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In China's Vanguard Civilization: Is there Shelter for the Third World?

Tseggai Isaac

Abstract

This paper looks at China's civilizational and modernization heritages. Its ancient civilization is described as the first phase of China's civilization. In the first phase, China's Civilization was stellar, and creative, possessing well-structured bureaucratic institutions with phenomenal capacities for artistic production and the advancement of high sciences. The second phase of China's civilization reflects its current modernization, one inspired and operationalized by Marxism and Maoism. The earlier phase of China's Civilization was aloof, benign, self-sufficient, reticent and reluctant to attract untoward global attention. This ancient civilization, rooted in the organic soil of China itself, was holistic, robust on its own merit.

China's civilization was inspired by its ancient religions and social formations. From such fountainheads, China's institutional framework at the village, community, district, and regional levels responded to bureaucratic authority to produce creative and organically legitimate governance for centuries.

The ancient civilization of China represented a multidimensional grandeur. At its height, it combined scientific rationalizations with productive outputs in material science. There was a seamless integration of ancient technical and scientific differentiation. These were ancient, but their scientific characteristics were rather modern. If we average and standardize variation to account for epochal setbacks and institutional aberrations, such as misguided actions by the emperors, it is not farfetched to say that the level of scientific maturity that Great Britain reached in its industrial revolution by the 16th and 17th centuries matched China's scientific output of two thousand years before.

China's scientific output in ancient days represented functionally relevant and exquisitely adaptive features in their effects and utility. Pre-modern China showed to the world mastery of the hard sciences. Its engineering excellence testified to China's mastery of metallurgy, chemical sciences, physics, astronomy, medicine, and structural engineering. Its socio-cultural development were the foundations of ancient China's highly matured political development. Political maturity of ancient China valued human freedom with hierarchical order, revealing one of the oldest and most creative civilizations in the world.

China's coming status as a superpower is unmistakable. As China's superpower status consolidates in the next few decades, Third World states are asking, naturally: "Is China going to introduce celebratory developmental alternatives to the neocolonial structures of the West?"

Introduction

The content of a nation's history is the foundation of its civilization. China's history and civilization reveal the country as having the oldest continuous state system, one infused with a rich civilization. Historians, anthropologists, sociologists, and political scientists attempt to unfold the nearly boundless tapestry of China's rich civilization and come to the common conclusion affirming that the State of China prevailed for millennia.

The enduring survivability of China is reflected in its cultural, traditional and religious heritage. Irrespective of the numerous dynasties of ancient China, the creative and productive emperors of the medieval years, or the struggling rulers on the eve of European colonialism, the State of China kept the lights shining on its legitimacy. China's status of a superpower was predicted as early as the 1890s.

More than a century ago, James Whitford Bashford noted China's status as a global power. He stated:

In the problems of the twentieth century, the United States and China bulk large — the United States because of her long line of sea coast on the Pacific, her high industrial and commercial development, her enormous wealth, her energy, and the inevitable increase of her population along the Pacific Coast. The completion of the Panama Canal will put the entire United States, including the Atlantic Coast, three thousand miles nearer China than is Europe. The Christian faith, which we very imperfectly represent, may nevertheless through us become dominant in the Pacific Basin.

China bulks large because she now has a population of 437,000,000 — three-fourths the people of the Pacific basin — whose industry, energy, economy, perseverance and fruitfulness make the Anglo-Saxon of the Orient. China sustains this immense population wholly by farming and such crude manufacturing as can be carried on by hand. China is just beginning to accept modern inventions and to introduce modern machinery; and with far the largest and toughest, most industrious and most economical laboring class on our globe, an era of vast industrial expansion is immediately before her.

Moreover, China is now beginning to construct railroads and to open the largest and finest coal and iron mines thus far known to man.

Baron Richthofen, after a laborious investigation of many years, submitted to the German government a three-volume report of the coal and iron resources of China, showing that they are the finest in the world. He found coal in fifteen of the eighteen provinces examined by him; and in the province of Shansi alone he reported enough coal to supply the human race for several thousand years. Side by side with these supplies of coal, Baron Richthofen found vast supplies of iron ore.

The German government was so amazed by Baron's report that an expert commission was sent to China in 1897 to reexamine his data, and this commission fully verified Baron Richthofen's estimates. It was the discovery of these marvelous resources of China which led to the greedy attempts of European powers to divide the empire — attempts which led to the Boxer uprising and which were frustrated largely by the statesmanship of Secretary Hay and the power of the United States. Surely, a population of 437,000,000 in a compact territory sustained by agriculture alone is a phenomenon unmatched by any other country on our globe.¹

The lengthy quote above is a proper context for looking at China's climb to the status of a superpower. It shows that the essential elements of national power were available in abundance for China to marshal those elements of power and embolden itself to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

This paper begins by looking at China's timeless civilization, its capabilities, and its potentials to defend itself from external aggression. Yet, as China prepares to assume a superpower status, its relationship to the Third World is facing criticism as being exploitative and damaging. We should look at this argument and examine if the links of ideology, national interest, and lack of skills in public policy are primary causes for any foreign aid irrespective of the status of "communist" China or the "liberal" West.

China's Timeless Civilization

The Chinese civilization commands unparalleled greatness among world civilizations. Other civilizations have left little of material use that can be said to have value in the 21st century. Chinese civilization boasts of the continuity and utility of its civilizational outcomes. China had the technical and strategic capabilities to embark on colonial ventures before European nations initiated their colonial ambitions. What China lacked at the time of European colonial expansion was simply the ambition to compete with Western Imperialism.

¹ Bashford, J. A (1907). *The Awakening of China*. The Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, China Sentential Commission, New York, NY: pp. 2-3.

National ambition as a motivating factor for greatness is exemplified by the fact that the great Chinese civilization that had accumulated vast technical, scientific, and legal traditions failed in the nineteenth century to capitalize on those resources to prevent China's defeat and occupation by the European powers.²

The Chinese — whose mastery of medicine, technology, explosives, magnets, and seafaring technology was incomparable from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries — are now measuring their current economic boom against their past ambivalence for imperial expansion. They see virtue in the pacifism and disinterest of their ancestors, in their refraining from spearheading colonial ventures before the Europeans. China's emerging projection of power appears designed not to repeat past ambivalence, but rather to meet any Western challenge on Chinese terms at any cost.

Unless the current totalitarian political system destroys the social system and leads to national decay, the prospect of China emerging as a superpower of undisputed supremacy is ineluctable.

The Chinese were oriented to think inward in terms of their perceived cultural superiority. They felt invincible and as a result neglected the need for vigilance. Self-contentedness at the highest level resulted in forgetting the call to develop and maintain the essential elements of national power. They could not overcome their inner thoughts and cultural practices to initiate aggression as a pretext for taking the lands of other societies. The closing decades of the 19th century were painful ones for China, because it could not mount any resistance against foreign occupation. Events such as the Boxer Rebellion represent symbolic indicators of China's indomitable spirit.

China slept for thousands of years and awoke to find itself embattled and ransacked by foreign powers.³

The ancient Chinese technical and scientific creativity flowed from cultural norms that permeated Chinese society, enabling them to solve immediate and local problems (Mott, F. W. 2003). The Chinese of the middle ages were innovative in the technical realms, but they lacked ambition and vision to channel their technical innovations for imperial conquest. They were ambivalent as to the benefits that could be extracted by marrying their scientific creativity with the contrivances of diplomacy, political ambitions, thirst for adventure and risk taking.

² Bailey, Thomas A. *The Foreign Policy of the American People*, Prentice-Hall, New York, NY: 1982. Bailey is full of accolades and, at the same time, he is a dispassionate critic of American greatness. His analysis is beneficial in looking at the pitfalls of uncouth diplomacy and the fortifying strengths of the military-industrial complex aptly defined by President Eisenhower. See, *President Eisenhower's Farewell Address to the Nation*, January 17, 1961.

³ Bailey, pp. 439-48.

Europeans borrowed and innovated from Chinese science and used this for global conquest that brought them bountiful colonial possessions.

Revolutionary China vs. Imperial China

Careful study of Mao Zedong's writings and wisdom reveals the difference between his sharp critical analysis and the spasmodic events that sprung up during his leadership to overshadow the implications of his ideology. The Cultural Revolution (CR) and the Great Leap Forward (GLP) were expressions of his critical thinking. They were introduced as the operationalization of his theory and the synthesis that he constructed to apply Marxism in China.

Theoretically, logically, and synthetically, the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward were powerful inspirations capable of achieving great results. What was missing was the lack of information for the effective implementation of public policy methodologies and the development of technocratic skills similar to those of the Qin and Han dynasties.

Some of early imperial China's social and political features are rare in the histories of early peoples: all political power was highly centralized; its government was a bureaucracy of highly literate administrators who were men selected in principle for their individual qualifications of learning and ability and its imperial institutions. . . . the imperial state was a civil government, in which, nominally at least, the civil virtues were held to be superior to the military (Mote, 2003, 3-4).

Chairman Mao believed that the Party is the macrocosm of the people. In his estimation, the Party could multitask as a vanguard army, national service unit, and as a bureaucratic civil service. What was needed was the institutional order that differentiated professional skills and channeled them to work centers with clear guidelines, clearer expectations, and accurate and precise measures of achieved results. The Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward lacked the systemization of the means of production and marshalling of appropriate professional skills.

Further, Mao believed that the masses give wisdom, inspiration, and guidance, to the correct path. He had confidence in the dedicated spirit of the masses and in their willingness to unite behind the Party as long as the Party did not betray their confidence and shortchange their expectations. He spoke of the dictatorship of the people as a collective application of a regimented society marching to the orders of the Party. When the Party sidetracked itself from policy formation, and engaged in aimless ideological regimentation of the masses, it began simultaneously to forget the ancestral wisdom, inspiration, and guidance that were embedded in the consciousness of the masses, and it became a party dictatorship instead of a people's dictatorship.

According to Mao's analysis, a people's dictatorship is legitimate; party dictatorship is not, because it undermines the vision of the masses. When the Party shortchanges the masses, Chairman Mao believed, the Republic will be confounded, and the Party will have fallen short of the people's expectations.

What constitutes the most remarkable and eye-opening realities of China today? It is the fact that Maoism remains the guiding light of the Chinese Communist Party. Mao's doctrinal analysis envisioned post-1989 China and the CCP's functional purposes. The development and placement of differentiated skill, coordination of capital and policy formations, and resources that were lacking during the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward were met by the end of the twentieth century as the fulfillment of Mao's visions. The state and the Party were to merge in symbiotic relationship to enhance the glow of a functional state.

Today's China was predicted during the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward. It found its bearing during the third quarter of the 20th century. In the 21st century, it is at the initial phase of its maturity. Its capacity for capital formation, its systemization of a vast work force, and its inherent abilities to maximize the efficiency of its material resources suggest the prospect of surpassing the EU, the United States, or Russia in global influence. The productive and useful expectation of the Cultural Revolution and the bench-marks of the Great Leap Forward can be realized with maximum effect in the Third World if China commits enough resources for its own investment returns while uplifting the Third World from its dismal position today.

The closing decade of the 19th century China positioned itself to overcome the intrusions of colonialism in China. The years between the First and Second World Wars witnessed the birth pains of the modern China. Events such as the Boxer Rebellion represented symbolic indicators of an indomitable spirit.

The First World War years contained painful episodes that rendered China, once a great power, possessing a majestic civilization, reduced to a defensive posture; at times it was barely capable of defending its sovereignty against colonial powers and Japanese imperialism. The devastation continued during the Second World War. The 1940s witnessed the maturity and the determination of the Communist Party under the leadership of Chairman Mao Zedong. The Chinese Communist Party at this stage showed a combative spirit and intense discipline.

The military and political organizations were on sure footing as of mid-century, able to defeat the Nationalists and consolidate China's sovereignty in the post-post World War II decades. After the Second World War, China's role was regional, mainly in Korea and Taiwan/Formosa. After 1976, the making of an impending superpower with inspiring history and tradition embedded in its old civilization started to become evident.

Joseph Fewsmith describes China at this stage as “historically the most self-conscious society in the world, and the legacy of its history and civilization continue to play an important role, consciously and unconsciously, in the way that China is governed.”

When Mao Zedong, the leader of the Communist revolution, sought guidance on governing his nation, he turned not to the works of Marx and Lenin, whose philosophy he espoused, but to China’s dynastic histories to better understand the way in which China’s emperors had ruled the nation. He did so even as he excoriated China’s imperial past as feudal.⁴

Once the China Communist Party inaugurated the People’s Republic of China, the Republic started, metaphorically, learning to walk, to steady its footing, and then to take off on its journey at its current swift pace. Fewsmith’s analysis offers important perspective as to the options available to leadership for guiding China along the path of its past civilization. The challenge was of choosing liberal democracy or communism; which best approximated Chinese tradition and civilization?

The Cold War: A Defining Era for China and the Third World

The end of the Second World War introduced new geopolitical alliances. The former European colonies of Africa and Asia were liberated, and they joined the community of nations as sovereign states. European powers had divided China into spheres of European economic interests, but the country nevertheless escaped European colonization. Furthermore, the civil war between the nationalists and the communists preoccupied Chinese patriots.

In 1949, the communists under the leadership of Mao Zedong defeated the Nationalists and established themselves as the rulers of China with the People’s Liberation Army (PLA.) The communists defeated the Nationalist hope of instituting liberal democracy in China. Ever since then, the Chinese Communist Party has become the undisputed authority, assuming the role of modernizing China and creating a formidable deterrent as well as offensive capabilities.

The Cold War years (1945-1991) were defining decades for China. In the first place, the army participated in the Korean War. Even though its military and strategic resources were far more limited than those of the Allied forces, the numerical size and the discipline within the PLA’s hierarchy enabled China to extract a settlement resulting in the division of Korea. At this time the Chinese State morphed in ways that blended Mao’s theory of the people’s dictatorship and Party rule.

⁴ Fewsmith, J. “The Government of China”, In Michael Curtis, General Editor, *Introduction to Comparative Politics*, Longman, Inc. New York, NY: 1997: 397.

The symbiotic blend of the Chinese State and the Party reveals the seamless overlap between the powers of the state and the party, and the ideological framework that defined their unity. Imperial China captured by Maoist China gained a Chairman without royalty and state power without the imperial crown. The cultural attributes that molded the Chinese citizen, the makings of individual resiliency to endure interminable hardships while extolling imperial China as one of the highest civilizations in the world was replaced by the People's Party's "permanent revolution" (Britten, 1968).

The "permanent revolution" was the costly preoccupation of the Party to create dreadful purges of its bureaucratic ranks and its cadres on the pretext and fear of an incipient betrayal of the revolution and a default to bourgeoisie mentality.

Revolutionary China defined its rationale for ruling on the logical abstractions of Chairman Mao's teachings; the force of his personality seemed to overshadow his ideological abstractions and sidetracked the Party and the State into running in circles diverted away from the healing cultural values of the Chinese people.

The best way to look at this abstract elaboration is to think of the undisputed legitimacy of the Chinese state, its living history, civilization, culture, and heritages, all so dominant that modification and political analysis and attempts to provide an alternative view and alternative institutions or ideas, such as communism or liberalism, continually appear out of place.

China's long-established identity has proven to be beyond ideological or practical innovations, even those of Mao himself. Revolutionary China began to play a global role during the Cold War. Stalin's Russia began as an ally of China, but the friendship dissolved fast, because of border friction and Stalin's misperception of Mao.⁵ At first, the two regimes were ideological friends, but for Stalin it was difficult to control his contrarian ego. He refused to reciprocate the same respect and ideological comradeship that he received from Mao. Soon, the two communist giants split.

During this time, China embarked on a tumultuous ideological journey. The Party wanted to create a monolithic communal state and concentrate its energies on collectivism without giving due consideration to those technocratic resources that were needed to facilitate developmental strategies that are efficient, expedient and non-disruptive. Lack of technical and systemic planning caused food shortages. Cadres who showed ideological inspiration without any technical skills and administrative strategies were ordered to achieve the same levels of performance that would be expected of trained and experienced technicians and scientists.

⁵ *New York Times*, "Stalin-Mao Alliance was Uneasy: Newly Released Papers Show", <https://www.nytimes.com/1995/12/10/world/stalin-mao-alliance-was-uneasy-newly-released-papers-show.html>

This failure to harmonize ideological visions with the development of bureaucratic and civil service professionals resulted in the failure of the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward to serve as a useful template for the Third World to emulate.

Such setbacks were mitigated by the sense of national freedom and state sovereignty of China and its citizens. China had become totally free from foreign domination. It revealed its confidence by following a philosophy of self-reliance. Perhaps most significant, Mao's logic on capitalism appears to have predicted the present market system of 21st century China.

On the one hand, he condemns capitalism as a tool of mass oppression by the capitalist classes. He makes exception to this theory by allowing small-scale capitalist activity within the rank of the middle classes such as artisans, shop owners, individual farmers. He believed the CCP's task was to eliminate the residues of capitalism in private hands and totally transfer the apparatus of capitalism to the state.

Ultimately, the problem of such an expectation is prioritization.

The period that Mao envisioned for the eradication of capitalism in one sector of society and its replacement with people's socialism was not set in stone. Even if rigid mobilization and discipline are enforced on the formation and implementation of public projects with tightly scheduled policies, the effect is a form of chaotic misery and needless catastrophes such as were seen in the Cultural Revolution and Great Leap Forward. Mao's real communism is the expression of a state capable of attaining the legitimacy to represent all of the masses and bring the entire economy under its control by emulating the accumulative habits and practices of capitalism.

The following statement reflects Mao Zedong's idea of capitalism, at least at the time when it was published in 1952:

The present-day capitalist economy in China is a capitalist economy which for the most part is under the control of the People's Government and which is linked with the state-owned socialist economy in various forms and supervised by the workers. It is not an ordinary but a particular kind of capitalist economy, namely, a state-capitalist economy of a new type. It exists not chiefly to make profits for the capitalists but to meet the needs of the people and the state.

True, a share of the profits produced by the workers goes to the capitalists, but that is only a small part, about one quarter, of the total. The remaining three quarters are produced for the workers (in the form of the welfare fund), for the state (in the form of income tax) and for expanding productive capacity (a small part of which produces profits for the capitalists).

Therefore, this state-capitalist economy of a new type takes on a socialist character to a very great extent and benefits the workers and the state.⁶

The above quote is the heart of Mao's thinking, in the opinion of this author. It is what Mao prophesied would take place in China when he penned it barely a decade after he led his army to victory in the civil war. It was realized in the precise manner that he prophesied during the years 1989 to today. China today is what Mao envisioned in his revolutionary days.

China is relatively new to the status of a superpower actor, so comparing the way China interacts with the Third World will offer a useful context for what is to come for the poor states of Africa and Asia as they raise their hopes and expectations about China.

How will China make a difference in the economic, educational, health, and overall societal welfare of the Third World? China under the leadership of Chairman Mao was friendly and sympathetic to Third World countries.

Will the Chinese state fulfill Chairman Mao's vision for the Third World today, in the present century, as it has done with respect to the people of China?

The following statement shows Mao's good will and the genuine solidarity that he extended to the Third World as it struggled against colonialism and the forms of economic dependency that he recognized.

Chairman Mao Zedong referred to the Chinese people as comrades of the former colonized peoples of Africa and Asia. He called for a common bond to throw off the burdens of poverty and destitution that came about due to Western exploitation and greed.

It is also instructive to catalogue the types of material, cultural, scientific, economic, and developmental experiences China can share with the Third World.

Mao Zedong's strategic thinking shed light on the fact that the two super-powers were then the main source of instability and turmoil in the world. Their acts of pursuing hegemonism, power politics — the big bullying the small, the strong bullying the weak, and the rich oppressing the poor — that gave rise to strong opposition and resentment by countries of the third world.

As a member of the third world, China firmly supported other third world countries in their struggles against hegemonism and struggles waged by countries of the second world against interference and control by the super-powers.

⁶ *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*: "On State Capitalism", (Written comment on a document of the National Conference on Financial and Economic Work held in the summer of 1953), July 9, 1953.

China was firmly opposed to the policy of expansionism pursued by the super-powers and carried out the policy of uniting with and struggling against the United States to strike at Soviet hegemonism, thus effectively restraining the expansionist forces of the Soviet Union.⁷

The People's Army was conditioned to tolerate the bitter revolutionary struggles that brought the birth of the People's Republic of China in 1949.

Mao organized a peasant army, the People's Liberation Army, and created a strong political organization, while the Chinese Communist Party indoctrinated cadres in peasant-based guerrilla warfare, and confronted Chang Kai-shek's nationalist army. The PLA was an effective military force. It quickly matured and was superior in size, discipline, and military strategy. It drove Chiang Kai-shek out of mainland China and established a communist government in 1949. The CCP was Mao's creation, organized from the grassroots.

The Makings of a Powerful China

Revolutionary China embarked on its current journey in 1949 when the People's Republic of China (PRC) took power and inaugurated the People's Republic. The new communist state was on the experimental path to render Marxism as a practical guide for political, economic, and social progress. Capitalism as a contending ideology to Marxism was severely criticized by the newly mobilized communists when they published their *Communist Manifesto*. They catalogued its harmful effects on the working classes of the world. The toil of the industrial workers, the negative capitalization of labor at far lower value compared to the goods produced by the industrial laborers, and the exponential growth of capital accumulation without good citizenship of industrialists offended Marx and Engels.

In the imagination of the revolutionary Marxists, such as Lenin, Trotsky, Mao and Stalin, Marxism provided an equalitarian solution (Wolfe, B. 1948; Moore, B. 1966).

Marxism in its experimental phase began when the Bolsheviks launched the Communist state of Russia in 1917. After Lenin's death, Joseph Stalin took over and led Russia through the difficulties of the Second World War. Stalin's brand of leadership exploited the centralizing and dictatorial versions the communist doctrine. He was gifted in commanding attention, generating fear in the heart of his comrades and followers. He was unbending in the execution of his agenda.

⁷ See" Chairman Mao Zedong's Theory on the Division of the World and the Strategy of Forming Alliance Against an Opponent, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/ziliao_665539/3602_665543/3604_665547/t18008.shtml.

Stalin ignored the philosophical and analytical foundations of Communism as he relied on his dictatorial instincts to run the Soviet State. His personality dominated the institutional hierarchies of the Leninist Party. Mao resembled Stalin in his interpretation of Marxism. He differed from Stalin, because Mao, belatedly, modified Marxism by waking up to the ancient Chinese cultural wisdoms, *The Yen-an Way*”, as having ideals worth considering.⁸

In 1934, Mao and the PLA made their “The Long March” from southeastern China. They settled in the Province of Yen-an, an impoverished rural section in northwestern China. They established Yen-an as their revolutionary base from where Mao’s thoughts and ideological philosophy evolved from hardcore Marxism, gradually distancing themselves from the Soviet Model. Mao’s version of Marxism needed theoretical modification. It is not the Russian version of communism that China needed, but one inspired by the ancient soil and soul of China. He found those inspirations in rural and traditional Yen-an.

Mao's theoretical elaboration was incremental. It was an amalgam of his writings, poems, theoretical analysis, and China’s folklore linked together by a thread of revolutionary zeal. Both Mao and Stalin converged in the similarity of their party control. Stalin was much older, but they were ideological contemporaries. They differed in their ideological orthodoxy. Mao shared Stalin’s practices of mass mobilization. The severity of Stalinist collectivization and villagization and Mao’s Cultural Revolution and Great Leap Forward have identical outcomes on their respective societies. The outcomes were traumatic and destructive.

The Yen-an way reoriented Mao’s views into reconsidering the great merits of the Chinese heritage. He embarked on integrative theory by taking into consideration Chinese ancient history and the lives of great Chinese emperors. In practice and reality, he was self-assured, confident of the soundness of his own theory. Additionally, the outcome of his policy decisions attracted attention to his forceful personality.

The Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution were the climax of his way of thinking, one that had evolved since the 1930s when he moved his base to Yen-an. His temperament and his personal idiosyncrasies compromised the soundness and the objectivity of his theoretical thinking. His major decisions, such as the Cultural Revolution and Great Leap Forward, bordered on irrationality.

The destruction and devastations they wrought and the pain they inflicted on the long-suffering Chinese people did not make theoretical or common sense.

⁸ Selden, M. (1971). *The Yen-an Way in Revolutionary China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

In discipline, combat preparation, and mobilization, Mao was an innovative trailblazer, while always admiring and celebrating such ancient Chinese philosophies and ideological inheritances as Confucianism. To elevate his revolutionary message, he propagandized Maoism as a variant of Marxism rooted in the peasantry.

In Asia, the legacy of colonial policies with regard to border lines is being felt today by China's neighbors. The limits of China's borders that had been drawn during the colonial era and readjusted by Japan and the Great Powers after the Second World War are now subject to China's apparent intentions to redraw the limits of its claims to the satisfaction of its newly regained self-assertion and grandeur.

China's neighbors, namely Vietnam, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Cambodia are protesting China's unilateral decision to redraw their borders and contest their territorial waters.⁹ Similar problems persist in the Middle East, Africa, and South America and in Eastern Europe (Isaac, T. 2015:15).

Maoism as a special version of communism modified to fit Mao's conceptions was not crystalized to approximate the ideals of Marxism, Leninism, or Maoism. The CCP charted its own version of ideological, political, industrial and economic policies as the basis for launching the robust modernization journey that China embarked on in 1989.

From 1946 to 1949, China experienced a civil war between the nationalist Chinese under liberal Chiang Kai-shek and Mao's Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). Chiang Kai-shek had started his own career as a communist. As he studied the communists and understood their methods, he changed course to become a dedicated liberal securing financial and military aid from the West, particularly the United States. One of the first steps that he took after he changed his ideology was to fight to eliminate the communists within his organization.

In 1927, Chang Kai-shek succeeded in defeating the communists. He severely crippled and disrupted their organizational efforts, but a few fled to the rural areas under Mao's leadership. Chiang Kai-shek thus served as the preeminent leader of Mainland China until 1949. In the civil war that culminated in 1949, Chiang Kai-shek and his National Army were driven out of mainland China to create the Republic of China on Taiwan. The People's Liberation Army under the leadership of Mao Zedong declared the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949.

⁹ Wan, W. "China Wages a Quiet War of Maps with its Neighbors", *The Washington Post*, electronic edition, February 16, 2013.

The Making of a Mercantilist and Powerful China

Following the death of Chairman Mao in 1976, the chaos and restlessness of the revolutionary zeal was sorted out when a new group of leaders rose from the ranks of the CCP and redirected China away from Maoism and toward state capitalism. China's state capitalism allowed small measures of private enterprise in commerce, IT enterprises, real estate, and agriculture. Under the leadership of President Jiang Zemin, in the early 1990s, a robust free market economy and entrepreneurial incentives were encouraged. The upper echelon of the CCP controlled political power and, at the same time, relaxed economic restrictions.

The Party woke up to realize that the Chinese genius for national renewal and prosperity rested on the engine of private entrepreneurship, not as a result of ideological sentiment but as an aspect of national character. As private capital was encouraged, parts of the macroeconomics of China, including fiscal, monetary, foreign trade, commerce, industrial, and policy matters were firmly under the grip and watchful eyes of the CCP. The ideological party of the Mao years embraced the state as an instrumental tool for mercantilism.

As a result, within the last 50 years, China has managed to stand tall as an economic giant. Today, China's economic tentacles span the globe. It uses its vast economic surplus to stipulate its own dictates to achieve compound interest on the marginal foreign aid it extends to the Third World. Will this dynamic accumulation differ from the capitalist mode of economic interaction against which Chairman Mao used to rail?

The CCP certainly became adept at creating pragmatic and practical policy tools. At the lower level of economic activities, the CCP allowed small businesses and single input merchandising interests, such as consumable and perishable items, for its vast consumer market. As Townsend stated:

Despite their sensitivity [to centralization] problems, Chinese elites apparently remain committed to their pattern of diffused administrative responsibilities. It has served as a check on bureaucratic expansionism, prepared the country for resistance to foreign attack, and compiled a creditable record of economic growth.

Most significantly, perhaps, it has created an administrative system that is sensitive to the growth potential of localities and encourages them to maximize the use of their own resources. This aspect of decentralization, in combination with mass line methods of work, supports political mobilization and community involvement among the population.¹⁰

¹⁰ Townsend, J. R. *Politics: China* (1980). Little Brown and Company, Boston, MA: p.316.

This practice encouraged large-scale capital accumulation, the spinoff of which was the increase of government revenue. Never mind that regulatory policies were lax or that the greed associated with feverish capitalism resulted in the reciprocal exchanges of benefits between grasping entrepreneurs and corrupt party cadres. In the larger scheme of Chairman Mao's analysis of the "contradictions" associated with the revolutionary landscape, the economic sector manifests profit-seeking elements who will use their bureaucratic positions to align with entrepreneurs to impede the revolutionary struggle.

He was specific about the endemic tendencies of profit-seeking pointing out: "To maintain public order and safeguard the interests of the people, it is necessary to exercise dictatorship as well over thieves, swindlers, murderers, arsonists, criminal gangs and other scoundrels who seriously disrupt public order".¹¹

For midlevel production, distribution and labor relations, a version of a neo-corporatist system blending state and corporate interests as instrumental policy for national mobilization became the chosen path for harmonious means of economic production, distribution, and extraction. Government revenue skyrocketed as Chinese goods flooded global markets. Governance mattered in the larger scope of the CCP's national agenda.

Once the benefits of a guided free market started accumulating, the CCP encouraged intense capital accumulation. Its capacity for capital formation, for mobilizing the workforce, identifying work centers, segmenting the workforce via work centers, and identifying policy targets from the actual planning strategies was combined with the force of its ability to inspire society for most productive activities. State autarchy was unleashed and Chinese entrepreneurs, scientists, engineers all contributed to the rise of a triumphant, increasingly wealthy state.

Mao was always optimistic about China's potentials. His use of the concept of "empiricism" to affirm his conviction of China's stratospheric rise was looked at askance by those who subjected his work to strict analysis.¹² He based his hopeful optimism of China's rise to prominence on purely Marxist logic. His "thoughts", strategies, and polemics were Marxist, but it is also apparent that he channeled Confucianism, the values of which he was jealously proud.

After 1989, a new outlook and new ideas were elevated as ideological guides to be embraced by an enlightened state and Party for the achievement of national prosperity.

¹¹ Mao Tse Tung (1960). *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People*. Peking, Foreign Languages Press, 1957: 12.

¹² Kraus, R. C., "The Limits of Maoist Egalitarianism," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 16, No. 11 (November 1976), pp. 1084-1086

China has rediscovered Mao's philosophical thoughts and reconciled them with those ancient Chinese cultural goals that he tried but could not accomplish due to his larger-than-life image of himself in comparative terms. He was egotistic, self-assured, brilliant in thoughts, thoughtless in actions, and unwilling to look back and take corrective measures to correct or admit his failures. The succeeding leadership bettered him in being rational, astute, wise, duty-bound, cautious, but prodding and taking risks in global affairs.

The blend of ideology and culture are elevating the citizen as an engine of creative ideas, boundless efforts, and a committed vanguard for a modernized and industrialized China. Today, China is rising, and its bright future can shed rays of hope to Third World Countries. The extent to which the Third World is going to fare better by emulating the China model compared to the developmental model that was offered by the liberal ideology is a legitimate topic of study.

China and the Third World Today

China has reignited its ancient culture of phenomenal creativity in growing areas of science, the economy, Internet Technology, and globalization.¹³ It has climbed up the ladder of the take-off stage and reached the economic heights, thus inching closer to the developed stage. As it does so, its approach to development is a zero-sum game. China is now viewed as lacking a sense of restraint in its exploitative relations to the Third World.

China has evolved into a country that is accumulative and exploitative — in the process, it has become far worse than the liberal capitalists whom Chairman Mao described as “blood suckers.”

One former government official whose country was taken advantage of by the Chinese International Development Bank lamented:

Venezuela has tried to finance itself with the help of the China Development Bank, which does not impose the kind of conditionality that IMF bashers dislike. Instead, the CDB lends on secret terms, for uses that are undisclosed and corrupt, and with built-in privileges for Chinese companies in areas like telecommunications (Huawei), appliances (Haier), cars (Chery), and oil drilling (ICTV).

¹³ Financial Times, January 2015, “Chinese GDP Growth Lowest in 24 Years”, <https://wilsonquarterly.com/quarterly/summer-2014-1989-and-the-making-of-our-modern-world/chinas-1989-choice-paradox-seeking-wealth-and-democracy/>; See also <https://www.ft.com/content/760621a8-9fcf-11e4-aa89-00144feab7de>.

The Chinese have not required that Venezuela do anything to increase the likelihood it regains creditworthiness. They merely demand more oil as collateral. Whatever the IMF's faults, the CDB is a disgrace.¹⁴

China has earned the right to be regarded as a fully developed country. Its level of modernization, both in the economic and the political arenas, is as robust as those states who categorized China as a developing state less than 50 years ago.

China's lightning economic development is spectacular, and the scale of differentiation is vast in all categories of the sciences. China's civil engineering feats are creating islands out of the deep-sea oceans. China's strategic and defense developments are manned by the most sophisticated scientific skills under the command of phalanxes of young scientists whose creativity, vision, dedication, and Confucian discipline are awe-inspiring.¹⁵ Simultaneously, China is accelerating its scientific speed with determined confidence to catch up with the West, and with the United States, in particular.¹⁶

With the outbreak of the Cold War shortly after 1945, China was at a crossroads. Was the Peoples Liberation Army to clench the revolutionary banner and launch China on a radical revolutionary path or were the Nationalists going to prevail?

Until Chairman Mao Zedong's death in 1976, China was a vanguard leader of the Third World. As such, it provided to the Third World countries an ideological vision of egalitarian Marxism. However, the stridency of Maoism, the asymmetry of its ideological vision, and the tactical errors committed in the selection of public policy tools essential for the smooth implementation of the Great Leap forward, all attracted negative attention.

The drama overshadowed the substantive contents and ideological intent of the Great Leap Forward. For this reason, the "brotherhood" and the common vision that China saw as the basis for cementing a strong bond with the Third World were not consummated. The mechanical aspect of the Cultural Revolution also dissipated popular energy as different social forces within the CCP battled each other while the masses meekly fulfilled the Party's objectives in terms of production goals.

¹⁴ Hausman, R. (2015), quoted in David Dollar, "China Investment in Latin America, The Brookings Institute Governance and Global Issues, Paper 4, January 2017: page 9. Also, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/fp_201701_china_investment_lat_am.pdf

¹⁵ Cong Cao. *China's New Scientific Elite*: Routledge Curzon, Taylor and Francis Group, London, UK: 2004:35-48).

¹⁶ "Nine Ways Chinese Scientists are Pushing the Envelope in 2017", <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/society>, Viewed 26May2018.

The organizational crisis within the Party was used by capitalists and imperialists to paint a negative picture of Maoism. Third World countries were warned to distance themselves from Maoism. President Kennedy's warning "Those who ride on the back of the tiger will end up inside" was frequently cited and was meant to sway the geopolitical preferences of the Third World.

Still many Third World revolutionaries remained loyal comrades of China and admired the CCP's ability to rule effectively. Third World revolutionaries such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, and Mohammed Mossadegh of Iran were all dedicated centralists whose ideological vision was similar to that of Maoism.

The ideological objectives and goals where China and Third World revolutionaries agreed included, in this author's view:

1. Equalitarian Marxism envisioned a strong centralizing developmental state.
2. The centralizing developmental state is ultimately dedicated to faithfully striving for the realization of human rights, civil liberties, due process of law and justice.
3. In order to achieve these ultimate objectives, the party must be disciplined and trained in the art of selfless revolutionary thought. The rank and file members must be valiant, relentless, loyal and conversant in Marxist analysis.
4. The state was to be governed by the rules and edicts of a centralized and dominant party.
5. The party would rely on using authoritarian methods to realize totalitarian governance without deviating from its mission to build a prosperous, peaceful, and secure society.
6. Totalitarianism is a unitary system where social harmony is enforced, individualism is subordinated to the collective objectives and goals, and individual choices are curtailed for maximizing harmonious political and social order.

Countries differed in their methodology of application and in the challenges they faced to fully implement their policy goals. Nearly all of the above-cited revolutionary leaders were confronted by foreign and domestic resistance. Those who overcome foreign resistance were exceptions, such as Nyerere. Only China stands today fulfilling the Maoist version of Marxism.

The warm embrace of the Third World by Mao is still enunciated by the leadership of China. There is obvious goodwill from China and the huge investment that China is making in the Third World is worthy of praise. As stated above, an ideological stand without the technical support of an effective public administration and public policy can fail and thus make heavy investment in the Third World meaningless.

Patterns of China's foreign aid programs seem designed to give mixed results of promise and disappointing failure. The areas where China's foreign investment and foreign aid is making progress are seen in those countries that have established a committed civil service sector. Thus, in countries such as Ethiopia where, in relative terms, cultural habits repudiate corruption, China's investment was fruitful. Those that are failing are mostly in Africa where the civil service sector is fraught with corruption and inefficiencies.

China's interaction with the Third World is dynamic; it is evolving and changing. An example of this is China is rethinking of its investments with corrupt and ineffective governments. What positive returns will China's investment bring can only be measured over an extended period of time. The pitfalls that impaired the effectiveness of the Cultural Revolution and Great Leap Forward can also be challenges to developmental cooperation. Skilled manpower, high ethical standards, transparency, and, most of all, proven benefits that lift the lives of neglected societies must animate China's role in the Third World in order to make a difference. These are what China wishes for its citizens and should be what China's investment abroad may show to the world in general and to the Third World in particular.

Conclusion

China stands self-assured, proud of its civilization and history. Its manpower and the Chinese spirit and culture that animated its genius constitute an enviable resource that many countries admire. Beyond that, as modern China expands its global influence to distant lands, its mining and resource extraction ventures can easily turn to misadventures if China neglects its obligation to profile ethical and honest exchange with Third World interlocutors.

If China is aiming to help the Third World in ways that are better than those options that were provided by the West, its motivation should be based on reciprocal benefits, not on ways that compound the Third World's economic impoverishment. Among these options are:

1. China should reciprocate the generosity, trust, and high expectations that Third World's citizens have placed on China's partnership as better alternatives in the broad areas of the economy, diplomatic, and civilization.
2. Direct investment by capitalists, and what Chairman Mao called "their running dogs," was criticized by Chairman Mao, and by scholars from the dependency theory field of study as form of neo-colonialism. China's direct investment must provide socio-economic benefits to its Third World partners enough to elevate their poverty-stricken lives and to heal their wounded pride.

3. China's interaction and economic exchanges with the Third World are criticized as being mechanical, one-sided and brutally exploitative. Critics argue that China is interested only in what China can get by way of hoarding extracted goods and industrial input and leaving Third World in worse situations. China must work hard to dispel this criticism by aiming to better the lives of those societies with whom China interacts in care, consciousness, and altruism similar to its aims for its own citizens at home.

China has earned the right to be regarded as a fully developed country. Its level of modernization, both in economic and political areas, is as robust as those states which relegated China to developing status just recently. China's lightening economic development is spectacular, and the scale of differentiation is vast in all categories of the sciences. China's civil engineering feats are creating islands out of the deep-sea oceans.

China's strategic and defense developments are manned by the most sophisticated scientific skills, under the command of phalanxes of young scientists whose creativity, vision, dedication, and Confucian discipline are awe-inspiring.¹⁷ Scholars observe that China is accelerating its scientific speed with determined confidence to catch up with the West and the United States.¹⁸

Some look at China's march forward as technical achievement and accumulation of wealth. They measure China's achievements by what is quantifiable. Such quantifiable results cannot be disputed. However, there are normative elements in the study of nations that are as effective as quantitative results. These include national character, history, institutional accountability, and the harmonization of such amorphous characteristics as ideological beliefs and the strict parameters of public policy goals and objectives. The country that succeeds in the harmonization and in the precision of these vectors will rule.

¹⁷ Gao, Ch (2018), "This War Turned China into a Super Power", *National Interest*, January 2018: <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/war-turned-china-military-superpower-23954>.

¹⁸ Huang, K, (2018), "China Enlists Top Scientists in Mission to become Military Tech Super Power", in *South China Morning Post: Diplomacy*, August 31, 2018. <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2130777/china-enlists-top-scientists-mission-become-military>.

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