The Chinese View of Their Place in the World: An Historical Perspective

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The object of this article is to examine changing Chinese attitudes to their place in the world from a Chinese historical and intellectual perspective, in order to provide a basis for anticipating developments in the future attuned more to a Chinese than to a western point of view. The question immediately arises whether such a perspective is in any way relevant to the recent theory and practice of international relations in the People's Republic of China, and what insights, if any, such a perspective may provide for discussing the future. This is a controversial subject concerned with the nature of cultural change, and the extent to which "imprinting" from a long continuity of accepted social and cultural values can psychologically condition people *even after a decisive break in that tradition appears to have occurred.* Among scholars who claim to see definite continuities between the traditional Chinese perception of world order and the contemporary one, the most persuasive, in my view, is Mark Mancall, while, among those who warn against seeing any clear link between the present and the traditional past, Benjamin Schwartz seems pre-eminent. The gist of Mancall's argument is that the breakdown of the institutions of China's traditional world system took place faster than the erosion of the assumptions on which the order itself was based, and that it is possible that historically rooted assumptions concerning the very nature of the international order, differing from both those of the West and the Soviet Union, may be a complicating factor in contemporary China's foreign relations, while Schwartz would say that the traditional Chinese perception of world order has been fundamentally undermined in the present century.[1]

The thesis which I wish to put forward here is that, although all educated Chinese were content to give up the institutions of the

1. Mark Mancall, "The persistence of tradition in Chinese foreign policy," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 349 (September 1963), pp. 14–26. Benjamin Schwartz, "The Chinese perception of world order, past and present" in Fairbank (ed.) *The Chinese World Order, Traditional China's Foreign Relations* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 276–88. For a recent analysis which tends to reinforce Schwartz, see Albert Fuerwerker, "Chinese history and the foreign relations of contemporary China," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 402 (July 1972), pp. 1–14.

tributary relationship for a system of foreign relations based on treaties according to European custom, a number of influential men of differing political beliefs appears to have retained some of the major assumptions on which the traditional Chinese world order had been based; namely, that China possessed a universally valid system of beliefs which were ethically right and ought to be followed by all people; that China had a special role in the world as the guardian of these values, and that, although they could not be imposed on other peoples, China must herself live up to them and set an example by which others could learn how to follow the right path. Although they could not put these aspirations into immediate effect they could record them on paper, and work towards them in practice. Therefore, in examining the attitudes of the leaders of the People's Republic of China, we should bear in mind the persistence of these assumptions into contemporary times.

China's traditional perception of her place in the world, generally referred to by non-Chinese scholars for the sake of convenience as "the tribute system," has been studied quite intensively in recent years.[2] Apart from the flexibility of these institutions in response to particular circumstances of power relationships, what stands out clearly is the absolute Chinese belief in the ethical rightness of the premises on which these institutions were based. The Chinese world view was normative. It was not simply that the Chinese regarded their culture as superior in a material and aesthetic sense; they believed it to be morally superior, and of universal validity. Though non-Chinese peoples were not forced to acknowledge and adopt Chinese ethical and social values, they were encouraged to do so, and somewhat despised if they neglected the opportunity. As long as China came into contact only with envoys who were willing to comply with Chinese custom (albeit with mental reservations), the system worked reasonably well, but during the first half of the Ch'ing dynasty, when a number of embassies came to Peking from European countries, there was usually an element of cultural confrontation in their relations with China. This was quite explicit in the first British "tributary" embassy under Lord Macartney in 1793, and showed Britain resentful at not being able to enter into diplomatic and trade relations with China according to the assumptions and practices of the European system of international relations.[3] Eventually, between 1840 and 1943, Britain used superior military power to force China to enter into foreign relations with her according to the European conception of "a positive law of nations" based on

2. The fullest analysis to date is in John K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Chinese World Order*. The contributions by Mancall, Wang Gungwu, Fairbank and Schwartz are of special relevance to the theme of this article.

3. See J. L. Cranmer-Byng, "The Chinese attitude towards external relations," *International Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (winter 1965–6), pp. 57–77.

treaties and European custom.[4] However, China was not a nation in the western sense, but a state defined by a culture claiming to exemplify the correct universal ethical system. Significantly China did not abandon her "tribute" system and the ideology behind it as a result of mere military defeat but instead adapted it to meet new problems by developing a "treaty system" of relations with the western nations. Throughout the Chinese documents of the period from the 1840s into the 1880s these treaties were regarded not only as concessions extracted by force, but also as traditional methods of controlling those who did not accept the Chinese world view. Although, by the early 1880s, major adjustments had been made in the practical workings of China's relations with western powers, there was still no real meeting of minds on any common ground; a tug-of-war between two value systems continued. Documents of the period show that the Tsungli Yamen ministers were clearly disillusioned by the cynical way the western powers (and now Japan) seemed to exploit every opportunity to gain the maximum "profit" for themselves by using force, or the threat of force, to obtain ends which, in the Chinese world view, were not morally justified. China was being forced by circumstances and her own weakness into an international system in which the Chinese did not believe because, in their view, this system had no universal moral justification. Although Ch'ing officials were strong in condemning the foreign powers in their memorials, while having to make concessions to them in practice, Wang T'ao, as a modern-style journalist living in a treaty port, could be more outspoken in condemning the western system. "Alas, the countries beyond the seas . . . all scheme to realize their private interests. The great dominate the small, the strong coerce the weak, the countries of others are annexed and their rulers mistreated. This goes on all over. Though there is international law, it exists on paper only." [5] The development which brought China fully into the sphere of western diplomatic relations was the sending of Chinese envoys abroad and the establishment of permanent missions in foreign capitals with all the ramifications to which this gave rise. The first envoy to be sent, Kuo Sung-tao, reached England early in 1877, and in the subsequent decades of the dynasty the institutions of China's traditional system petered out while the western system of international relations with its alien ethical standards, which from the Chinese point of view seemed amoral and often hypocritical, took its place. But Chinese scholar-officials only accepted this change very reluctantly

4. On the implications of this development of positive law in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century, see Mark Mancall, *Russia and China: Their Diplomatic Relations to 1728* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 266–76.

5. Paul A. Cohen, "Wang T'ao's perspective on a changing world" in A. Feuerwerker *et al.*, *Approaches to Modern Chinese History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), p. 142. Cohen's article contains an excellent exposition of Wang T'ao's perception of might and right in interstate relations, pp. 138–45.

and *faut de mieux*. It was a harsh experience which caused many educated Chinese in the last decades of the Ch'ing dynasty to experience feelings ranging from despair, through frustration, to blazing hatred. The late Joseph Levenson has traced the intellectual stages by which educated Chinese were driven, during the early years of the present century, to part with their belief in China as a culture based on universal and ethically correct principles, and instead to conceive of her as a nation-state among other theoretically sovereign independent states within the western version of world order.[6] As a result of being forced into this alternative world order, they were now faced with the stark reality of "the survival of the fittest" among nation-states. Unfortunately for them China, at this time, was extremely weak, and could hardly be considered as sovereign or independent, except formally and legalistically in western international law. This was so patently unjust, and so galling to Chinese pride, and it seemed to have happened in such a short space of time, that a number of Chinese leaders were driven by inner compulsion to find ways of action and thought which would at least start the process of healing the psychological shock caused by the amputation of their own perception of world order and immutable and universal ethical values. They achieved this in a number of ways. Some turned to revolutionary nationalism as an eventual means of transforming existing society in order to make it so strong that China would be able to throw off western domination. Others took up the cause of gradual constitutional reform, and pinned their faith in western democracy and science as an alternative way of making China strong enough to resist foreign domination and regain her position of leadership in the world.

Benjamin Schwartz has presented a strong case against this line of reasoning. He argues that the traditional Chinese perception of world order "*was* fundamentally undermined in the twentieth century," and that "we should be extremely skeptical of assertions that assign it great causal weight in explaining present or future Chinese policies."[7] Put like that his argument seems unexceptionable. This is true as regards the institutions of the tributary system and any literal interpretation of the cosmology underlying it; neither has any great causal weight today. But, nevertheless, there appears to have been a kind of distilled essence of the traditional perception of world order (or residual sludge if you prefer) left over in the minds of various prominent Chinese from the 1890s onward. There exist a number of striking assertions of faith in China's universal mission, and the contribution which Chinese civilization would once again make to the future welfare of mankind, usually within the framework of a new universal world order. Schwartz tends to see these simply as assertions of the superiority

6. *Confucian China and its Modern Fate: a Trilogy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), especially Vol. 1, ch. 7.

7. Schwartz, "The Chinese perception of world order," p. 284.

of the "Chinese way of life" similar to any other nationalistic belief of a people in the special value of their own "way of life" or "civilizing mission." [8] But was this merely "the Chinese way" or something deeper and different in quality? Did the Chinese people, in the first half of the twentieth century, wholly accept the intellectual and moral premises of an alien system of inter-state relations based on western preconceptions of diplomacy and international law? Certainly they played the game of international power politics, but was this from conviction of its rightness or *faute de mieux*? Did they wholeheartedly believe in the system or did they in fact despise it? They could hardly believe that any real equality existed for China in the European system of international relations as then practised. Did they, in fact, retain certain historically rooted assumptions concerning the very nature of the international order, though kept, as it were, indefinitely in cold storage, while they were forced to react, from their position of weakness, to the West on the West's own terms?

Before going further let us examine some of these assertions of faith in China's "universal mission." The earliest one is probably that made by Wang T'ao in the 1880s while the mechanics of the "tribute system" were passing into limbo. Wang T'ao advocated relatively sweeping reforms in China, and went on to claim that once these reforms had taken effect China would be as strong as the West, but in addition she would possess something lacking in the West, namely, moral qualities. Thus China, which had started out by responding to the West on western terms, would eventually be able to compel the West to respond to China on Chinese terms.[9] A more influential scholar, K'ang Yu-wei, also stressed the special contribution which China would make to a future stage in world history in his famous *Ta-t'ung shu* (*Book of the Great Harmony*) completed in 1902, in which he transformed Confucius into a prophet of progress towards an utopian future.[10] K'ang's younger contemporary, Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, was an influential publicist in the crucial decade of 1901–11, and popularized K'ang's main ideas among the new generation of intellectuals. By using a Confucian time-scale against which to measure world history Liang was able "to protect China from an inner sense of failure by interpreting its history as part of a universal pattern." [11] In 1919, after returning from a visit abroad, Liang wrote his *Travel Impressions of Europe* in which he put forward a manifesto for the younger generation of Chinese

8. Benjamin Schwartz, "The Maoist image of world order," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1967. Reprinted in Schwartz, *Communism and China: Ideology in Flux* (N.Y.: Atheneum, 1970), pp. 228–42.

9. Cohen, "Wang T'ao's perspective on a changing world," p. 145. See also pp. 153–4.

10. See Joseph Levenson, *Confucian China and its Modern Fate*, Vol. 1, pp. 81–2.

11. Joseph Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953), p. 169.

intellectuals and asked: "What is our duty? It is to develop our civilization with that of the West and to supplement Western civilization with ours so as to synthesize and transform them to make a new civilization. . . ." He then expanded the theme of borrowing methods from other civilizations, but at the same time stressed the unique value of the Chinese contribution.[12] One year previously Li Ta-chao had hailed the October 1917 Revolution in an article entitled "A Comparison of the French and Russian Revolutions." Li saw the Russian Revolution as the first step towards the "reconstruction of a third great civilization," in which the Chinese cultural tradition had a special role to play.[13] Li repeated the same basic idea again in 1918 in an article entitled "The Basic Differences between Eastern and Western Civilizations," in which he argued that the crisis of the world could not be overcome unless a new, third civilization was to emerge.[14]

Although by this time China's diplomats had developed a fair sophistication at negotiating with the foreign powers in a western style of diplomacy, they were gravely handicapped by having to do so from a position of weakness. This led not only to a widespread feeling of frustration and humiliation, but also to an inner sense of temporary failure, which may account for the fact that a number of influential publicists and statesmen during the era of the Republic insisted not only that China must strive towards the status of a great power, but also that China embodied certain unique values which were of importance to the whole world. For instance Sun Yat-sen, in his sixth *San min chu-i* lecture, delivered in March 1924, while discussing "benevolence," that is, the duty to "lift up the fallen and to aid the weak," claimed that when China eventually became strong, and saw weaker and smaller people suffering under the domination of the Great Powers in the same way that China was now suffering, then China would stand out as their champion against such imperialism. This would be in accordance with the traditional Chinese concept of "governing the state and pacifying the world." "If we want to be able to reach this ideal in the future, we must now revive our national spirit, recover our national standing, unify the world upon the foundation of our ancient morality and love of peace, and bring about a universal rule of equality and fraternity." [15]

As an example of a publicist we may look at Tai Chi-ta'o, who was Sun Yat-sen's personal secretary from 1912 until Sun's death in 1925,

12. Translated in Wm. Theodore de Bary *et al.* (comp.), *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1960), pp. 847–9. See also Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, ch. 6, in which he analyses Liang's intellectual position between 1912 and 1919.

13. Maurice Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967), p. 64.

14. *Ibid.* pp. 46–7.

15. Frank W. Price, trans., *San Min Chu I; The Three Principles of the People* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1927). Abridged ed. (Taipei: China Cultural Service, 1953), p. 50. The Chinese text occurs in the Shanghai, 1927 ed., p. 148.

and an associate of Chiang Kai-shek thereafter. As a well-known journalist, writing on all aspects of China's frustrating weakness and the overriding need for national unity and strength, he was influential in the 1910s and 1920s. As a patriot, who felt keenly China's continuing humiliation, he found a psychological compensation by expressing a belief in the distinctiveness and value of his own historical tradition. Other nationalist movements in the twentieth century have drawn inspiration from their own cultural tradition, but none has sprung from the decay of a tradition which believed so implicitly in the rightness of its culture and values as universally applicable. Tai wanted to see China thrust herself into the forefront of universal change and regain her position of greatness in the world. Yet, in spite of his desire for China to become great and strong, he had nagging doubts concerning the effects of modernization with its apparent disregard for morality. To him city life, especially in Shanghai, was intrinsically bad. In any case China was failing to modernize rapidly enough and this led Tai to reassert the importance of "national greatness." He argued that China had a moral responsibility to lead the entire "coloured world" in its fight against imperialism, and he defined his ideas of nation and race in terms of traditional moral values which were distinct from the gross materialism of the West. "In spirit at least Tai's view pointed back to Chinese history and ahead to the Maoist view of the world." [16] Chiang Kai-shek said much the same in his book *China's Destiny*, published in 1943, in which he drew heavily on Sun Yat-sen's writings. Chiang Kai-shek, like others before him, was seeking psychological compensation for China's lowly position among the nations of the world by emphasizing the ethical values of Chinese culture. The whole of the period from 1895 to 1949, which saw the final transition from culturalism to nationalism, should be seen not so much against the backdrop of the traditional tribute system, but rather against the stark realities of imperialism. The resulting sense of failure and frustration in the first half of the twentieth century gave rise to a condition which has been diagnosed by one scholar as "the nationalism of cultural despair." [17]

This feeling of despair has been dramatically reversed within two decades of reconstruction carried out by the People's Republic of China. If one asks what is the driving force which has made this possible the short answer is revolutionary nationalism, the basic dynamic of which is a belief in continual progress through a correct understanding of the law of contradiction. In the Chinese interpretation of the writings of

16. W. G. Saywell, "Modernization without modernity: Tai Chi-t'ao, a conservative nationalist," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (October 1970), p. 263. For a fuller treatment of Tai, see William G. Saywell, "The thought of Tai Chi-t'ao, 1912–1928" (unpublished thesis, University of Toronto, 1968).

17. Ishwer C. Ojha, *Chinese Foreign Policy in an Age of Transition: the Diplomacy of Cultural Despair* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969). Ch. 2 refers.

Marx, primacy has been given not so much to a strictly deterministic interpretation of the materialist conception of history, but rather to a strong belief in the active participation of man in making history. This populist belief seems to have been accepted by both Li Ta-chao and Mao Tse-tung with a strong intellectual and emotional commitment from almost the beginning of the Communist movement in China. In fact Li Ta-chao had already raised the problem of the conflict between determinism and activism in his essay "My Marxist Views" written in 1919.[18] Meisner's *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism*, and the introduction by Hélène d'Encausse and Stuart Schram to their *Marxism and Asia*,[19] document how the ideals and goals of Marxist-Leninism were adapted to Chinese realities, and the extent to which they were conditioned by pre-existing cultural and intellectual factors. From his study of Li Ta-chao, Meisner draws the conclusion that "Marxism in China can be seen as a form of utopian mentality – a radically new interpretation of history and society and a vision of the future – which has tended to transcend and transform the existing historic situation. This new body of ideals has served as a spur to political action to change China in accordance with Marxist ideals. In the process the ideals and goals have themselves been conditioned by a variety of pre-existing cultural and intellectual factors, as well as by the practical possibilities for revolutionary action." [20] D'Encausse and Schram also stress that the evolution of Chinese communism cannot be adequately understood apart from the nature of the political and intellectual tradition in which it evolved, and that China is still marked with the imprint of her past.[21] This is an intricate problem in intellectual history which requires more investigation but it would be foolhardy to assume that all intellectual and emotional ties with the past have been broken during the past 50 years, even if the institutional links with the past have been destroyed.[22]

These considerations might seem to have marginal relevance for understanding China's international relations in the present and trying to predict their possible course in the future, had it not been for the Cultural Revolution. But the significance of the Cultural Revolution and its aftermath can hardly be exaggerated, and it has sent scholars hurrying to examine antecedents; not just the Great Leap Forward and its aftermath, but the whole "Yenan syndrome" and the evolution of the "Maoist vision." Mao's world view, and in particular his perception of China's place in the world, have not

18. Meisner, *Li Ta-chao*, pp. 126–7.

19. H. Carrère d'Encausse and S. Schram, *Marxism and Asia* (London: Allen Lane, the Penguin Press, 1969).

20. Meisner, *Li Ta-chao*, p. xiv.

21. D'Encausse and Schram, *Marxism and Asia*, pp. 45–6.

22. For a suggestive discussion on this problem see James Chieh Hsiung, *Ideology and Practice: the Evolution of Chinese Communism* (N.Y.: Praeger, 1970), chs. 5–7, especially pp. 158–65.

been static and it would require a long article to trace its evolution adequately. But certain main features can be identified. In the 30 years from 1919 through 1949 the main emphasis has been on nationalism and revolution. The ingredients of Mao's *weltanschauung* in this period include a strong belief in the human will and the importance of being an activist; a belief in the potentially creative force of the masses, and therefore of the need to transform the consciousness of the Chinese people in order to release these creative forces. Another component of this world view is the idea of struggle, especially the conviction that there can be no compromise between "hostile" contradictions. Also from this period comes Mao's guerrilla ethos which can be applied not only to warfare but also to ideological remoulding, and even to the conduct of foreign relations. Some of his intellectual concepts may have been derived from his reading of western thinkers in translation, while other concepts he developed from specifically Chinese sources. Some of Mao's Chinese predispositions may have been reinforced by certain influences derived from the West, so that we see the re-emergence of traditional Chinese ideas in western guise.[23] But whatever the exact mixture of influences on his intellectual development, Mao himself remains profoundly Chinese. As an indication of his world view before the period of the Great Leap Forward in 1958 his essay "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," written in 1949, is representative.[24] In this work he points to the abolition of classes, parties and state power as the road that mankind must take, and claims that "it is only a question of time and conditions." The task of the Chinese Communist Party is to work hard to create the conditions in which classes, state power and political parties will die out and mankind will enter the era of Great Harmony. Although K'ang Yu-wei wrote the *Ta-t'ung shu* (Book of Great Harmony) he was unable to find the way to achieve it, and the only way to do so, Mao says, is through a people's republic led by the working class. As regards foreign relations, China should unite in a common struggle with those nations of the world which treat China as equals and unite with the people (presumably in contradistinction to their governments) of all countries. In the early 1950s, China was "leaning to one side" in her foreign policy in order to receive the support and guidance of the Soviet Union, but by 1958, at least for Mao, this period of leaning to one side was over. He now urged that China must be self-reliant, while at the same time he lauded the fact that the Chinese people were "poor and blank." These two qualities – self-reliance and being poor and blank – were developed by Mao into one of the main components of his world view which

23. On this point, see Benjamin Schwartz, "China and the West in the thought of Mao Tse-tung," in Ping-ti Ho and Tang Tsou (ed.), *China in Crisis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), Vol. 1, Bk. 1, pp. 365–79, and the comments on this article by Stuart Schram and Donald Munro, pp. 380–96.

24. Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works*, Vol. IV (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1961), pp. 411–23.

came to full tide in the Cultural Revolution, and carried with it a conviction that China had a mission to convince less developed countries that they could become strong by following China's example.

Another component of Mao's world view, as reflected in the Cultural Revolution, is the interaction between the conception of China's uniqueness as the exemplar of true Marxist-Leninism and the university of China's revolutionary role. From the Chinese viewpoint, the full significance of the Cultural Revolution lies in the attempt to create people who are deeply inspired with a new kind of social motivation and social consciousness in a society which offers the individual the opportunity to develop his fullest potential. At the same time this breakthrough towards the creation of a higher human consciousness is seen as attainable, eventually, by all peoples who are influenced to follow China's lead. This world view resonates closely with the belief expressed by Sun Yat-sen and others, though the content now is not residual Confucianism but a Chinese version of Marxist-Leninism containing both western *and* Chinese ingredients. It is in this way, and only this way, that intellectual and emotional ties with the past can still be seen to persist. The important point is that the ideology for transforming the consciousness of the individual is offered as China's unique contribution to a regenerated world of the future. It is something to be proud of because it is the product of contemporary China's own culture. It regains for China the place of cultural pre-eminence which she regarded herself as holding in the past.

The admission of China into the United Nations, the beginnings of a *détente* with the United States, and the fact of being a nuclear power should have gone some way towards eradicating that feeling of humiliation and frustration which, from the beginning, has been the main dynamic of her nationalism. Eventually, with the reuniting of Taiwan with China, and the return of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty, the process will be complete and the scars of the past should heal over. But it should not be forgotten that the People's Republic of China was forced to wait for 22 years before being allowed to assume China's seat in the United Nations. From the Chinese point of view this is humiliating and is not likely to fill them with respect for that body, or rather the way in which votes can be manipulated in the U.N. to suit the policies of the great powers. Now that China is herself a member of the United Nations, will she in the future be satisfied to settle into the role of an influential power within a western-originated system of international relations, manipulating that system to her own national advantage without wishing to make any substantial changes in the ground rules and the attitude of mind which underlies them? Or will Chinese leaders at some stage feel the need for reassurance that the ideology and life-style of their society has universal validity by the fact that other peoples turn towards them for inspiration and example? Some observers have recently argued that once China has settled into playing a full part in world affairs her attitudes and actions

are likely to be shaped by the pressures and complexities within the United Nations' network, and that she will soon be acting, even if not speaking, in the style usual to a great power. This may be so, and China may come to accept the ethos of the other major powers in international relations. But this is basically an argument derived from a western-oriented analysis of nation states and nationalism. It is a comforting assumption for "*status quo*" powers but does not do justice to the Chinese commitment to revolutionary change. Other observers, on the contrary, have pointed out that while present Chinese methods of diplomacy are flexible and pragmatic the long-term goal of "socialist internationalism" has not been repudiated but reaffirmed. The Chinese seem to have inexhaustible patience in working towards their long-term aims, and the final defeat of the spirit of "imperialism" throughout the world, which plays such a major role in present Chinese thinking, is seen by the Chinese themselves as an historical task that may require centuries to accomplish. According to this line of argument "revolution" is the main trend in the world in the future and the revolutionizing of human consciousness the ultimate goal. It would seem more realistic to expect that China will carry out a policy of both co-existence through co-operation and contending through contradiction. Thus, I would suggest that China will operate on two levels at the same time. At the more formal level, such as in the United Nations and in international conferences such as the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, she will tend to adopt a "realistic" style of diplomacy following the generally accepted *modus vivendi* adopted by sovereign independent nation states within the competitive world of international politics and diplomacy. This she will do for the same reasons of apparent national self-interest that apply to all other countries. This is the "nationalism" side of her revolutionary nationalism. But, at a more informal level, she will tend to adopt an "ethical" style of diplomacy, more in harmony with her self-image as the exemplar of a new society and new life style made effective in China since 1949, and more especially as a result of the Cultural Revolution. This is the "revolutionary" component of her dynamic. By so doing she will seek to justify her pragmatic style of diplomacy and to maintain the image of a distinct communist and Chinese cultural identity. These two levels of diplomacy are best understood not as alternatives but rather as complementary aspects of China's involvement in the world community, and are likely to be seen operating simultaneously in the future. This will require very considerable virtuosity on the part of those who give directions from Peking on foreign relations and those who translate these into action abroad, in order to prevent the two approaches from conflicting and cancelling each other out. But China's leaders appear to have strong faith in China's values and life style as evolved under the impact of Chinese communism, and a strong sense of cultural identity. At the same time they show considerable flexibility in diplomacy as befits students of Mao's writings on guerrilla warfare. They have

already come a long way in developing their own Chinese style of "informal" diplomacy, at once moderate but capable of impressing those whom they wish to persuade. Now, with a much wider field open to her through membership of the United Nations, China will have the opportunity to refine and extend the use of her own informal style of diplomacy. According to this analysis, therefore, China will continue to display both "ethical" and "self-interest" styles in her foreign relations. She will go along with the basic institutional system of international relations as practised within the United Nations, though attempting, under certain circumstances, to change what she feels to be intolerable in that system as judged by her own ethical standards.

Conclusion

In the late nineteenth century China was forced by her own weakness in face of powerful western countries, and their imitator, Japan, to abandon her own well-tried methods and ideology for conducting relations with non-Chinese peoples. She did so most reluctantly, and even after she had been forced to enter the western system of international law and relations, some of her influential leaders still considered that China had a superior ethic because it was based on moral right rather than the use of force. National leaders such as Sun Yat-sen in the 1920s and Chiang Kai-shek in the 1930s maintained that China had a mission to become strong so that she could once again play her proper role in the world through the moral influence of her culture. In this same period Marxist-Leninism was being adapted to the concrete situation in China by Li Ta-chao and Mao Tse-tung. China, in the world view developed by Mao, also had a universal mission, but based on very different premises from the residual Confucianism of Sun Yat-sen and others. Mao's belief in China's mission was based on the possibility of a world revolution in which China's example and ideological "rightness" would be crucial. These two versions of China's mission in the future overlapped for two decades in time, though the assumptions on which they were based were completely different. Nevertheless both versions were nourished by a strong sense of nationalism and a feeling of pride in China as an exemplar in "cultural" values. While Sun and Chiang looked back to China's past for the content of their ideology, Mao looks to her immediate past for his inspiration, and to the development of that vision in the future. One essential quality, which both versions of this faith in China's special mission have in common, is their "imprinted" belief in the relevance of Chinese cultural values and life style as an inspiration to guide other peoples of the world in the future. As a result of the Cultural Revolution China is being propelled forward by revolutionary fervour just as much as by nationalism. It would *not* seem realistic, therefore, to take it for granted that China will come to accept the total ethos on which the western-evolved system of international law and relations is based

without a struggle to modify it substantially, even though in the tactics and mechanics of diplomacy she maintains very considerable flexibility. Until it can be shown conclusively that in the estimation of China's leaders her ideological beliefs ought to play only a minimal part in the long-range development of her international relations, it will be more realistic to assume that this development will take place within the context of a prolonged phase of "cultural" confrontation in which the Chinese post-Cultural Revolution world view will contend ideologically with the predominantly western world view of the present, with its underpinning of capitalist-individualist beliefs. The arguments which fly backwards and forwards between those of us who attempt to analyse the motives underlying contemporary China's foreign relations are perhaps symptomatic of the extent to which we are already involved in this confrontation of values and the dialectic of ends and means.