

State Vs Mind: Can Confucian Ideology Make China's Foreign Policy Richer?

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As far as China's growth trajectory is concerned, west and the rest has observed a complex equation. However, the 'Chineseness' (中華性 Zhonghuaxing) is a prominent narrative of Chinese leadership in present scenario to understand the Chinese mind set. Although China's colossal material efficacies are always in situ with the parallel projection of its future growth. scholars and Sinologists always have the tendency of analysing the past from many respects. However, they tend to emphasize on the positive aspects of China, which offered them visibility in the international system. Highlighting China's economic dynamism, integration into the global economy it portrays the continuity of economic integration, and the interdependency between China and rest of the world increases.

For couple of decades, some orthodox theories coupled with Mao's ideology has served as the guiding principle for China and Chinese Communist party. Concepts like dialectical materialism, class struggle and proletarian dictatorship were in place for handling Chinese people for the realization of socialism. The legitimacy of CCP is also justified by its theories just to justify socialist movement; it monopolizes political power and other doctrines that contradicts its ideology. As a consequence, not only the so-called western ideologies were repudiated, but at the same time traditional ideologies like Confucianism are also marginalized. Interestingly, over last few decades the hegemony of Confucian ideology has remerged in China; first, it was socio-ideological significance of study Sinology, i.e. (guoxue reⁱ); further, China's contemporary classics-reading movement has flourished significantly in China mainland and west. These have been around and throughout history, with varying content and intended for various individuals or social groups. The feeling of seeking for roots infers Confucian philosophy can be served for multiple needs and interests of China. That was the beginning of widespread revival of Confucianism.

Keeping the idea of Confucius in backdrop for diversity as an empirical reality under 'self-cultivation' and 'harmonious society'(xiushen yu hexie shehui 修身与和谐社会) in late 90s CCP leaders initiated the official operation of the Confucius classroom and the establishment of Confucius Institutes worldwide. Basically, this 'xiushen yu hexie shehui 修身与和谐社会' is the epistemological approach; not a mere theoretical issue, but also a practical one. The purpose of such a concept is for people to recognize their position, role and duties as members of society. Thus, self-cultivation allows for correctness of name and is the basis for positive relationships in the family and in society. That is, self-cultivation is the correct way to achieve greater harmony in reality and one of the solutions to socio-political problems. Without diversity there can be no harmony. In the process of proliferation of Confucianism, what comes to our mind that, is that a revival of Confucianism in mainstream? However, the upturn of Confucianism is a phenomenon of the primary cultural tradition of Chinese civilization. During post-Han period, Confucianism became one of the significant discourses, which brought legitimization of the ruling system for the emperor.

In fact, pre-modern China was basically a manifestation of Confucian ideology that was the guiding principle for administration ranging from government structure till day-to-day life. In 1911 imperialism came to an end, with the imperial catastrophe, and with the establishment of People's Republic of China (中华人民共和国 zhonghua renmin gong he guoⁱⁱ) Confucianism became less effective all around.

Hence, the resurgence of Confucianism was not a reaction to May Fourth ideology, which stated that China must seek new horizons of modernization, where science and democracy were given priority for the nation and emancipation from traditionalism itself.

Sculpturing Foreign Policy:

In Chinese lens, the dynastic record of 'foreign policy' is fragmented under the topics like border control, frontier trade, imperial benevolence etc. Confucian philosophers pointed out that scholar-officials, farmers and artisans laboured with mind or muscle, but merchants only moved things about with. Specially, it was the initiative of China's southern Sung (1127-1279), who were more interested on foreign trade between east and far east. This sea trade evoked to determine China's maritime policies, which later proliferated and transformed into China's domestic policy. Later the Han emperor had to acknowledge the egalitarian relationship and brought to acknowledge Confucian lessons as the necessity of bringing social order. It would appear that the influence of Confucian political thought on China has an embedded connection with political order and philosophers like Xunzi and Mencius in some way. Despite differences in their thought process, this article emphasizes the similarities. Confucian views the political community as an ethical society aimed at promoting moralityⁱⁱⁱ. It defines the six 'W^{iv}' for the welfare of the common people, who appears to be the logical continuation of their emphasis on virtue, and the idea that all persons are equally capable of becoming righteous.

Many people hold the belief that Confucian philosophy and traditional Chinese culture are somehow incorporated into China's diplomatic theory. Confucian standards are the unlimited treasury (core) of thoughts for Chinese political theorem. Confucianism has given shrewdness backing to China to fabricate communist global relations with Chinese qualities. The generous government of Confucius was of the opinion that China's true starting point was to follow the quiet course of events; a theoretical approach to diplomatic layout. According to J. Nye, the discovery of Chinese Foreign Policy is a cumulative approach of China's soft power model^v. The diachronic review of Chinese foreign policy says that to understand the role of Confucius and Confucianism had a much-selected application in broad spectrum. It seems to have a direct connection between Confucian text and soft power under present Chinese foreign policy. Soft power in Chinese discourse is primality confined on China's domestic policy. Following Chinese scholars' discussion on soft power, Chinese leaders used culture as the main source of Chinese soft power building. Confucianism has resurged as a primary feature for Chinese culture exporting. The Chinese government has put a great deal of effort into exporting Chinese culture through Confucius Institutes worldwide and through various Chinese cultural events. In recent years, references to the term "soft power^{vi}" have become widespread in China, and people who study Chinese politics and international relations have analysed soft power concepts in their own understanding.

To be precise, the Chinese Govt has mainly focused on the traditional Confucian moral framework and the mandate of rules, which has allowed the Chinese government to work in securing their right to rule and enhance a more assertive approach (Foreign Policy) in abroad. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has also utilized Confucian mandate, as their soft power to enhance their nationalist sentiments among the people; therefore, Confucianism has been served as the codifying ideology further secure CCP's right to rule. On the other hand, foreign policy of China talks about the various challenges of the contemporary time.

Moreover, beyond the domain of international relations, philosophy of Confucius has also influenced Chinese in many respects. It is an established fact that in the fields of foreign policy analysis and

international relations, expression of ideas is always remains crucial to any changes in a nation's foreign policy. That is to say, a nation's politics and foreign policy would be heavily influenced not only by shifts in global politics at the moment, but also by its heritage and traditional ways of thinking. Thus, the foreign policy imperatives of China become viable with the current international system.

The analysis here, will demonstrate the influence of Confucianism on Chinese domestic politics and foreign policy, and the gradual analysis will cover the recent arguments and the role of Confucianism behind the psyche of several leading contemporary leaders and thinkers. Moreover, China's foreign policy directions during post Tian'an men era apparently fails to fully clarify China's status in the world order. While discussing the changing pattern of China's foreign policy dynamics since the foundation of the People's Republic of China (PRC), we need to look at the historical junctures as well. Despite discourses on Chinese foreign policy and Confucian ideology, study says that history of China's foreign policy dynamics is mainly focused on: a) Regional Stability is required in shaping China's relations with rest of the world, b) maintaining the national identity and c) neighbourhood have added magnetism in china's foreign policy.

According to chronology of dynasties, warring state period has its own significance; eastern Chou started around 770 BC, this period was stamped not just for its conflict with savages and battle inside provinces of China. The best blend of (ethics of religious traditions) that dominated China's political structure up until the 20th century was introduced by Confucius during the same time period as his philosophy, which became known as Confucian doctrine. Over times Confucian philosophy keeps providing resolutions of numerous problems. Particularly, interpretation of Confucian strategy of safeguarding nation is a precursor of China's foreign policy that defines the Chinese style of diplomacy and establishes a connection between the Confucian notion and its advancement as far as the state-party decisions are concerned. Further it also reflects the viability in the practical actions of China in the domain of foreign policy.

The recent viability of the term "Confucianism", not merely illuminates the cultural institutions that work to spread Chinese culture and language worldwide, also demonstrate the question of how Confucius schools promote Chinese leaders' hegemonic goals around the world today. Hence, the etymological meaning of foreign policy could be described as framework and its efficacy how the strategies used to spread the word about its national interest around the world. Diplomacy, on the other hand, is how a nation negotiates with other nations to meet its needs. Confucianism has had a significant impact on Chinese politics and foreign policy. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has used Confucianism to bolster nationalist sentiments among the people as rulers in Chinese history. Thus, in order to procreate a more assertive foreign policy and bolster the CCP's domestic rule, Confucianism has been used as the governing ideology. One could assert with conviction that Confucianism will continue to be China's primary source of modernization-related concepts.

Confucian perspective towards Global leadership

While nurturing the relationship between Confucianism and China's strategic move in dealing its domestic and foreign affairs, it is required to look at the classical model of political leadership in classical Confucianism. That talks about the core values, virtues, and the relationships. The Conceptual reconstruction is used to create a new Confucian model with utility ethics and ethics of justice and righteousness in mind. The proponents of the Confucian matrix can demonstrate its features and

effectiveness in political and economic leadership. In addition, it is a quest for a practical method for achieving the crucial transformation toward global power. As far as the new model is concerned with a normative harmonization process, it can be made even better in considering all of the fundamental human values and how humanity will evolve in the future.

However, the Confucian model offers a creative and practical approach to addressing the requirements of various levels of leadership, from management to global strategic capacity building. The creation and upholding of the new power politics model, on the other hand, greatly aids comprehension of the Confucian model in relation to contemporary Chinese political leadership and foreign policy. The notion of demotic belief that Confucians pacifism is established upon a modern Chinese myth, created in the early 20th century rather than a legitimate Confucian foreign policy tradition. Confucian foreign policy traditions were characterized with the juxtapose nature of inclusivism and exclusivism, neither of which gave up the use of force as statutory measures for foreign policy.

According to the 'Book of Change' (Yijing), traditional Chinese theory of human relationship and value served as the foundation for both traditions. Relational interactions in China's foreign relations were a possible outcome of the adoption of inclusivism or exclusivism in foreign policy^{vii}. Affined interplay in China's foreign relation was an episodic outcome of the adoption of inclusivism or exclusivism in foreign policy. As reflected in the inclusive tradition, Confucianism's inclusive humanism may serve as a significant intellectual inspiration for Chinese foreign policy today. The Confucian grand strategy's inclusive relationism also significantly broadens the strategic vision of Chinese foreign policy. The discourse regarding Chinese foreign policy under President Xi Jinping already demonstrates a significant amount of inclusive relationism. By proponent of this strategy more into practice, both China and the world will be benefitted from multiple directions.

China's foreign policy architecture 1949 onwards

Since the very founding of the PRC, Chinese leaders have spouted hawkish rhetoric and engaged in militant provocations at and beyond China's frontiers. While confrontational verbiage was more common when Mao Zedong—who dominated PRC domestic politics and foreign policy between 1949 and 1976—was alive, these pugnacious pronouncements have remained a part of Beijing's playbook in the post-Mao era^{viii}. Again, the so-called Chinese People's Volunteer Army's widespread support for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea marked the beginning of the PRC's foreign policy goals toward the end of 1950. The changing trend of Maoist-era military strength continued until the first half of the post-Mao era. Like rulers in Chinese history, Confucianism is somehow incorporated into the framework of the communist party to quell nationalist sentiments among the populace; China's governing ideology is partially influenced by Confucianism's indoctrination, as is its increasingly assertive foreign policy and domestic policy. While discussing Confucianism and Chinese politics, the fact pops up that essence of Confucianism was vanished during Mao era in China mainland after CCP established its power in 1949. Technically in post Mao era, resurgence of Confucianism took place in China under the banner of 'Gai ge kai fang' (Opening and Reform). During the period of opening and reform era, China witnessed its rapid development in its political, economic strength. Thus, the quest of whether China can rise peacefully becomes a matter of concern toward its neighbourhood and the west. We know that China was very pragmatic on its initial development, and Deng's thinking was heavily influenced by the "virtue" philosophy. That set the tone for China's overall foreign policy and was one of the main reasons Confucianism came back in force in the mid-1990s; that allowed China to redefine its policy architecture, define the implications of Confucianism for democracy and western liberalism,

and establish Confucianism as the dominant ideology in China. However, my approach here is to connect Confucian ideology with Chinese Foreign policy, with some basic arguments like can Confucianism make Chinese foreign policy richer? China has its rich history of cultural civilization. Confucianism is not just a school of thought; rather, it is a state of religion and sentiment. Confucianism is one of the pillars of Chinese civilization.

As far as the rapid economic development of China in the 21st century is concerned, it seems that indoctrination of Confucianism has already in the Chinese policy system, which may be not visible openly. On the outset, one thing we must consider Confucian ideology as a typical ideology of China and enjoy privileges that no other system does. A few Confucian scholars argued that Confucianism must be understood and reshaped as a civic religion rather than a state of religion. Under a specific cultural consciousness China constitutes the foundation of its civic religion, in which its people can find the meaning of their existence. (Che 2013, 2016). As we know that the concept of nation-state does not fit for China, in Chinese lens, the dynastic record of 'foreign policy' is fragmented under the topics like border control, frontier trade, imperial benevolence etc. China's southern Sung (1127-1279) was more concerned with international trade between the east and the far east. China's maritime policies were influenced by this sea trade, which later evolved into the country's domestic policy. This sea trade evoked to determine/develop China's maritime policies, which later developed and transformed into China's domestic policy. Later the Han emperor had to accept the egalitarian brother to brother relationship and brought to accept Confucian teachings as the basic of social order.

Foreign Policy with Chinese characteristics

A new ability to evaluate Beijing's shift in policy discourse has been added by the western breakthrough on sinology. China pursued its alliance with two superpowers in the aftermath of western colonialization and freedom restoration in the middle of the 20th century. As Xunzi, the incomparable Confucian master attested: changes in international politics have largely been attributed to the political ideas of leaders, and that political power is important. As a result, the idea of leadership and Xunzi's concept of political power share many commonalities.

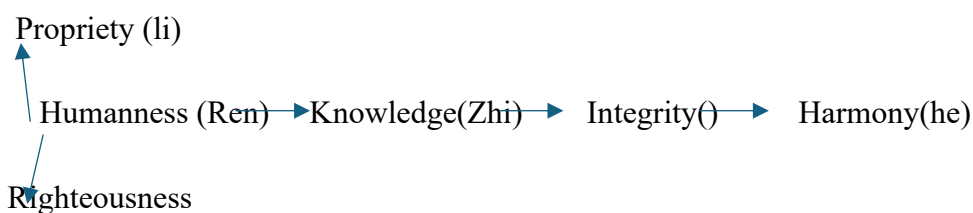
Departure from Deng's 'Tao Guang yang hui^{ix}' to Xi's 'Xing xing', gives a and methodological shift of China's foreign policy frame work. In terms of China's foreign policy, this demonstrates how identical leadership emerges and how it shapes Chinese leaders' minds. China observed variations in the doctrine of concealing capabilities and waiting for the right time during its transit, but Deng has also supported "You suo zuo wei" (proactive and achieve success). Etymologically, the ideational leadership is derived from the perception of national leaders. However, 'ideational leadership' centers round 'leadership achieved with the help of ideas'. Thus, it is applied by the policy practitioners, according to requirement. Even though it is truly Confucian, the current call for "harmony" (he xie) in China is a socialist value. Moreover, China's quest on 'benevolence' (ren), is one of the key components of Confucianism. Even Xi Jinping's concept of a "world community of common destiny" has elements of classical philosophy. It is necessary to have a better understanding of the philosophical connotations of Xi's vision and mission for a Chinese international order in order to comprehend them, particularly Xi's and the CCP's obsession with Confucian thought.

This, in turn also requires understanding the context through which such came about, necessitating a dive into Chinese history. Understanding "heaven," the source of all human and social values, is

essential to comprehending Confucian ideology. Although Chinese heaven is authoritarian, its goal is harmony and order rather than creation or destruction. Instead of establishing or destroying its purpose to maintain harmony and order, it appears that heaven in Chinese culture is more patronizing. Confucius advocated for a hierarchy that begins with the family because he did not see humans as separate entities. Therefore, the Chinese view superiority as the primacy of collective effort over individual effort in order to maintain social order. As far China's balance and power is concerned, indeed there are some links and yet juxtaposing relationship between 'Yin' and 'Yang', but balance of power is very much realist terminology. Whilst the west is fascinated by the wisdom of 'Art of war' also well informed of China's strategic culture of *wo xin chang dan*^x. However, Confucianism also provides an ethical code of conduct and says that the right to power could be withdrawn from the Son of heaven if he failed to embrace and practice Confucian values that consist of Humanness, Righteousness, Knowledge, and Integrity. Under such scenario, there would be a change in dynasty until a new Tian zi emerged to uphold the moral values.

Incarnating Confucian model in Chinese society, Confucianism justified and rationalized inequality in the traditional Chinese tributary system under Heaven (Tian-xia). The concept of Tian-xia could be viewed from three perspectives: Datong, homogeneity, and order (Qin 2010: 41-42). Therefore, holism asserts that there is no distinction between "I" and "we," or "self" and "other." Datong talks about harmony and widely refers to the trinity where human and nature, ideal and reality meet as a harmonious whole (Qin 2010:42)^{xi}. Sharing the same Tian, the power of Tian Zi could occasionally extend beyond its geographical boundaries to include tributary states whose citizens ought to strive for Chinese culture based on Confucian principles in order to promote world harmony.

Conceptual framework of the key tenants of Confucianism



Conclusion

Confucianism indeed a large concept, for the purpose of understanding its role in China's foreign policy. This chapter marks that China failed to promote Confucian values, which led to opposition from local communities. However, despite this failure, Confucianism still has the potential to mobilize China's cooperation in a decolonial push away from Western hegemony. Instead, it ought to be acquired as a counterbalance that provides a means of elective improvement for developing and immature nations that are freed from the scourge of dependence. Last but not least, Confucianism could be used to describe the self-based moral universe or self that is based on goodness.

Therefore, according to Confucius, a ruler must establish trust for 'there is no way to establish oneself without trust from people' (论语Lunyu12:7)^{xii}. Further a step ahead, maintain harmony within is the

first step of bringing stability and peace. This is the fundamental difference in western concept of enforcement through rule of law and punishment (Yue 2014)^{xiii}. China's military and economic power have trembled its neighbours, leading to fear that rise of China could dismantle international peace. However, soft power never allows to take weapon. As far as Confucian values are concerned, it embraces unity and righteousness and achieve harmony all around is its ultimate goal. But the question of whether Confucianism has an iota of guiding state behaviour that is important. Quavering with Cheng's view, reviving Confucianism as a moral -political philosophy and by incorporating the moral values into Chinese Foreign policy has the potential to make Chinese foreign policy richer.

NOTES

ⁱ Chinese national learning (A movement in contemporary China and the issues surrounding it.)

ⁱⁱ Chinese use this term for PRC.

ⁱⁱⁱ Low, K.C.P. Confucian Ethics. In: Idowu, S.O., Capaldi, N., Zu, L., Gupta, A.D. (eds) Encyclopedia of Corporate Social Responsibility. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg. 2013. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-28036-8_594

^{iv} Who, What, Where, How, Why, When are termed as 'W'.

^v Joseph Nye. Soft power: The origins and political progress of a concept.

^{vi} Soft power, coined by American scholar Joseph S. Nye in the early nineties, has been widely used in the academic and political arenas. According to Nye, the power a state exercises can be divided into two categories: hard power, referring to military and economic power; and soft power, indicating the ability to achieve goals through attraction rather than coercion.

^{vii} Lu DP. Influence of I-ching (Yijing, or The Book Of Changes) on Chinese medicine, philosophy and science.

^{viii} Allen S. Whiting, *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence: India and Indochina*, Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1975; and Andrew Scobell, "Is There a Civil-Military Gap in China's Peaceful Rise?" *Parameters*, Vol. 39, No. 2, Summer 2009, pp. 4–22.

^{ix} Deng Xiaoping's foreign policy doctrine—to calmly observe, hold one's ground, react firmly, act but keep a low profile

^x which means enduring self-imposed hardship in order to strengthen and prepare the resolve of a person to realize his ambition.

^{xixixi} Yue, R.Wk. Beyond dependency: the promise of Confucianism in Post-Westphalia International relations. *Bandung J of Global South* 2, 4 (2015).

^{xii} Hunter, Michael: *Confucius Beyond the Analects*, Brill, Leiden.2017

^{xiii} Hinton, David: *Analects, Confucius*. Counterpoint, Berkeley. 2014