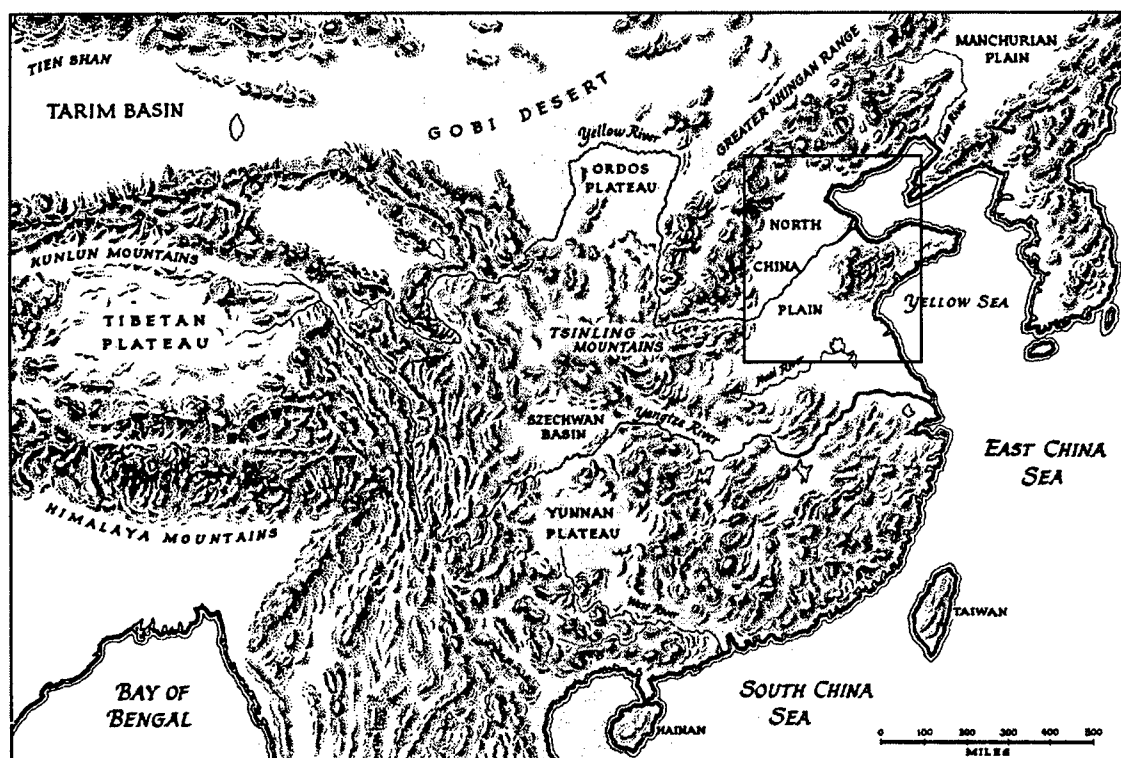


Figure 8. Principle Geographic Features of China. The area enclosed by the box roughly corresponds to the territory occupied by the four states addressed in this section. The state of Qi occupied the mountainous peninsula while the remaining states of Wei, Han, and Zhao primarily occupied the North China Plain. (See figure 7 for the political boundaries in 350 BC.) Source: Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 4. The author of this thesis modified the map with the box around the North China Plain.

The Strategy

Sun Bin's *Military Methods* was lost for almost two thousand years, but in 1972 a fragmentary copy was discovered in a tomb in Shandong Province. Some topics or ideas within the work are incomplete, but the existing text does contain an exposition of many key strategic and tactical concepts. The strategic concepts that agree with the strategic topics in *China's National Defense* are listed below.

Interest:

Unity

Objectives:

Economic Development

Capable Military

Policy:

Peaceful Means First

Prioritize Economic over Military Development

Sun Bin taught that a state's ability to gain the support of its population was the basis for victory in warfare. Some of his instructions were: "Taking the masses is the basis for victory";²² "One who gains the masses will be victorious";²³ and "One who does not gain the masses will not be victorious."²⁴ In order to gain the support of the people, the state must be prosperous, and Sun Bin advised King Wei to "enrich the state."²⁵ According to Sawyer, "taking the masses" referred to gaining the support of the people, and gaining popular support was "essential to creating a prosperous state and mounting a successful campaign."²⁶ Sawyer described the phrase, "enrich the state" as an echo of similar guidance to be found in the *Seven Military Classics*:

Fundamentally, the state needs to garner the willing allegiance of the populace in order to convert it into enthusiastic, well-trained soldiers capable of defending the state and defeating the enemy. Only a reasonably prosperous, satisfied, and well-ordered populace – one free of onerous labor services and excessive taxes – will be physically and emotionally capable of undertaking the hardships of military duty. Moreover, the state that focuses upon developing an adequate degree of material prosperity will be able to afford the vast expenditures and great waste of military campaigns, as well as the luxury of removing able-bodied males from the active farming population to undergo training and serve for prolonged periods.²⁷

Thus economic prosperity gains the allegiance of the people and leads to defeating the enemy. Therefore, Sun Bin's *Military Methods* would support the objective of economic

development and the national interest of unity (support of the population for the government) contained in *China's National Defense*.

Economic prosperity not only gains the allegiance of the people, but it also allows the State to properly conduct warfare. According to Sun Bin, the first policy had to be to enrich the state; next the army had to be strengthened. (This policy agrees with the White Paper policy of prioritizing economic development over military development.) A strong army was needed, Sun Bin said, to defeat enemies and preserve the state. "Victory in warfare is the means by which to preserve vanquished states and continue severed generations. Not being victorious in warfare is the means by which to diminish territory and endanger the altars of state. For this reason military affairs cannot but be investigated."²⁸ Sawyer also notes Sun Bin's advice to maintain a strong military capability. "Insofar as evil or threats to security remain in the world, the military and warfare are both necessary and unavoidable. The state's very survival depends upon understanding the principles of warfare, undertaking military preparations, and acting when necessary with commitment and resolve."²⁹ Sun Bin's advocacy of a strong military force is consistent with the similar policy of establishing a capable military that is contained in *China's National Defense*.

But while an advocate of a strong military, Sun Bin also believed that the military should only be used as a last resort. He instructed that, "only when it is unavoidable, engage in warfare."³⁰ According to Sawyer, "Sun Bin, just as Sun Zi before him, felt that warfare is of paramount importance to the state, critical to its survival in a dangerous, troubled world. However, the *Military Methods* also indicates that warfare should not be undertaken except when unavoidable and moreover should not be pursued for pleasure or

... profit.”³¹ Using military force as a last resort implies that other, peaceful, means will be used first, and that policy is consistent with the policy advocated in *China's National Defense*.

In summary, the strategic setting of Sun Bin's *Military Methods* and the strategic concepts therein have both similarities and differences with those discussed in *China's National Defense*. Geographically, the Qi state was significantly different than today's China. Qi was significantly smaller, and instead of large mountain ranges compartmentalizing the state, her interior mountains helped isolate and protect large portions of the state. Economically, Qi is dependent on agriculture but commerce is evident with salt and iron commodities. Internationally, the state of Qi was frequently at war. Despite strategic setting differences between Qi and China today, the related strategic concepts in Sun Bin's *Military Methods* and *China's National Defense* are consistent.

Interest:

Unity

Objectives:

Economic Development

Capable Military

Policy:

Peaceful Means First

Prioritize Economic over Military Development

Three Strategies of Huang Shi Gong

Similar to such texts as Sun Zi's *Art of War* and the *Wei Liao Zi*, the origins of the *Three Strategies of Huang Shi Gong* are also debatable. Sawyer accepts the view that the concepts, language, and historical references incorporated in the text point to the end of the first century BC (Western Han Dynasty) as the time when this work was written.³² Therefore, the situation in China during this time period will be examined to describe the strategic setting.

Strategic Setting

The ancient works studied to this point were written during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods. The Warring States period ended when the Qin ruler unified China for the first time and established the Qin Dynasty. This dynasty reigned from 221 BC to 202 BC, and was followed by the Han Dynasty from 202 BC to 220 AD. The Han Dynasty is further subdivided into two parts, the Western Han (202 BC – 25 AD) and the Eastern Han (25 AD – 220 AD).³³

The amount of land that was controlled by the Western Han Dynasty in 100 BC is depicted below in figure 9. The dotted areas represent the territory added by emperor Han Wu Ti, while the white portion along the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers roughly correspond to the land occupied by the Chinese feudal states during the Warring States period. The Han Dynasty reached from present-day northern Vietnam in the south to the Korean Peninsula in the north, and then extended to present-day Xinjiang in the West. The amount of territory controlled by the Han was a significantly greater than the area contested during the Warring States period. This territorial expansion also increased

China's contacts with foreign civilizations to include people from the South China Sea, Japan,³⁴ and Central Asia.³⁵

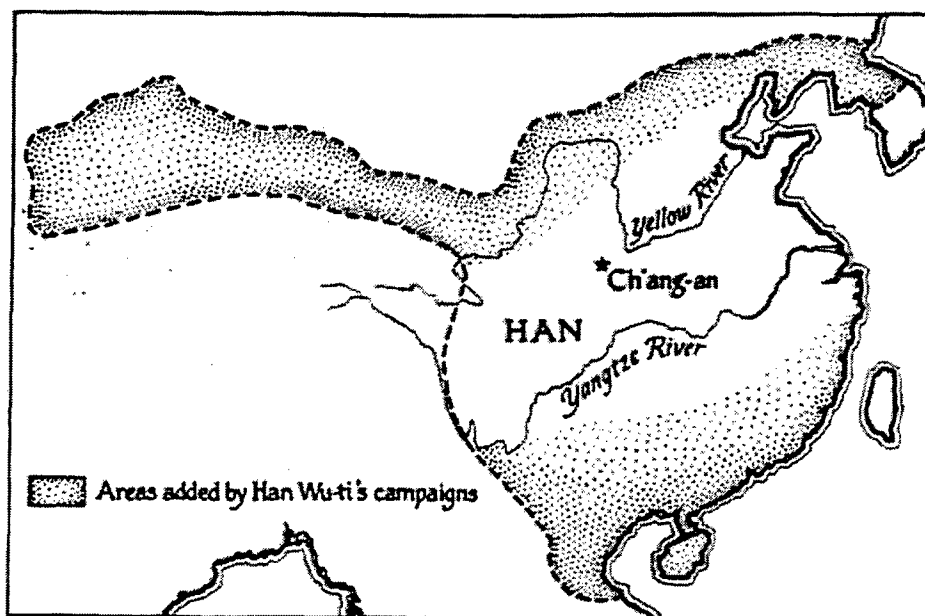


Figure 9. The Han Empire, 100 BC. Source: Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 126.

The Western Han was a relatively stable and peaceful time period, which allowed significant growth within China to include a population boom and flourishing cultural development. The population grew to some 60 million people, with the major concentration in northern China, and diverse cultures were added as the Han expanded south to the South China Sea.³⁶ The Han Dynasty employed a bureaucratic-type government with military governors and civil administrators for each prefecture.³⁷ China was organized into 13 provinces that closely represent the provincial divisions of today.³⁸ Civil servants were selected for their talent as opposed to birthright,³⁹ and universities

were established with a corresponding resurgence of scholarship.⁴⁰ The legalist systems of the Qin Dynasty were replaced with less rigid and more humane laws and Confucianism gained prominence.⁴¹ In short, the relative peace during the Former Han Dynasty allowed China to expand in size and culture.

Economic development also expanded with increased agricultural production and increased commercial growth. Agriculture was based on a freehold farming system that provided a tax base for the government, and significant achievements such as irrigation improvements and crop rotation techniques increased agricultural yield.⁴² Agriculture was still the foundation of the economy, but commerce also flourished despite the fact that merchants were still widely despised in society. The government established monopolies in iron, salt, and grain,⁴³ and greater contacts with foreigners, such as the people in Central Asia, expanded China's trade opportunities.

Although the Western Han Dynasty experienced significant population, cultural, agricultural, and commercial growth, the dynasty did have notable internal and external threats to stability. Internally, the government had to control a more diverse population, since the great expansion of the Han Dynasty assimilated many different groups of people with diverse cultures. The government also had to control the distribution of economic wealth. According to historian Charles Hucker, China's government had to control the amount of wealth that was distributed to the private sector because such private wealth was always considered a threat to central political authority and a threat to the adequacy of state revenues. On the other hand, the state could also not allow widespread poverty because that would create unrest and possible revolt.⁴⁴ The primary external threat to the Han Dynasty was the Xiong Nu nomads (the Huns), who frequently

fought with the Chinese along China's north and northwestern borders.⁴⁵ These wars placed a heavy burden on China's manpower and economy, causing a drain of leadership from civil duties and increasing the tax burdens on the populace.⁴⁶ However, these wars did provide opportunities for the military to practice warfare.

The Strategy

The Three Strategies of Huang Shi Gong was written in a time period when China was already unified, and although the work does address external threats like those posed by the Huns, the primary focus is on "government and military administration and control."⁴⁷ The text stresses the importance of the ruler gaining popular allegiance in order to maintain both internal and external security, and offers methods that a ruler should employ to achieve such allegiance. The text also provides guidance on the proper use of military force, and addresses issues such as generalship and a balanced use of military force. The strategic topics that are common in both *The Three Strategies* and *China's National Defense* are summarized in the list below.

Interests:

Unity

Objectives:

Economic Development

Capable Military

Policies:

Use of Force vs. an Internal Threat

Peaceful Means First

The Three Strategies of Huang Shi Gong distinctly link a ruler's ability to secure the state with the ruler's ability to gain the allegiance of the people. According to *The Three Strategies*, "The commander in chief's method focuses on winning the minds of the valiant, rewarding and providing salaries to the meritorious, and having his will penetrate to the masses. Thus if he has the same likes as the masses, there is nothing he will not accomplish. If he has the same dislikes as the masses, there is nothing he will not overturn. Governing the state and giving security to one's family (is a question of) gaining the people. Losing the state and destroying one's family (is a question of) losing the people. All living beings want to realize their ambitions."⁴⁸ *The Three Strategies* then tells the ruler that in order to gain the allegiance of the people he must provide the people with sufficient economic prosperity. "To treat the people as they should be treated means concentrating on agriculture and sericulture and not disturbing the people during their vital seasonal occupations. It means keeping taxes and impositions to a minimum, not exhausting their wealth. If you impose few labor services, if you do not cause the people to be overly labored, then the state will be prosperous and the families will enjoy pleasure."⁴⁹ *The Three Strategies* also warns of the collapse of the state if that state fails to establish economic prosperity. A state that lacks sufficient food is an "empty state," and this will create problems. "When the state is empty, the people are impoverished. When the people are impoverished, then the government and populace are estranged. While the enemy attacks from without, the people steal from within. This is termed a situation of 'inevitable collapse.'"⁵⁰

Sawyer identifies the link between economic prosperity, the allegiance of the population, and security, as an important theme in *The Three Strategies*. He notes that

this work instructs a ruler to develop economic prosperity so he can mobilize the citizens for defense of the state during a crisis.

The ruler and also the general should act to ease distress, remove evil, and increase prosperity. Consequently, they should minimize taxes and labor duties, avoid disrupting the critical agricultural seasons, and nurture stability and tranquility. Because it is expected that the well-ordered, ideally governed state can mobilize its citizens when confronted by hostilities, military matters – apart from actual strategy and tactics – essentially become questions of civilian government and administration. Conscripts provide the basis for military strength, and defensive capabilities are stressed.⁵¹

Johnston also sees *The Three Strategies* as advocating the view that effective internal rule protects a state from external threats. He notes that *The Three Strategies* “appear consistent with a classically Mencian view of state security, where the quality of internal rule ultimately dissolves external threats.”⁵²

If a ruler provides economic prosperity to the people, then the ruler will gain their allegiance. Once the ruler gains their allegiance, then the state will be secure. This link between prosperity and internal security matches the strategic concepts in *China's National Defense* of economic development and unity.

The next issues that are similar between *The Three Strategies of Huang Shi Gong* and *China's National Defense* are the establishment of a capable military force, the use of force to maintain internal order, and the preference for using peaceful means to solve disputes. The following passage from *The Three Strategies* addresses each of these strategic issues. “The Sage King does not take any pleasure in using the army. He mobilizes it to execute the violently perverse and punish the rebellious Weapons are inauspicious instruments, and the Tao of Heaven abhors them. However, when their employment is unavoidable it accords with the Tao of Heaven.”⁵³ The instructions from

this passage are: the state needs a military force to execute the perverse and rebellious; it is proper for the state to use military force against internal subversion (to execute the rebellious); and the state should prefer peaceful solutions to conflict since using the army is unpleasant and weapons are inauspicious.

The interpretations and assessments by Sawyer and Johnston also recognize these implied policies. According to Sawyer, *The Three Strategies* state that “warfare is inauspicious and evil and that it violates . . . the natural tendency of life.”⁵⁴ He notes that *The Three Strategies* also teach that “the state should also have a strong military and prepare for righteous warfare.”⁵⁵ Johnston also makes this point. “The text is clear, however, about the legitimacy of violence for righteous causes. Endorsing a notion of righteous war common to the other military classics, the *San Lue* [*The Three Strategies*] notes near the end that while the wise king does not revel in the application of military force, he must use it nevertheless to punish the violent and suppress disorder. The metaphor used to describe righteous war leaves no doubt about the efficacy of overwhelming military force.”⁵⁶ Therefore, military force should be used as a last resort to avoid the evils of combat. The state must have the necessary military capabilities should the need for military action arise. Lastly, military action can include the suppression of internal disorder. These three strategic concepts correspond to similar concepts in *China’s National Defense* if we take the “suppression of internal disorder” as referring to the warning in *China’s National Defense* that the use force may be necessary to reunify Taiwan with China and to curb armed subversion.

In summary, the strategic setting of the Western Han and the strategic concepts of the *Three Strategies of Huang Shi Gong* have similarities and differences with those of

China's National Defense. Geographically, the Han Dynasty did have to control a large area with large mountain ranges that compartmentalized the nation, which is similar to China today. The Han had to contend with similar diverse cultures due to expansion south and west into new territory. Economically, the Han was the economic power of the region and agriculture was the primary economic activity, but the Han government also struggled with maintaining state control over economic wealth just as China is struggling today. Internationally, the Western Han was in a relatively constant state of war with the Huns, while China today is not actively engaged in military conflict. Compared to the previous ancient works, the strategic setting of the Han Dynasty more closely resembles the setting in the China of today. Additionally, all of the related strategic concepts between the *Three Strategies of Huang Shi Gong* and *China's National Defense* are consistent.

Interests:

Unity

Objectives:

Economic Development

Capable Military

Policies:

Use of Force vs. an Internal Threat

Peaceful Means First

Questions and Replies between Tang Tai Zong and Li Wei Gong

This work is apparently a record of questions and answers between emperor Tang Tai Zong of the Tang Dynasty and his chief military advisor Li Wei Gong, but there is debate about the work's authenticity. While Tang Tai Zong and Li Wei Gong lived

during the early Tang Dynasty, some historians claim the work is a forgery that was constructed in the late Tang Dynasty or during the later Song Dynasty.⁵⁷ Since there is no definitive proof that this work is a forgery, the early Tang Dynasty will be examined for this study.

Tang Tai Zong was the second emperor of the Tang Dynasty after he usurped the throne from his father in 627 AD,⁵⁸ and he ruled until his death in 694 AD. Li Wei Gong was one of three prominent generals that served the early Tang Dynasty, and he was one of Tang Tai Zong's earliest associates and supporters.⁵⁹ Both Tang Tai Zong and Li Wei Gong were experienced military commanders. Their recorded conversations include discussions about their own experiences as well as references to earlier works on strategy such as *The Methods of the Si Ma*, *Wu Zi*, and Sun Zi's *Art of War*.

Strategic Setting

The work just discussed in the previous section, the *Three Strategies of Huang Shi Gong*, was a product of the Western Han Dynasty, which preceded the Tang Dynasty by over 600 years. Following the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty, in 220 AD, political fragmentation and disunion existed within China, until China was unified again during the Sui Dynasty in 589 AD.⁶⁰ The Sui Dynasty regained political control over the populace and began efforts to culturally link the southern and northern parts of China. The dynasty improved the transportation system between the Yellow and Yangtze River systems, but the government also oppressed the people to construct such improvements.⁶¹ An official name Li Yuan eventually led a revolt that ended the Sui Dynasty and led to the establishment of the Tang Dynasty in 618 AD.⁶²

Figure 10 depicts the dramatic expansion of Chinese influence during the Tang Dynasty. China proper was similar in size to the area controlled during the Han Dynasty (the enclosed white area on the map), but the Tang Dynasty also gained large tributary regions to include Tibet, the area around the Aral Sea to the west, most of Manchuria, and Korea. The primary external threat was from Central Asian nomads who lived in the areas north and west of China, but these nomadic people were fragmented⁶³ and the Tang Dynasty was able to beat back Turkic invasions.⁶⁴

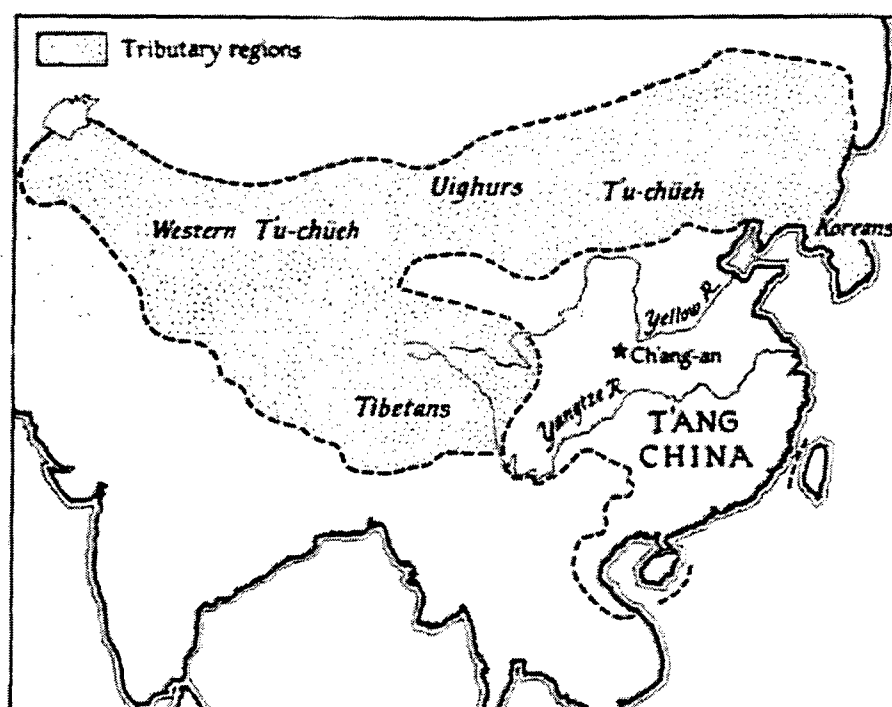


Figure 10. The Tang Empire, 700 AD. Source: Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 142.

China's largest concentration of population was along the Yellow River valley, and despite increased urbanization,⁶⁵ agriculture and peasant farmers were still the

primary foundation of society. Land distribution was usually the greatest internal challenge for the government.⁶⁶ Improper land distribution reduced state revenues and service levies and even led to widespread poverty. According to Hucker, “widespread poverty always created a popular unrest that threatened political stability and even dynastic survival.”⁶⁷ The Tang Dynasty effectively distributed land under an “equal fields” system that allocated fields evenly per person for lifetime tenure, and the tenants provided required taxes and labor services to the state.⁶⁸ The Tang established a stable, centralized administration,⁶⁹ and Tang Tai Zong proved to be an accomplished civil administrator.⁷⁰

Commerce also significantly flourished during the Tang Dynasty, which improved the welfare of the common man.⁷¹ External trade opportunities were increased as Tang influence expanded and merchants continued to gain wealth. However the dynasty still feared the potential power of merchants, so the government imposed controls on merchants and established government monopolies on goods such as grain and tea to limit merchant influence.⁷² International horse-trading was particularly important to China at this time since the military used cavalry forces and China was not able to domestically breed quality riding steeds. Such horses were usually obtained from nomads in the northwest or from the Korean Peninsula.⁷³

China, during the Tang Dynasty, was politically and culturally unified with an effective administration and prospering economy, and according to Hucker, “In its material and technological richness, Tang life had no equal anywhere in the world.”⁷⁴ Interestingly, the Tang Dynasty may be more similar to today’s United States than today’s China. The Tang Dynasty’s internal stability, economic expansion, and military

dominance over the Turkic people in the northwest clearly established Tang's hegemony in the region, and today's China does not have this level of Asian hegemony. One parallel between the Tang and today's China is the use of international trade to strengthen military power. Just as the Tang Dynasty traded with Central Asian nomads and Koreans for horses, today's China trades with Russia for military hardware and with the US for economic prosperity.

The Strategy

Questions and Replies between Tang Tai Zong and Li Wei Gong primarily discusses tactical issues such as the use of orthodox and unorthodox forces, military leadership, and methods of fighting battles. The work rarely addresses issues at the strategic level, but there were a few strategic topics discussed. These topics are listed below, and they are consistent with the topics contained in *China's National Defense*. However, a defensive military strategy is conditional based on the situation of the State.

Interests:
Sovereignty

Objectives:
Economic Development
Capable Military

Policies:
Peaceful Means First
Defensive Military Strategy?

The passages that follow encompass the national interest of sovereignty and the objective of economic prosperity, which are advocated in *China's National Defense*.

Tang Tai Zong asked his advisor Li Wei Gong, "I have established the Yao-ch'ih Supervisor in Chief subordinate to the Anhsi Protector-general. How shall we manage and deploy the Han [Chinese] and barbarian peoples in this area?" Li Wei Gong replied, "When Heaven gave birth to men, originally there was no distinction between 'barbarian' and 'Han'. But their territory is distant, wild, and constantly practicing fighting and warfare. If we are generous to them, show good faith, pacify them, and fully supply them with clothes and food, then they will all be men of the Han."⁷⁵ Tang Tai Zong's question about the best way to govern the protectorate addresses the national interest of sovereignty, and Li Wei Gong's reply describes a situation that parallels the distant provinces of Tibet and Xinjiang in China today. According to Li Wei Gong, prosperity of the people and pacification of the people are the proper methods of management. State generosity and provisions of clothing and food bring prosperity to the people, and is consonant with the objective of economic prosperity in *China's National Defense*.

The next strategic topic addressed is the necessity for China to maintain a capable military force. One conversation between Tang Tai Zong and Li Wei Gong examined *The Methods of the Si Ma* to demonstrate the need for military preparations even during times of peace. Tang Tai Zong asked his advisor, "The *Si Ma Fa* [*The Methods of the Si Ma*] begins with the spring and winter ceremonial hunts. Why?" Li Wei Gong replied, "... They (rulers) employed the pretext of the hunt to hold court assemblies, accordingly conducting tours and hunts among the feudal lords, instructing them in armor and weapons. The (*Si Ma Fa*) also states that unless there is a national emergency, the army should not be wantonly mobilized, but that during the times between the agricultural seasons they should certainly not forget military preparations. Thus is it not profound

that it placed the hunts of spring and winter at the beginning?"⁷⁶ This passage expressed the importance of military preparedness even during peaceful times, and Johnston reinforced this interpretation. He said, "The text cites with approval the statement in the *Si Ma* that preparing for war, even in times of peace, leads to the security of the state; understanding the way of warfare leads to peace, the expansion of the ruler's awesomeness, and the fulfillment of the people's needs."⁷⁷ Therefore, *Questions and Replies* is consistent with the objective in *China's National Defense* of maintaining a capable military force.

Though a state may have a capable military, *Questions and Replies* also advocates the policy of using peaceful means first, before using military force. Tang Tai Zong had asked Li Wei Gong, "Kao-Li (Koguryo) has encroached on Hsin-lo (Silla) several times. I dispatched an emissary to command them (to desist), but they have not accepted our edict. I am about to send forth a punitive expedition. How should we proceed?"⁷⁸ This question indicates that diplomacy was used before military action, but a statement made by Li Wei Gong clearly subordinates the use of military force to the use of peaceful resolutions. Li Wei Gong stated, "The army is employed only when there is no alternative,"⁷⁹ which is consistent with the policy of peaceful means first in *China's National Defense*.

The last strategic topic discussed was the employment of a defensive military strategy. *Questions and Replies* supported the use of a defensive military strategy, but only in certain situations. If a state is not strong enough to defeat an adversary, then that state must adopt a defensive strategy until they have enough strength to successfully attack. Li Wei Gong told Tang Tai Zong, "I recall Sun Zi said: 'One who cannot be

victorious assumes a defensive posture; one who can be victorious attacks.’ This indicates that when the enemy cannot yet be conquered, I must temporarily defend myself. When we have waited until the point when the enemy can be conquered, then we attack him.”⁸⁰ This passage describes a defensive strategy that is only temporary and the strategy will become offensive once able to defeat an enemy.

Johnston has a similar assessment. “The wiser strategy is to ‘not seek great victories’ and thus also avoid ‘great defeats’. This requires first and foremost putting oneself in an indefeatable position (i.e., static defense), and then waiting only for the opportunity to go on the offensive against the adversary. Until this opportunity appears one should ‘defend against losing’.”⁸¹ The instruction of Li Wei Gong and the assessment of Johnston do not clearly indicate whether such defensive or offensive strategies apply to a national level or to a battlefield operational level. The text can be interpreted in either way. If the text does apply to a national level, then it indicates that the defensive military strategy in *China’s National Defense* may only be a temporary measure until China is strong enough to adopt an offensive strategy.

In summary, the strategic setting and strategic concepts applicable to *Questions and Replies between Tang Tai Zong and Li Wei Gong* have similarities and differences with those applicable to *China’s National Defense*. Geographically, the Tang Dynasty and China today control similarly large compartmentalized areas. The Tang had to contend with controlling widespread and different cultures. Economically, the Tang Dynasty was relatively more prosperous when compared to today’s China, since the Tang was the economic power of the region. Agriculture was still the primary occupation, but commerce was expanding. The Tang also used international trade to enhance military

strength. Internationally, today's China does not face threats of invasion as much as the Tang Dynasty faced Turkic attacks. Despite some strategic setting differences, there are consistent strategic concepts between *Questions and Replies* and *China's National Defense*. However, the ancient text does not clearly indicate if a defensive military strategy applies to the national level. If it does, then such a strategy is conditional based on the situation.

Interests:

Sovereignty

Objectives:

Economic Prosperity

Capable Military

Policies:

Peaceful Means First

Defensive Military Strategy?

This completes the examination of all eight Chinese classics. In the next chapter, a strategy comparison chart will be used to compare the strategic settings and strategic concepts of all nine strategic works. That chart will form the basis for the conclusions that follow.

¹Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 230.

²*Ibid.*, 13-14.

³*Ibid.*, 273-274.

⁴*Ibid.*, 233.

⁵Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 78.

⁶Ibid., 243.

⁷Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 260.

⁸Ibid., 232-233.

⁹Ibid., 250.

¹⁰Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 78.

¹¹Ibid., 80.

¹²Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 256-257.

¹³Ibid., 247-249.

¹⁴Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 82.

¹⁵Ralph D. Sawyer, *Military Methods* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), cover.

¹⁶Ibid., 5-6.

¹⁷Ibid., 77.

¹⁸Ibid., 18.

¹⁹Ibid., 18-20.

²⁰Ralph D. Sawyer, *Military Methods* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 22.

²¹Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 15-18.

²²Ralph D. Sawyer, *Military Methods* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 101.

²³Ibid., 101.

²⁴Ibid., 102.

²⁵Ibid., 156.

²⁶Ibid., 276.

²⁷Ibid., 159.

²⁸Ibid., 181.

²⁹Ibid., 85.

³⁰Ibid., 104.

³¹Ibid., 61.

³²Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 283-284.

³³Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 130.

³⁴Ibid., 125.

³⁵Ibid., 127.

³⁶Ibid., 171-172.

³⁷Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 100.

³⁸Ibid., 103.

³⁹Ibid., 105.

⁴⁰Ibid., 106.

⁴¹Ibid., 103.

⁴²Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 192.

⁴³Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 105, 107.

⁴⁴Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 180-181.

⁴⁵Ibid., 125.

⁴⁶Ibid., 170; Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 107.

⁴⁷Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 284.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 292.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 294.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 298.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 287.

⁵²Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 84.

⁵³Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 305-306.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 288.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 291.

⁵⁶Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 86.

⁵⁷Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 313.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 312.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 312-313.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 311.

⁶¹Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 122.

⁶²Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 311.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 312.

⁶⁴Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 124.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 173.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 181.

⁶⁷Ibid., 180.

⁶⁸Ibid., 140.

⁶⁹Ibid., 139.

⁷⁰Ibid., 141.

⁷¹Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 179.

⁷²Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 129.

⁷³Charles O. Hucker, *China's Imperial Past: An Introduction to Chinese History and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 191-192.

⁷⁴Ibid., 192.

⁷⁵Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 337.

⁷⁶Ibid., 330-331.

⁷⁷Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 91-92.

⁷⁸Ralph D. Sawyer, trans. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 321.

⁷⁹Ibid., 348.

⁸⁰Ibid., 352.

⁸¹Alastair Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 139.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter reviews the strategic settings that are addressed by the eight Chinese classics and *China's National Defense*. Then, the strategic concepts mentioned in the White Paper and the eight ancient works are compared. Conclusions are drawn, based on this comparison, and additional questions for further study are identified.

The strategy comparison chart (figure 11) summarizes the findings of the previous three chapters, and simplifies the process of answering this study's research questions and reaching final conclusions. Along the top of the chart are the names of the nine strategic works examined in this study, beginning with *China's National Defense*. The left-hand column lists the strategic concepts, found in the White Paper, that have precedents in the ancient texts. A "+," "-", "?," or "o" is used to indicate what one of the ancient classics has to say on a specific topic. A "+" on the chart indicates that the classic supports the concept in *China's National Defense*. A "-" indicates that the classic opposes or is in disagreement with the concept in *China's National Defense*. A "?" shows a partial similarity between the classic's concept and the one in *China's National Defense*. An "o" means that the respective Chinese classic did not address that concept.

National Interests:

Sovereignty	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
Unity	+	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	0
Territorial Integrity	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Security	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0

National Objectives:

Economic Development	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	+
Reunify w/ Taiwan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Regional Peace/Stability	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capable Military	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

National Policies:

Use Force vs. Internal Threat	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0
Peaceful Means First	+	+	+	+	?	+	+	+	+
Defensive Military Strategy	-	0	?	?	?	0	0	0	?
Discourage Military Alliances	-	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0
Military Assists Economy	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Econ.>Military Development	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0
Modernize Military	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0

Figure 11. Strategic Concepts Comparison Chart

The strategic settings for all the Chinese classics differed greatly from the strategic setting of modern China. The ancient states of the Warring States and Spring and Autumn periods were significantly smaller in size and population when compared to China today. Their economies were also more dependent on agriculture instead of industry and commerce. Internationally, the ancient states were in a relatively constant state of war, while modern China does not have an impending external threat. Han Dynasty China also had differences with today's China, but its expanded territory and inclusion of more diverse peoples are characteristics that make the Han Dynasty more similar. None of the ancient states or the Han Dynasty controlled the same amount of territory that China does today, but the last dynasty examined, the Tang Dynasty, did occupy a similar area. The Tang Dynasty had internal stability, economic prosperity, and military dominance over Turkic nomads from the north and west, which made the dynasty the clear hegemon in the region. Today's China does not have such hegemony.

Eight strategic concepts found in *Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings* were also addressed in *China's National Defense*. Six of those eight concepts were consistent with the White Paper but two were in disagreement. The six consistent concepts include the national interests of unity and territorial integrity, the national objectives of economic prosperity, regional peace/stability, and establishing a capable military force, and the national policy of using peaceful means first. The Tai Gong advises that the ruler of the state must gain the allegiance of the people or face defeat, and in order to gain such allegiance, the state must gain wealth to satisfy that population. The Tai Gong also advocates the establishment of friendly relations with neighbors to reduce the threat of foreign invasion or attack. He supports the establishment of a strong military force to

protect the state from external threats, but he also instructs that using military force is less desirable than using peaceful solutions. The two opposing concepts between *Tai Gong's Six Secret Teachings* and *China's National Defense* are the national policies of using an offensive military strategy and encouraging alliances. The Tai Gong supports offensive action to overthrow the ruling Shang Dynasty, and advises that alliances are necessary to defeat a stronger foe.

Four strategic concepts found in *The Methods of the Si Ma* were addressed in *China's National Defense*. Three of those four concepts were consistent with the White Paper, but one was in disagreement. The three consistent concepts include the national objective of establishing a capable military, and the national policies of using force against an internal threat and using peaceful means first. According to the Si Ma, the use of moral and political means to achieve state objectives is preferable to the use of military force. However, military force is necessary when moral or political means fail. The Si Ma also advocates the use of force against renegade feudal lords. The opposing concept is the use of the military to assist the state's economic development. According to the Si Ma, mixing military and civil affairs will weaken the state.

Five strategic concepts found in Sun Zi's *Art of War* were also addressed in *China's National Defense*. Three concepts were consistent with the White Paper, one concept has partial consistency, and one concept is in disagreement. The three consistent concepts include the national objectives of economic development and establishing a capable military force, and the national policy of using peaceful means first. According to Sun Zi, "Warfare is the greatest affair of state," and therefore establishing a capable military force is a necessary objective. In order to prosecute war effectively, the state

must also gain the needed resources to support the military. However, Sun Zi clearly indicates that the use of military force is the least desired method to resolve conflicts. The partially consistent concept is the national policy of using a defensive military strategy. Sun Zi states that a defensive strategy should be used if one cannot be victorious. If one can be victorious, then an offensive strategy is preferred. The opposing concept is the national policy of encouraging alliances. Sun Zi advocates the use of alliances, especially on terrain that attracts the attention of many different states.

Six strategic concepts found in *Wu Zi* were also addressed in *China's National Defense*. Three concepts were consistent with the White Paper, two concepts have partial consistency, and one concept is in disagreement. The three consistent concepts are the national interest of unity, the national objective of establishing a capable military force, and the national policy of using force against an internal threat. According to *Wu Zi*, the state must gain the support of the population before it can achieve greater affairs. He advocates the maintenance of a strong military force to protect the state against external threats, but he instructs that the military can also be used to quell an internal rebellion. The two partially consistent concepts are the national policies of using peaceful means first and using a defensive military strategy. *Wu Zi* advises that the situation dictates how to employ these policies. The character and strength of an opponent determines the use of peaceful versus violent means or defensive versus offensive strategy. The opposing concept is the national policy of encouraging alliances. Alliances are seen as strengthening a state and *Wu Zi* cautions against attacking an enemy who has the assistance of allies.

Seven strategic concepts found in *Wei Liao Zi* were also addressed in *China's National Defense*, and all of those concepts are consistent with the White Paper. They include the national interests of unity and security, the national objectives of economic development and the establishment of a capable military force, and the national policies of using peaceful means first, placing economic development over military development, and modernizing the military. According to the *Wei Liao Zi*, a state must preserve its security by strengthening its internal well being. The state must garner the allegiance of its people and the method to gain such allegiance is to promote prosperity. Only after a state gains the allegiance of the people and becomes prosperous can the state develop a capable military force, which includes the acquisition of modern weapons and equipment. Yet, military force is to be used only as a last resort.

Five strategic concepts found in Sun Bin's *Military Methods* were also addressed in *China's National Defense*, and all of those concepts are consistent with the White Paper. They include the national interest of unity, the national objectives of economic development and establishing a capable military force, and the national policies of using peaceful means first and placing economic development over military development. Sun Bin advocates the need to gain the support of the population for survival of the state, and the way to achieve that support is to be prosperous. Once the state gains prosperity, then the state can strengthen its military force in order to "preserve" the state. Again, military force should only be used as a last resort.

Five strategic concepts found in *The Three Strategies of Huang Shi Gong* were also addressed in *China's National Defense*, and all of those concepts are consistent with the White Paper. They include the national interest of unity, the national objectives of

economic development and establishing a capable military force, and the national policies of using force against an internal threat and using peaceful means first. According to *The Three Strategies*, security of the state depends upon the allegiance of the people and providing the people with sufficient economic prosperity gains that allegiance. Military force is not only necessary to protect the state from external threats, but it is also necessary to defeat internal rebellions. As in the previous two works, the use of military force is considered to be a last resort.

Five strategic concepts found in *Questions and Replies between Tang Tai Zong and Li Wei Gong* were also addressed in *China's National Defense*. Four concepts were consistent with the White Paper, while one concept has partial consistency. The four consistent concepts are the national interest of sovereignty, the national objectives of economic development and establishing a capable military force, and the national policy of using peaceful means first. Tang Tai Zong and Li Wei Gong discussed the issue of maintaining sovereignty over an established protectorate and Li Wei Gong stated that the way to achieve this goal is to bring prosperity to the people of the protectorate. The text also supports the establishment of a strong military force to secure the state even in peaceful times. The military should also be used only when there is no alternative. The partially consistent concept is the national policy of using a defensive military strategy. Like the texts of Sun Zi and Wu Zi, this text advocates a defensive strategy when weak and advocates an offensive strategy when strong.

Some common threads of strategic thought are evident when looking across the comparison chart (figure 11) from left to right. First, under the heading of national interests, unity is the prevailing theme, identified as a goal in five of the eight Chinese

classics. Under the heading of national objectives, prevalent themes include economic development and the establishment of a capable military force. Six of the eight ancient works identify economic prosperity as a consistent objective with *China's National Defense*, while all of the Chinese classics are consonant with the White Paper about establishing a capable military force. Under the heading of national policies, the predominant theme is the use of peaceful means first. All of the ancient works address this policy and only one work (*Wu Zi*) does not clearly show a preference for peaceful solutions. Based on the ancient works examined in this study, each of these strategic concepts in *China's National Defense* has strong historical precedents. This enhances the validity of considering these concepts to be part of what might be called a traditional Chinese approach to national security issues.

However, an examination of the remaining national policies on the comparison chart demonstrates how difficult it would be to try to predict China's strategy using such a so-called traditional approach as a basis. The national interests and national objectives found in *China's National Defense* are not opposed by any of the Chinese classics, but the classics do offer opposition to some of the policies in the White Paper. Four of the ancient works address the use of a defensive military strategy. One work supports an offensive strategy while the other three works advocate flexibility based on the situation. They take the position that if a state or nation is weak, then a defensive military strategy is its best course. On the other hand, if a state or nation is strong, then it is advised to adopt an offensive military strategy. In *China's National Defense*, China proclaims that she will maintain a defensive military strategy even when she is stronger, but based on this study it is not clear if that strategy will continue, especially if China achieves greater

power. Each of the three Chinese classics that addressed military alliances supports the use of such alliances, while *China's National Defense* opposes them. Again, this raises questions about the continuation of that White Paper policy when none of the ancient works examined in this study clearly supports such a policy.

In sum, *China's National Defense* is China's current plan to address internal and external security concerns. Internal concerns include a population that surpasses China's ability to feed, cloth, and house them, minority groups that threaten internal order, and high rates of unemployment and underemployment. Another concern is the possibility of Taiwan independence, which once again can affect China's internal control. Externally, the influences of the fourteen countries that surround China, as well as the US and Japan, offer additional challenges. Four of those countries have nuclear weapons that can reach Chinese soil, but all of those nations have expressed a defensive intent, just as China has.

China's National Defense does have precedents in the writings of ancient Chinese strategists, the strongest precedents include the national interest of unity, the national objectives of economic development and establishing a capable military force, and the national policy of using peaceful means first. However, the White Paper also contains two policies with contradicting precedents: a defensive military strategy and the avoidance of military alliances.

The national interest of unity refers to the support of the people for the government, and the majority of the eight ancient works identified such popular support as a prerequisite for security. *China's National Defense* also identifies unity as one of China's four primary interests. The emphasis placed on unity by the ancient strategists may also suggest that unity is the preeminent goal when compared to the other three

interests found in the White Paper. Such emphasis may also help explain why maintaining control over Tibet, Xinjiang, Hong Kong and Taiwan is so important to China.

The majority of the eight classics also identify economic prosperity as a prerequisite for security. Prosperity is the means to satisfy the population, which enhances their support for the government. Prosperity also provides the necessary resources for a state to build and maintain a capable military force. *China's National Defense* prioritizes economic development over military development, which suggests that China's current internal economic concerns are perhaps more important than her external security concerns. Presently, China does not appear to have an imminent foreign threat that requires military action, and that allows her to focus resources on internal challenges.

The eight Chinese classics unanimously support the development of a capable military force to protect the state against external threats and internal subversion. *China's National Defense* also recognizes that establishing a capable military force is a necessary objective. However, the majority of the ancient works and the White Paper also recognize that the use of military force should only be used as a last resort, which supports the next common theme of using peaceful means first.

Seven of the eight ancient strategists advocate using peaceful means to solve conflicts before using military force, and this policy is also one of the most prevalent points in *China's National Defense*. Solving conflicts without the use of force is certainly less of an economic burden. If China does in fact consider internal concerns

more important than external concerns, then a peaceful means first policy allows her to dedicate more resources towards these internal concerns.

The national policies of using a defensive military strategy and avoiding military alliances have contradicting precedents in the Chinese classics. Those classics provide examples where offensive strategy and military alliances are preferred, and where preference for offensive or defensive strategies depends on the situation. Today, China has no impending external threats, and if we accept the notion that her primary focus is on internal concerns, then the defensive strategy advocated in the White Paper supports that focus. An offensive strategy is likely to consume more of the state's resources. The lack of significant external threats also reduces the need for establishing alliances. As long as China's external threats remain minimal, she has no need to ally herself with others. However, should an external threat emerge, there are precedents that demonstrate China's past willingness to exercise offensive strategies and to seek military alliances. These precedents raise questions about China's intentions in the future.

Uncertainty about China's intentions creates concern in the US. Will China pursue an offensive military strategy if and when she becomes more powerful? Will such a strategy positively or negatively affect US interests? Given this uncertainty, what should the US policy towards China be: engagement or containment? Engagement opens avenues for dialogue, increases trade, and provides greater access to China. This greater contact with China likely improves US-Chinese understanding. However, engagement also makes it harder to protect US secrets (for example, technology), which can potentially threaten US security. Containment would better protect such secrets, but it would also sacrifice the greater dialogue, trade, and access mentioned above. Reduced

contact with China would also detract from mutual understanding and would encourage US-Chinese suspicions. Engagement provides better relations, but in some areas it increases risk. Containment better protects US secrets, but relations and foreknowledge will suffer.

This study supports a policy of limited engagement with China. Based on the analysis above, China's priority appears to be on internal concerns such as unity and economic development. In order to pursue these goals, China will likely avoid armed conflict and only fight if she is provoked. Therefore, China does not represent a direct threat to the US, and engagement would provide significant economic benefits and improve US/Chinese relations. However, given the uncertainty of China's future intentions, and the strategic concepts laid out in the ancient classics, there are reasons for caution. Historical precedents demonstrate that the potential for China to expand her influence with offensive actions does exist. Therefore, engagement in areas of advanced technology and defense matters should be limited in order to prevent China from gaining access to US secrets that can potentially be used against us in the future.

The uncertainty about China's future intentions regarding offensive military strategies and the use of military alliances highlights another concern for future study: deception. In Chapter 4, a quote from *Questions and Replies between Tang Tai Zong and Li Wei Gong* discusses using the "pretext" of the hunt to practice military operations. Sun Zi's *Art of War* and some of the other ancient texts also address deception as a key component of strategy. *China's National Defense* makes no mention of deception, but this is not surprising since the White Paper was produced for international dissemination and a desire to exhibit greater transparency. However, the Chinese classics remind us

that the strategic concept of deception has historical precedents that should not be ignored without further study.

Another question revealed by this study concerns the relationship between strategic settings and strategic concepts. In Chapter 1, strategic settings were recognized as a significant influence on a nation's security strategy. The expectation is that states with similar strategic settings are more likely to utilize similar strategic concepts. The strategic settings in which the classics examined in this study were written were significantly different from the situation that China faces today. Yet, most of the related strategic concepts in those works are consistent with *China's National Defense*. Perhaps a more thorough investigation into the ancient settings is warranted.

Another question is whether or not the consistent themes found in the ancient Chinese works are also present in the strategic works of other periods in China's history. If so, then such results would provide even stronger evidence for the existence of traditional Chinese strategic thought. This question also highlights the value of this thesis. This study provides a start point from which to expand the inquiry into other historical time periods, and that expansion can foster even greater understanding of China's current and future strategic thought.

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