

# Appendix VIII

## Why the West Plays Chess and the East Plays Go:

### How Classical Chinese and Ancient Western Grammars Shaped Different Strategies of War, *Weiqi* and Chess

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## Preface

### An Outline of the Essay

This is the first look in English and probably the first look anywhere into what I see as the ultimate origins of war, go and Western chess strategies in the grammars of ancient China and Greece. If language affects thinking and by implication, the world views of cultures, it stands to reason that the influences in the area of strategic thinking might be profound, especially if the languages involved in a comparative study are very different.<sup>1</sup> This notion would extend to the choice and techniques of playing strategic games that emulate war because cultures have chosen to perpetuate in the sense that, consciously or unconsciously, they have been deemed a worthwhile activity.

Thus, in terms of go, this article will try to trace the process that led up to the cultural integration and intense playing that began in the Han period (206 BC-220 AD) and which followed its humble beginnings as a simple game that was used by early Confucians in the late 4<sup>th</sup> and early to mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century BC to illustrate their evolving ideas about filial piety and human nature. (This will be discussed later in this essay). It will also trace the equal European fascination with chess that began around the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD when feudal Europe began to “see itself” in the game and which blossomed into popular play in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>1</sup> Whether languages affect behavior is the subject of the Whorf-Sapir debates in anthropology. The general consensus today is that they do. See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistic\\_relativity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistic_relativity)

After the basic differences between chess and go from the point of view of language are examined, it will become easier to see why the Chinese style of thought—its cultural “matrix” so to speak—would develop its war strategies and absorb go so readily after it was developed and why the West would develop different war strategies that are reflected in its attraction to chess.<sup>2</sup>

David Moser’s PhD thesis, along with A.C. Graham’s *Disputers of the Tao* and Chad Hansen’s *A Daoist Theory of Chinese Thought* provided much of the linguistic material for this essay.<sup>3</sup> They all noted that a distinguishing feature of these two languages is that apparently from the beginning, the West had a class of marked abstract nouns along with the verb “to be” and other features in their language that China did not have.

This meant that the West, unlike China, constructed abstract nouns which didn’t physically exist but were treated as if they did by a process known as hypostatization or reification. That is, they regarded abstractions as having an independent existence though their ontological status is open to question. (This term comes from the Greek *hupostatos*, “placed under,” “substantial,” which is from *huphistasthai*, “to stand under,” “to exist”). For example, one can see “white” but not “white-ness” and it is the same for “happy” and “happy-ness,” etc.

To fully understand the background of these developments, **Part One** reviews the effects of 550 years of constant warfare in China between 771 and 221 BC, when, cut off from the rest of the world, about 150 cities and states fought each other and reduced themselves to one. This, along with the lack of abstraction and “to be,” had strong effects on the social, political, economic, philosophical and strategic spheres, one of which was the development of the “Hundred Contending Schools of Philosophy” as Chinese philosophers tried to explain the evolving nature of the new reality—what it was and what it was not, and what should be done or not done about it. One consequence was that 70% of early Chinese books, many of them now-famous (the *Daodejing* for example) concerned military matters, though often (to us) in a veiled manner.

One of the theories that developed was the relativism of Daoism, whose tenets included “action through non-action” and how the “Soft” can conquer the “Hard.” Thus, as the states grew fewer and the initial feudalistic style of fighting evolved into mass-warfare with armies of hundreds of thousands, a new kind of non-feudal leadership was called for so a “Darker” side of Daoism emerged. Its principles and strategies eventually appeared in books like Sunzi’s *The Art of War*, was summed up in the “Thirty-six

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<sup>2</sup> The Greek, Arabic and Western Indo-European languages in countries where chess is extensively played and interwoven into the culture is called “the West” in this article. It includes Russia but not India which has the verb “to be” and where chess may have been invented but the game never became important in a cultural sense. Russia uses the verb in the past and future tenses and, in not-so-distant times, “to be” was used in the present tense.

<sup>3</sup> David Moser; 1996 Univ. of Michigan PhD thesis *Abstract Thinking and Thought in Ancient Chinese and Early Greek* A.C. Graham; *Disputers of the Tao*; Open Air Press; 1989 Chad Hansen; *A Daoist Theory of Chinese Thought*; Oxford Univ. Press; 1992

Strategies,” which are discussed in Part Three and first appeared on go boards in the beginning of the Han dynasty.<sup>4</sup>

**Part Two** covers the effects of how the linguistic differences between East and West affected mental attitudes, strategies and their entire cultures, including the board games they played. What is presented below in “A Short Overview of the Language Thesis” is expanded in great detail and is followed by quotations from early and later Chinese *weiqi* players that show the links between Sunzi’s ideas and *weiqi* strategies that developed after its “feudal” stage, which is when early Confucians wrote about it as a simple game. Once the linkage with Sunzi’s strategies was established and expanded, the game became more intriguing and so was accepted (or rejected by some) into the culture of the *literati* and hence the game became an acceptable part of the “cultural matrix” of the nation after peace was established in 206 BC. These developments are compared and contrasted with the similar linguistic origins of the principals of Western war strategies that became embodied in chess and led to its mass acceptance and improvement of play that followed its own “feudal” days. This change-over also coincided with the changes in European feudal-style warfare that were uprooted by Napoleon’s adroit guidance of the mass-armies of France in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Part Three** of the essay briefly discusses the different attitudes about “cunning” in the two cultures—it is prized in China and despised in most areas of the West (think of Wall Street, lawyers and card sharks). Then it greatly expands on a section that had to be, for the most part, deleted from the revised edition of my first go book, *Go! More Than a Game* (Tuttle Publishing Revised 2011) that dealt with the Thirty-six Strategies, which are a compendium of Dark Daoist thought. The strategies are accompanied by the best military examples of their ancient use from many sources, along with suggestions on how beginners can apply them to their games. There are also some examples for stronger players.

Lastly, there is a short **Coda** that discusses the “anti-strategy” of how to lose a “won” game or war. It concerns the fall of the dynasty of the Qin in 207 BC, only 14 years after they had swept all before them and united China for the first time. This happened because they ignored the basic tenet of Dark Daoism that had brought them to power—that one must change with the changing times. Instead, they weakened themselves because they could not shut down their millions-of-men war and construction machines. Instead, they were kept employed for useless activities such as external wars and the building of the Great Wall, the Emperor’s tomb and many other projects until internal revolts succeeded in toppling them.

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<sup>4</sup> For example, Huan Tan (43 BC-28 AD) in *Xinlun* advised that the best approach in the game was to spread your pieces widely so as to encircle the opponent. Second best was to attack and choke off enemy formations. The worst strategy was to cling to a defence of your own territory. This seems to echo Sunzi’s advice to first attack his alliances, then his armies, and last of all, his walled cities. In go terms, this might mean to first attack his connections, then his solid groups and last his territory.

*I want to note that this is only a brief survey of some very complex matters which, since all these elements have never been put together in a single work, was as much to satisfy my own interest as well as those of readers who want to know about the historical backgrounds of go and chess. When appropriate, weiqi, the Chinese word for go is used.*

*The main article and its appendices along with my other writings can be found in this e-Library of the American Go Association at [www.usgo.org/bobhighlibrary](http://www.usgo.org/bobhighlibrary). Many of them are summed up in the aforementioned Go! More Than a Game.*

*I should note that no single system of spelling Chinese names and places is used. And, as in my other articles, nearly every sentence could be footnoted, but I have done so only in the most important places or where there is controversy.*

*I gratefully thank sinologist David Moser, who was not a go player but whose PhD thesis provided much of the framework for this essay and who was also kind enough to review it with much constructive criticism. Many thanks are also due to John Fairbairn, Roy Laird, Alex Trotter and Christine Mathieu for their reviews of its initial phase.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## PREFACE

An Outline of the Essay

A Short Overview of the Language Thesis

## PART ONE

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND THE EVOLUTION OF EARLY CHINESE WARFARE

I. Other Isolated "Fishbowls" of the World

II. The Spring and Autumn Period (771-481, 475, 468 or 403 BC)

Background

Covenants

What They Thought About

Sacrifices, Divination and the *Zhouyi*

The Armies, the Battles, the Ancestral Spirits and the Cosmic Order

Political and Military Developments

III. The Warring States Period (481, 475 or 403-221 BC)

Introduction

Technology and "Progress"—The Background

Oaths and Bonds Between Unequals Replace Covenants Between Equals

Geopolitics in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC

IV. The One Hundred Contending Schools of Thought

Was Warfare a Natural or Unnatural Condition of Humanity?

The Six Philosophies Organized by Court Historian Sima Tan (165-110 BC)

The School of Confucianism (*Rujia*)

The School of Legalism (*Fajia*)

The School of Mozi (*Mojia*)

The School of *Yin-Yang*

The School of Names (*Mingjia*)

The Schools of (Philosophical) Daoism (*Daojia*)

Yang Zhu  
Primitive Daoism  
Military Daoism (*Bingjia* or *Guidao*)

Four Schools of the *Hanshu*  
The School of Diplomacy  
or  
The School of Vertical and Horizontal Alliances  
The School of Miscellany  
The School of Small Talk  
The School of the Agriculturalists

Changing Over Time: The Passage from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Centuries BC  
Several Hundred Years Later: Sima Tan's Thoughts While he Organized  
the "Schools" for Posterity  
"Daoist" to "Daoism"

V. The Daoist School of the Military—Sunzi, Sunbin, the Arts of War and the  
*Bingjia* or *Guidao*

Background and Review  
Two Generals and Two *Arts of War*  
The Waging of War as an Intellectual and Psychological Endeavor  
The Way of the "Dark Daoists"  
Summation

## **PART TWO**

### **LANGUAGE AND THE GREAT CULTURAL DIVIDE BETWEEN CHINA AND THE WEST AS REFLECTED IN DIFFERENT WAR STRATEGIES AND THE PLAYING OF GO AND CHESS**

I. Introduction and General Overview

"Abstract" Greek vs. "Non-abstract" Classical Chinese  
Preliminary Remarks on the Basic Elements of "Concrete" *Weiqi* vs.  
"Abstract" Chess  
Chess in the Middle Ages  
The Strong Queen Arises

II. The Absence or Presence of Abstract Nouns, the Verb "To Be" and Other Linguistic Features Developed and Shaped the Different Philosophies and Resulting Strategic Thinking of Early Greece and Classical China

Greece and the West—A Two-Tiered World

To Be or not to Be: Chess and the Military in the West

The Chinese Perspective

Chinese "Ideas" in Terms of Psychology and Philosophy

Ambiguity and "Scaling Down"

III. The Inner-Complexities of the Two Types of Perceived Reality

IV. The Chinese Written Language Encourages the Playing of *Weiqi*

V. Something and Nothing

VI. *Qi* and *Yin-Yang*

VII. Correlative Thinking: The Formation of the World of *Yin* and *Yang* from *Qi*

VIII. Some Linguistic and Mental Consequences of Binary Thinking and Correlative Cosmos Building

IX. *dao*—"The ways"

X. A Short Review

XI. A Correlative Cosmology of the Universe

The Context: Time-Space and Directionality

Five Phase (Element) Theory

XII. Extreme Correlation: A Note on the *Zhouyi* and *Yijing* (The Books of Changes)

XIII. Two Opposing Cosmologies

The East: Divisions of the Universe

The West: The Souls of Ambrose and Augustine

Humans and the Earth in China

The Grid in China

XIV. "*Weiqi*-Think" as Embedded in the Spontaneity of the *Zhuangzi*, the *dao* of Mastery, Strategic Thought in Rhetoric, the Patterns of Poetry, and the Language of Aesthetics

*Zhuangzi*, Spontaneity and the *dao* of Mastery  
Rhetoric and Strategic Thinking  
A Note on the Characters in Early Greek and Chinese Literature and More  
on Early Chess Pieces  
Poetry  
Aesthetics

XV. As China Begins to Play "Real" *Weiqi*, Negative and Positive Reactions of the *Literati* Appear

Some Negative Reactions of the *Literati*  
Some Positive Reactions of the *Literati*  
The *Qijing Shisanpian*: Some Uses of Dark Daoism in *Weiqi*  
A Translation of the *Yi Zhi*

## **PART THREE**

### **THE THIRTY-SIX STRATEGIES IN WAR, PEACE AND *WEIQI***

I. Western and Eastern Attitudes Toward the Ideas and Uses of Cunning

The West  
China

II. An Introduction to the Thirty-six Strategies

*Note: Beginning and some advanced go examples accompany the Strategies.*

III. Two Detailed Examples

The 15<sup>th</sup> Strategy: "Lure the Tiger Down From the Mountain"

Mao Zedong and Chiang Kai-shek Play the Tiger Game  
Mao Zedong, Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger Play the Tiger Game  
Chinese Business Negotiators Play the Tiger Game with Westerners in  
Beijing in the 1980s

The 23rd Strategy: "Befriend a Distant Enemy to Attack One Nearby"



### III. The Thirty-six Strategies

#### Strategies for When You Have Superior Resources

1. Cross the Sea without Heaven's (or the Emperor's) Knowledge
2. Besiege Wei to Rescue Zhao
3. Murder with a Borrowed Sword
4. Take One's Ease While the Enemy Becomes Exhausted
5. Loot a Burning House
6. Make Noise in the East, Attack in the West

#### Strategies for When the Two Forces Are Equal

7. Make Something Out of Nothing
8. Openly Repair the Gallery Road, Secretly March to Chencang
9. Leisurely Watch the Campfires From Across the River  
or  
Relax on the Mountain, Watch the Tigers Fight Below
10. Hide Your Dagger in a Smile
11. Let the Plum Tree Die to Save the Peach Tree
12. If You Chance Upon a Sheep, Be Sure to Steal It

#### Strategies for Attacking

13. Beat the Grass to Startle (or Frighten) the Snake
14. Find Reincarnation in Another's Corpse
15. Lure the Tiger Down from the Mountain
17. Cast a Brick to Attract Jade
18. Catch the Leader to Catch the Led

A Note on How the Tiger Game Perhaps Fits into This Section of the Thirty-six Strategies

#### Strategies for When Conditions are Chaotic

19. Steal the Firewood From Under the Caldron
20. Muddy the Waters to Catch the Fish
21. The Golden Cicada Sloughs Its Skin
22. Lock the Door to Seize the Thieves
23. To Attack Your Neighbor, Befriend Far Away States
24. Obtain Safe Passage from Guo to Attack Yu

## Strategies to Take What Your Opponent Has

- 25. Steal the Beams and Replace the Pillars
- 26. Point at the Mulberry and Curse the Locust Tree
- 27. Feign Foolishness, Madness or Drunkenness
- 28. Remove the Ladder After the Enemy is on the Roof

or

Climb Up On the Roof and Remove the Ladder

29. Silk Flowers Blossom in the Tree

30. The Host Becomes the Guest; the Guest Becomes the Host

## Strategies for When Everything Seems Lost

- 31. The Beauty Trap
- 33. Use the Enemy's Agents Against Him
- 34. The Self-Torture Scheme
- 35. The Interwoven Stratagems
- 36. Run Away

## **CODA**

### **An Anti-Strategy: How to Lose a "Won" Game—The Fall of the Qin Dynasty**

# PART ONE

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND THE EVOLUTION OF EARLY CHINESE WARFARE

### I. Other Isolated “Fishbowls” of the World

From the Aug. 11, 2012 *New York Times*:

*Some archaeologists have painted primitive societies as relatively peaceful, implying that war is a reprehensible modern deviation. Others have seen war as the midwife of the first states that arose as human population increased and more complex social structures emerged to coordinate activities.*

*A wave of new research [in Lake Titicaca in Peru and in the formation of the Zapotec empire in the Oaxaca Valley in Mexico and in older research in Mesopotamia] is supporting this second view.*

*With the same process now documented in both North and South America, “we are coming closer to having a model for pristine state formation that may have worldwide significance,” Dr. [Joyce] Marcus [of the Univ. of Michigan] said. “It also shows that our species, when thrust into almost identical circumstances, behaves in almost identical ways.”*

[In the words of the reporter, Oaxacan researcher Charles Stannish of UCLA added that] *The first states . . . were not passive affairs driven by forces beyond human control, like climate and geography, as some historians have supposed. Rather, they were shaped by human choice as people sought new forms of cooperation and new institutions for the more complex societies that were developing. Trade was one of these cooperative institutions for consolidating larger-scale groups; warfare was the other.*

*Warfare may not usually be thought of as a form of cooperation, but organized hostilities between chiefdoms require that within each chiefdom people subordinate their individual self-interest to that of the group.*

*“Warfare is ultimately not a denial of the human capacity for social cooperation, but merely the most destructive expression of it,” the anthropologist Lawrence H. Keeley writes in his book “War Before Civilization” (Oxford, 1996).*

*Compared with other species, humans are highly cooperative and altruistic, at least toward members of their own group. Evolutionary biologists have been hard pressed to account for this self-sacrificing behavior, given that an altruist who works for the benefit of others will have less time for his family’s interests and leave fewer surviving children. Genes for altruistic behavior should therefore disappear.*

*Darwin's solution to this riddle was that groups of altruists would prevail over less cohesive groups. This implies that natural selection can operate on groups, not just individuals, a thesis that many biologists reject.*

*But group-level selection is more likely to operate the fiercer the competition is between groups. Samuel Bowles, an economist at the Santa Fe Institute, believes warfare between early human groups was intense, and explains the very slow growth of population prior to 20,000 years ago.*

*Warfare "may have contributed to the spread of human altruism," he and his colleague Herbert Gintis write in their new book, "A Cooperative Species" (Princeton, 2011). "We initially recoiled at this unpleasant and surprising conclusion. But the simulations and the data on prehistoric warfare tell a convincing story."*

*Archaeology lends some support to the idea. "Groups that successfully organize themselves to raid others will acquire external resources and, in the long run, will be at a selective advantage against groups that are less well organized," Dr. Stanish and Dr. Levine write of their findings in the Central Andes.*

*"Both war and trade are sources of outside wealth," Dr. Stanish said in an interview. The leaders of early states had to keep people working. They relied on religious rituals to organize the labor force and material inducements from war and trade to satisfy the elite.*

*As the population in a region grew larger and richer, regional chiefdoms would form and start raiding one another for plunder. "Once this kicks in, it sets up a dynamic in which it's hard to be peaceful," Dr. Stanish said. "You either organize on a regional level or get killed or absorbed."*

*Of the regional chiefdoms that start a war for dominance, all but one will perish before the pristine state is formed. So why not form nonaggression pacts rather than take such a gamble?*

*Dr. Marcus suggests two reasons. One is that human social skills evolved in the small hunter-gatherer groups in which everyone lived until 15,000 years ago. "When humans try to run larger and more complex societies, with hereditary inequality, they are pushing their sociopolitical skills to the utmost," Dr. Marcus said.*

*Another reason is that elites who run chiefly societies "are very aggressive and competitive — they assassinate rivals even when they are siblings or half-siblings," Dr. Marcus said. "Competitive interaction is one of the most powerful driving forces in evolution, whether biological or social."<sup>5</sup>*

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<sup>5</sup> The New York Times; August 11, 2011

[http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/02/science/02warfare.html?\\_r=1&scp=1&sq=sign%20of%20advancing%20society%20An%20organized%20war%20effort&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/02/science/02warfare.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=sign%20of%20advancing%20society%20An%20organized%20war%20effort&st=cse)

For Peru see: <http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2011/07/20/1110176108.full.pdf+html?sid=0036d31d-8d20-4046-9647-02137e9d520b>

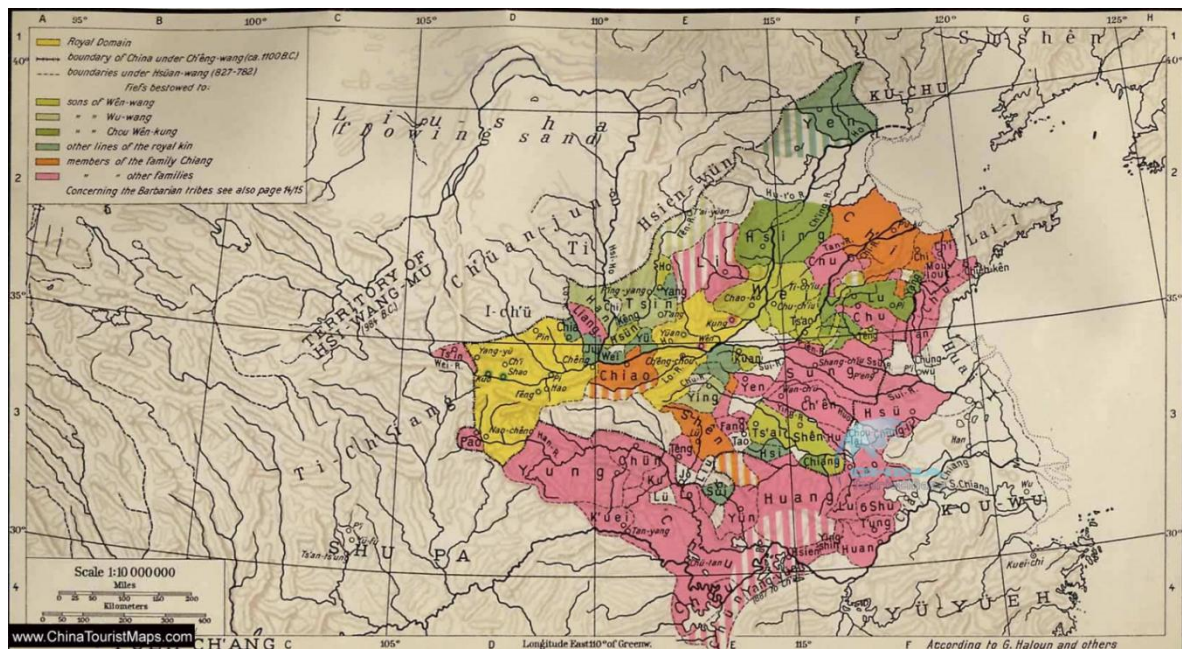
## II. The Spring and Autumn Period (771-481, 475, 468 or 403 BC)



6

*The Shang Dynasty that was conquered by the Zhou from the west in 1046 BC*

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.chinaknowledge.de>



*The Zhou Dynasty c. 1000 BC*

## Background

Following the royal debaucheries and resulting defeat of the Shang who had dominated northern China from an uncertain age to probably 1046 BC, their conquerors, the Zhou, came to rule a greatly expanded empire of city-states.<sup>8</sup> However, its kings were not strong enough to rule directly so they parceled out power to royal relatives and generals and left governing up to the most important feudal princes. The most important, later known as the twelve vassals, met during regular conferences where important matters were decided, such as military expeditions against foreign groups or offending nobles. During these conferences, one vassal leader was sometimes declared hegemon (*bo*) and given leadership over the armies of all the Zhou states. However, soon enough, these fiefdoms began to act independently and the influence of the court waned so that a pattern of fragmented warfare began developing.

Unlike Greece and other early civilizations in the West, the Chinese in this situation were surrounded by barbarian tribes and the impassable sea and so were cut off from outside influences. The first period of warfare that developed was called the

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.chinatouristmaps.com/china-maps/ancient-china-map/zhou-dynasty-map.html>

<sup>8</sup> According to the traditional chronology based upon calculations by Liu Xin, the Shang ruled between 1766 BC and 1122 BC, but according to the chronology based upon the *Bamboo Annals*, they ruled between 1556 BC and 1046 BC. The results of the Xia–Shang–Zhou Chronology Project place them between 1600 BC and 1046 BC.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shang\\_Dynasty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shang_Dynasty)



"Spring and Autumn"—a metonymy for the year as a whole that was used to name a number of annals written in some of the states. However, only the *Spring and Autumn Annals* from the state of Lu, traditionally said to be written or edited by Confucius (551-479 BC) and a commentary, the *Zuozhuan*, written in the neighboring state of Qi, have survived as major sources.

In the beginning there were at least 148 "vassal" fiefdoms and city-states.<sup>9</sup> These were scaled-down replicas of the royal establishment in that they each had their own capitals with two temples, one in the east for ancestor worship associated with *yang*, the positive, masculine principle, and one in the west, which was an open-air altar for the gods of soil and grain associated with the negative, feminine principle of *yin*. Within the confines of the altar was a *she*, most often a rock that symbolized the state somewhat like our national flags, the removal and loss of which spelt the end of a state because the ancestors would lose their potency.

The rulers of these states—the "meat eaters"—were divided into a hierarchy of lineages. That is, all the nobles were stratified and at least the lower ranks practiced a casual sociability with each other. They were bound together by covenants of blood and sacrifice and an overwhelmingly obsessive concern with honor and prestige. As dramatically described in *Sanctioned Violence in Early China* by Mark Lewis, thus was created a system of ritual violence that granted authority in the service of the ancestral and local spirits that culminated in a deepening spiral of civil war and mutual annihilation that ended in their destruction.<sup>10</sup>

During the first two and a half centuries of the Spring and Autumn period, there were 259 interstate wars (and more that were not recorded) and 130 major civil wars—and this was only the beginning stage that proceeded the much more violent period of the Warring States era.

## Covenants

Covenants sealed with blood and sacrifices were what held the society together. They were used to make alliances, end wars, mark property, etc.

Mark Lewis writes:

*Although there is evidence of some covenant-like ceremonies under the Shang and literary references to their use in the early Western Zhou [1046-771 BC], it was in the struggles of competing states and lineages during the Eastern Zhou [770-221 BC] that the covenant came to play a decisive role. Even the Confucian texts that regarded them as a sign of moral decay acknowledged their fundamental importance to the political order that emerged from the decline of the [Zhou] monarchy, and they described covenants as one of the "great services" of the state. . . .*

*The procedure of sealing a covenant can be reconstructed from scattered*

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<sup>9</sup> Hsu, Cho-yun; "The Spring and Autumn Period" in Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy; *The Cambridge History of Ancient China*; Cambridge Univ. Press; 1990; p. 567

<sup>10</sup> Mark Edward Lewis; *Sanctioned Violence in Early China*; State University of New York Press; 1990

*references in the sources and confirmed by the archeological excavations of numerous blood covenants at Houma [in Shanxi Province]. The participants in the covenant first purified themselves through fasting, erected an altar, and then dug a pit in front of it. They sacrificed an animal, cut off its left ear, placed this in one vessel, and caught its blood in another . . . Since it was the custom to cut off the left ear of an enemy killed in battle and, according to the Zhou Yi, of animals killed in ceremonial hunts, the disposition of its body clearly equated the sacrificial animal with a vanquished enemy or captured prey. This equation was sometimes heightened through the use of human blood. Blood was then sprinkled on the altar to summon the spirits, and the text of the covenant was read. This text included a list of the participants, the terms of the oath, and sometimes a curse upon those who violated the covenant. Each of the participants then smeared some blood on his lips while another held the left ear of the animal. After the reading of the text and the smearing of the blood, the sacrificial animal and one copy of the oath, also smeared with blood, were buried in the pit. Other copies of the text were given to the participants, and these were stored in special archives. Every covenant had a master (zhu) who directed the proceedings and was charged with enforcing the terms of the oath. The master of the covenant had the honor of drinking the first draught of blood, and the task of holding the left ear, which resulted in drinking last [thus becoming] . . . a sign of inferior status.*<sup>11</sup>

## What They Thought About

Within that warring structure of honor and prestige that determined a noble's worth, a feeling for how these people lived and thought can be glimpsed in a small excerpt from a poem. Part IV of the *Book of Odes* (written between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> century BC) discusses the Marquis of the state of Lu on the Shandong Peninsula. It had been a weak state in the preceding Shang period. Qufu was its capital.



12

<sup>11</sup> Lewis; pp. 46-7

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/rulers-lu.html>



*How pure and still are the solemn temples,  
In their strong solidity and minute completeness!  
Highly distinguished was Jiang Yuan,  
Of virtue undeflected.  
God regarded her with favour;  
And without injury or hurt,  
Immediately, when her months were fulfilled,  
She gave birth to Hou-ji.  
On him were conferred all blessings, –  
[To know] how the millet ripened early, and the sacrificial millet late,  
How first to sow pulse, and then wheat.  
Anon he was invested with an inferior State,  
And taught the people how to sow and to reap,  
The millet and the sacrificial millet,  
Rice and the black millet;  
Ere long all over the whole country; –  
[Thus] continuing the work of Yu.*

*Among the descendants of Hou-ji,  
There was king Da,  
Dwelling on the south of [mount] Qi,  
Where the clipping of Shang began.  
In process of time Wen and Wu,  
Continued the work of king Da,  
And [the purpose of] Heaven was carried out in its time,  
In the plain of Mu.  
"Have no doubts, no anxieties, "[it was said];  
"God is with you."  
[Wu] disposed of the troops of Shang;  
He and his men shared equally in the achievement.  
[Then] king [Qing] said, "My uncle,  
I will set up your eldest son,  
And make him marquis of Lu.  
I will greatly enlarge your territory there,  
To be a help and support to the House of Zhou. . . ."*

*Our prince's chariots are a thousand,  
[And in each] are the vermilion tassels  
and the green bands of the two spears and two bows.  
His footmen are thirty thousand,  
With shells [on] vermilion-strings adorning their helmets.  
So numerous are his ardent followers,  
To deal with the tribes of the west and north,  
And to punish [those of] King and Shu,*

*So that none of them will dare to withstand us.  
May [the Spirits] make you grandly prosperous!  
May they make you long-lived and wealthy!  
May the hoary hair and wrinkled back,  
Marking the aged men, be always in your employment!  
May they make you prosperous and great!  
May they grant you old age, ever vigorous,  
For myriads and thousands of years,  
With the eyebrows of longevity, and ever unharmed!*

*The mountain of Da is lofty,  
Looked up to by the State of Lu.  
We grandly possess also Gui and Mong;  
And we shall extend to the limits of the east,  
Even the States along the sea.  
The tribes of the Huai will seek our alliance;  
All will proffer their allegiance:  
Such shall be the achievements of the marquis of Lu.* <sup>13</sup>

It was within such a milieu that the divination manual, the *Zhouyi*, developed.

## **Sacrifices, Divination and the *Zhouyi***

The origins of the *Zhouyi* were in Shang dynasty oracle bone characters and inscriptions on Zhou bronze vessels of around 1000 AD, and, unlike the concoction called the *Yijing* (*The Book of Changes*) which it morphed into during and after the Han period, its chief concerns were divination and human sacrifice.

Richard Rutt wrote that when men like the Marquis of Lu divined:

*. . . He [would] put his proposal to the ancestors in the form of a wish or plan of action for which he asked the spirits approval, a form that sinologists commonly call ming "a charge". It was virtually a prayer in optative form, asking approval for a proposed course of action or information about the immediate future, and often expressed in both positive and negative form at the same time, for instance: "the king would set forth," and "the king would not set forth"; "It will rain," and "It will not rain." This was not a simple attempt to learn what the future held in store: it was an enquiry about a proposed policy or decision, intended to help the king decide rightly about a proposed policy or decision . . . [to] the extent it was a method of influencing future events, rather than just knowing their outcome. As in other cultures where divination is*

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<sup>13</sup> James Legge; *The She King; or The Book of Poetry*; Trubner and Co.; 1876; Part IV, 4 (300); p. 626  
<http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?l=Shijing&c=4&m=NOzh&s=4> For a complete history of Lu, see  
<http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Zhou/rulers-lu.html>

*institutionalized, it gave public credibility to the ruler's decisions.*<sup>14</sup>

Yarrow (milfoil) stalks which grew around the graveyards of the ancestors would then be cast according to various formulas and hexagrams would be chosen.

For example:

Hexagram 45 Cui—Together



*(Offering)*

The king is present in the ancestral temple

*Favorable augury*

*Use of a large sacrificial victim is auspicious*

*Favorable when there is somewhere to go*

*(Base)*

Sacrificing captives

Not bound—thus unruly and disorderly

*They cry, and then laugh*

*When travelling: NO MISFORTUNE*

2:

VERY AUSPICIOUS

NO MISFORTUNE

*Favorable for using captives at the summer sacrifice*

3:

Together wailing.

*Nothing favourable*

*When traveling, NO MISFORTUNE*

4:

VERY AUSPICIOUS

NO MISFORTUNE

5:

Taking together those of rank

NO MISFORTUNE

*No captives. VERY AUSPICIOUS*

*In long-term augury, troubles disappear*

6:

Sobbing, sighing, weeping, crying

NO MISFORTUNE<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Richard Rutt; *Zhouyi; A New Translation with Commentary of the Book of Changes*; Curzon Press; 1996; p. 147

<sup>15</sup> Rutt; pp. 268-9

The casting and reading might be followed by the interpretation of cracks in turtle shells that had been subjected to heat and also perhaps by interpretations of astrology, omens and dreams.

## **The Armies, the Battles, the Ancestral Spirits and the Cosmic Order**

In the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC, armies consisted of 100 to 1000 three-man chariots, perhaps only used as command and posts of status, accompanied by perhaps 10-20,000 foot soldiers using compound, reflex bows (with ranges of only 20-25 feet), spears, bronze daggers and dagger-axes, (but no swords which could not be depended upon to kill at the first stroke).



16

*Infantry warfare in the Spring and Autumn period*

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<sup>16</sup> <http://history.cultural-china.com/en/34History2951.html>



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### *Chariot warfare in the Spring and Autumn Period*

Military historian Frank Kierman Jr. wrote:

*[Warfare] was part of the system of ritual which kept the society in touch with the ancestral spirits and the cosmic order. It is not surprising therefore, that a great proportion of the battle narratives from that stormy period contain long episodes of preliminary activity and of interpretive afterthought as well as practical military measures: conditioning of the state, establishing a moral justification for whatever military initiative may be contemplated, gathering and assessing intelligence regarding the enemy, including the moral status and morale of the adversary sovereign and state, divination, issuing courtly challenges, taking up favorable positions on the chosen terrain, engaging in private excursions or skirmishes to demonstrate irresistible impetuosity before the event [by flouting bravoes and also to enflame or intimidate the opponent, then] . . . casting up moral and physical accounts afterwards, whether or not these followed logically from the issues upon which battle had in theory been joined originally. . . .*<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.chinahistoryforum.com/index.php?/topic/534-paintings-of-ancient-chinese-battles/page\\_\\_st\\_\\_15](http://www.chinahistoryforum.com/index.php?/topic/534-paintings-of-ancient-chinese-battles/page__st__15)

<sup>18</sup> Frank A. Kierman; "The Phases and Modes of Combat in Early China" in *Chinese Ways in Warfare*; Frank A. Kierman and John K. Fairbank (Eds.); Harvard Univ. Press; 1974; p. 28 These accounts have been disputed,



Mark Lewis adds:

*The oaths in the Shang shu all follow a basic formula. The commander details the crimes of his enemies, asserts that he himself is without particular merit but is following the will of Heaven, tells the members of his army how they are to conduct themselves in the battle, and stipulates the punishments that will befall them if they do not obey and, in some cases, the rewards they will receive if they obey and triumph.*<sup>19</sup>

Another observer, military historian Samuel Griffith, noted that:

*The battles of ancient China [in the Western Zhou period] were primitive melees which usually produced no decisive results. Ordinarily the two sides encamped opposite one another for several days while the diviners studied the auguries and the respective commanders conducted propitiatory sacrifices. When the auspicious moment selected by the soothsayers arrived, the entire array, whose roars shook the heavens, threw itself precipitately upon the enemy. A local decision was produced speedily. Either the attacker was repulsed and allowed to withdraw, or he broke through the defender's formations, killed those still inclined to offer active resistance, pursued the flying remnants for half a mile, picked up anything of value, and returned to his own camp or capital. Victory was rarely exploited—limited operations were undertaken to achieve limited objectives.*<sup>20</sup>

Mark Lewis continues:

*After the battle the immediate task was to dispose of the bodies of the dead. Given the centrality of ancestor worship in the period, securing the corpses for burial was extremely important, and men would fight to retrieve the bodies of their fellows on the field or arrange exchanges after the battle. But the corpses of the enemy might also be collected into a large tomb mound as a monument to bring glory to the ancestral cult.*

*. . . A victorious army would often use the corpses of the defeated to erect a monument to its victory, like the Greek tropaion. These artificial hills would stand as visible and lasting memorials to the victors, and . . . the tumuli were part of the web of practices that linked warfare to ancestor worship and the service of the lineage. The mound was to be left especially for the descendants of the victors, that they might know the prowess and glory of those who came before and seek to extend that glory in their turn. When the army returned to their own state after the battle, they performed the ceremony of "calling the army to order" (zhen) and then the ceremonial*

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however, by Edward L. Shaughnessy in "Military Histories of Early China: A Review Article" in *Early China* 21, p. 179. He suggests that attacks on unprepared forces were part of normal operations.

<sup>19</sup> Lewis; p. 24

<sup>20</sup> Samuel Griffith; *The Art of War*; Oxford Univ. Press; 1963; p. 33

*drinking (yin zhi) to mark the conclusion of the campaign. Prisoners, the heads or left ears of those slain, and any spoils taken in battle were then presented at the ancestral temples of the state and the cadet lineages. With these ritual offerings the campaign proper ended, "although the spoils of battle could also be sent as gifts or tribute to the Zhou king, the hegemon, or a friendly state.*

*Thus the hunt and the military campaign both culminated in offerings at the temples, and as was noted above, the word for what was taken in battle or hunt had the technical sense of "living beings obtained for sacrifice." All the "great services" converged in the sacrificial service of the altars, and indeed the word translated as "service" (shi) could in the narrow sense mean "sacrifice," as in the standard phrase you shi. When several speakers identified battle as a "great service," and even applied the phrase you shi to combat, they were explicitly describing warfare as a form of religious, sacrificial ritual. In this way warfare logically culminated in the offering up of the spoils of battle, and above all in human sacrifice.*

*[Previous to the Zhou conquest, under] . . . the Shang dynasty human sacrifice had been a regular institution closely linked to military activities. Excavations have revealed the mass execution of slaves or prisoners to "accompany" the deceased Shang rulers, and the oracle records contain many divinations regarding the sacrifice of members of non-Shang states or tribes. The hundreds of bodies discovered in some royal tombs were probably prisoners taken in warfare, and it is even possible that some campaigns were fought solely for the purpose of obtaining these sacrificial victims. Combat was tied to the service of the cult of the dead, and military success was clearly manifested in the scale of human sacrifice.*<sup>21</sup>

Thus, the wars in this initial period were led by lords who felt the need to preserve the honor of the ancestors and match their deeds through sacramental ties to the three great "services" of sacrifices, war, and, by extension, the grand hunt—all of which granted them the right to kill and eat meat as opposed to those who tilled the soil, ate only its products and staffed the armies after the harvests.

Regarding these esteemed duties, the Lord of Liu elaborated in a famous statement in the *Zuozhuan*:

*The great affairs of state reside in the temple sacrifices and in the war sacrifices. In the temple sacrifices there is the holding of cooked meats, while in war sacrifices, there is the receipt of raw flesh, [the blood of the fallen and the sacrifice of captives after the battle] these are the great measures of the spirits."*<sup>22</sup>

Kierman and others have commented on how the results of war were the ultimate measure of a sovereign's virtue and the sign of whether the cosmic forces approved or disapproved his stewardship of the state.

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<sup>21</sup> Lewis; pp. 25-8

<sup>22</sup> Lewis; p. 160-1

## Political and Military Developments

As the power of the various states grew, that of the Zhou monarchy steadily declined and following the sacking of its capital in present-day Xian by barbarians in 771 BC, the court fled to its eastern capital near Luoyang (where it had previously installed the survivors of the defeated Shang) and it became increasingly dependent on neighboring states for protection.

Thus, the southern state of Chu, a non-Zhou entity commonly portrayed as the “Southern Barbarians” began to expand into the valley of the Yellow River and even claimed the royal title in 704 BC. In response, the state of Qi organized a league based on covenants in 678 BC and defeated Chu in the famous battle of Chengpu that is described later in Part Three. After Jin took over the leadership of the alliance, Chu organized its own league in 633 BC and the two contended for the domination of central China for the next 150 years. Later, in 546 and 541 BC, a league of 14 states was organized to end the warfare but both failed to last as these armies grew to 50,000 combatants with some counting 4,000 chariots.

During that period, the first response to the escalating conditions of warfare came from Guan Zhong (720-645 BC), the chief minister of Qi. He told his hegemon:

*"If my lord desires to rapidly have his will under Heaven and subdue the feudal lords . . . Setup regulations within [the capital] and lodge the military statutes [covenants] therein . . . Divide the capital of Qi into three parts to create three armies. Select worthy men to be the heads of neighborhoods; let the districts organize columns and squads with company commanders to direct them. Moreover, use hunting to assign rewards and punishments, so the common people will master military service." "Good!" said Lord Huan.*

*Master Guan thereupon instituted each group of five families as a gui, and [each] . . . gui had a senior. Ten gui made a neighborhood, and [each] . . . neighborhood had a supervisor. Four neighborhoods made a lian, and [each] . . . lian had a senior. Ten lian made a district, and [each] . . . district had a "goodman". He used these to make the military regulations. Thus five families made a gui, and five men [one from each family] made a [military] squad of five [wu] commanded by the senior of the gui. Ten gui made a neighborhood, and these fifty men made a small regiment commanded by the supervisor [and so on up the hierarchy]. . . . Therefore the soldiers and squads were fixed in their neighborhoods, while the divisions and armies were fixed at the outskirts of the town.*<sup>23</sup>

It was also Guan Zhong's sage advice to Duke Huan that led to him to become the first “hegemon” or leader of an alliance of vassal states, a title that four others were to assume as their states waxed into power during the Spring and Autumn period.

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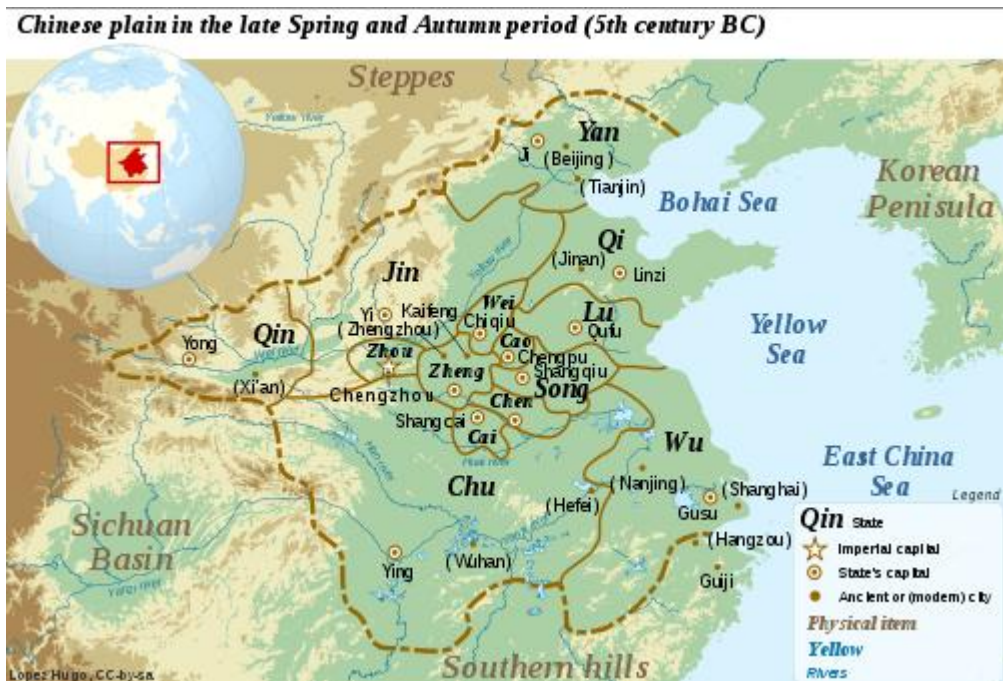
<sup>23</sup> Lewis; pp. 55-6 With this centralizing shift in governmental control, comparisons with the development of the aims of government in militarized Sparta and democratic Athens are natural.



Mark Lewis commented:

*. . . the hegemon [which originally had been known as a “master of the covenant”] had to use his power to maintain the political status quo, to suppress expansionist states, and to preserve or restore states menaced by hostile neighbors. These correlate activities of crushing the strong and rebellious while preserving the weak and obedient reflect the notion of “virtuous potency” (de) that was evolving in this period, and indeed several speakers describe such actions as expressions of the hegemon’s “potency.” So not only did this belief in the hegemon as a wielder of potency cast him in the role of a monarch, but two speakers argued that the hegemon’s potency and not the blood covenant secured the mutual trust that guaranteed adherence to the league.*<sup>24</sup>

By the end of the Spring and Autumn period in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century BC the number of states had reduced themselves to 22. Undoubtedly, they were aware of the horrors of what was probably going to come.



*China towards the end of the Spring and Autumn Period*

<sup>24</sup> Lewis.; p. 68

<sup>25</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spring\\_and\\_Autumn\\_Period](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spring_and_Autumn_Period)

### III. The Warring States Period (481, 475 or 403-221 BC)

#### Introduction

Mark Lewis summed up the changes that occurred as the bigger states began swallowing the smaller ones and became even larger with greater needs.

*The constant wars of the Zhou noble lineages gradually led to the creation of ever larger territorial units through the conquest of alien states and the extension of central government control into the countryside. These were called "warring states" because they devoted themselves to warfare, they were created through the progressive extension of military service, and the registration and mobilization of their populations for battle remained fundamental to their existence as states. They kept every form of violence that had defined the political order of the Zhou nobility—warfare, sacrifice, blood oaths, and vengeance—but these were reorganized and reinterpreted as constitutive elements of the new order. Whereas under the nobility the actual performance of ritually sanctioned violence had been the hallmark of authority, in the Warring States all men engaged in licit violence, while authority was associated with its manipulation and control. Instead of being a means of defending honor, sanctioned violence served to establish or reinforce the authoritarian, hierarchic bonds that constituted the new social structure. In place of the lineage as the primary unit of both politics and elite kinship, the state secured control of military force, while the kin groups were reduced to the individual households that provided both taxes and labor service. These kin units were in turn defined through patterns of sacrifice, vengeance, and collective punishments. The ultimate sanction of segmentary aristocratic rule in the ancestral cults was replaced by forms of sanctioned violence and authority that were justified through the imitation of the "patterns of Heaven" by a single, cosmically potent ruler. Finally, this new organization and interpretation of violence allowed the Warring States Chinese to develop a new understanding of the structure of human society and of the natural world. . . .*<sup>26</sup>

Lewis previously looked at the explanations that have been given by historians for these violent changes.

*[As the states grew fewer and increased in size] . . . there is little agreement as to the inner coherence, if any, of the total ensemble. How the various phenomena were related one to the other, which were primary and which secondary, and how to characterize the entire transition remain open questions. Thus, the best-overall treatment of the period, Yang Kuan's Zhanguo shi [History of the Warring States], provides detailed discussions of each of the developments listed above and many more,*

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<sup>26</sup> Lewis; p. 53

*yet the only explanatory model offered to link them together is the [Chinese] officially approved theory that this transition marked the change from a slave society to a feudal society dominated by the landlord class. While there were slave-like categories in Shang and Zhou China, the existence of a slave society remains unproven, and there is as yet no evidence whatsoever for the existence of private landlords in the Warring States. . . . [Thus] Yang Kuan's exposition moves systematically from economic foundations to political superstructure to cultural epiphenomena, but he links them together only through repeated appeals to the interests and actions of a spectral class which has left no trace in the historical record.*

*The standard one-volume treatment of the period in English, Choyun Hsu's Ancient China in Transition, focuses on the question of changing social mobility, but it also attempts a general characterization of the transition from Zhou feudalism to the imperial state. For his purposes Hsu adopts [Max Weber's] . . . categories [by placing] . . . great stress on the rise of trade and [arguing] . . . that contractual, commercial relations provided the model for basic social relations. . . . [along with a shift from "communal" to "associative" relations in a society that changed from being "familistic" to "individualistic."]*

*[Thus,] . . . Yang appeals to a fictive landlord class to explain the transition, while Hsu describes it in terms that Weber would apply to the modern, capitalist West [by] . . . attributing spurious "rational-legal" principles to the defenders and servants of the imperial state. . . . This tendency of all scholars living under the shadow of nineteenth-century social theory is exacerbated by the fact that the abundant new archeological finds in China . . . provide far more evidence of changes in technology and urban scale than of those in political organization, social organization, or values. Assertions of the priority of economy, technology, or demography also give scholars the satisfaction of revealing the objective "truth" behind the ideological mask of the native, Chinese tradition, which explained history as a political, social, or moral phenomenon. Nevertheless, the general failure of these scholars to provide coherent arguments that lead from the development of the iron plow to the rise of philosophical schools, or from a putative population explosion to the appearance of the imperial state, suggests that we should try other approaches. [Hence the title of his book, Sanctioned Violence in Early China whose contents will often be quoted here.]*<sup>27</sup>

## **Technology and "Progress"—The Background**

In the period that followed, as pressure steadily increased to survive, great advances were made in military and political management, in the technology of warfare and, to support it all, in agriculture.

Previously, populations had been ruled by the local aristocrats who lived with the craftsmen and traders inside the cities while those who tilled the fields lived outside the walls. Many of these urban populations participated in politics and sometimes overthrew

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<sup>27</sup> Lewis; pp. 6-7

unwise autocrats. (As will be discussed later, these were the “people” whose favor Confucius and Mencius said should be courted to staff a well-run kingdom).

All this changed, however, as the states grew larger and more centrally ruled by hegemony (called *ba*) and their administrative apparatus, fortified cities that were previously military and administrative centers in the central plain began to grow enormously so populations of 50,000 became common. As industry and trade flourished, they became focal points of the new road networks in the countryside that also united “great walls,” ramparts, forts and strategic locations such as guard towers located at mountain passes and road intersections.

These fast-growing cities were fortified with up to 20 meter thick outer walls with a separate “palace city,” within which a ruler often mysteriously ruled out of sight, living a life that probably did not conform to the ideals of the wandering Confucian moralists who preached “nonattachment to objects” and a “devotion to gaining knowledge” as a goal for princes to emulate.

Surrounding the ruler’s palace lived the *hoi poloi* in close city quarters with teeming marketplaces with lives devoted to manufacture, commerce and trade, their experiences full of the minor intrigues, adventures and other aspects of big city living. Meanwhile, the peasants still lived outside the cities and this was the environment that has prevailed in China ever since.

To manage the war-driven objectives of the emerging states bureaucracies were required to be based on merit rather than heredity and local rulers transferred the ownership of land as compensation for military service and successful administration, and whose recipients then paid taxes to enrich the coffers of the state.

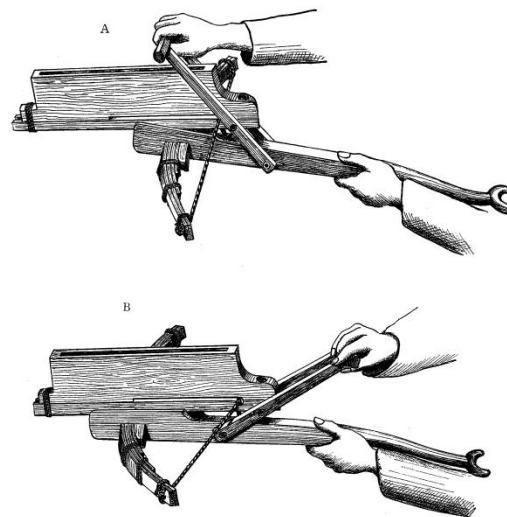
With the emergence of a market for land the beginnings of state-based agrarian economies also began to emerge. With the clearing of forests, improvements in drainage and the use of fertilizers opening up wastelands and increasing crop yields, the peasant population increased. Meanwhile, the old covenant and kinship systems that held Spring and Autumn society together were replaced by family units. The local *paterfamilias* and the princes of the state held unquestioned authority over these, and systems of mutual familial responsibility for crimes and treasons became were installed.

The 10,000-man armies of pre-sixth century BC who performed a few weeks of seasonal campaigning and fought battles that often lasted only a day had become, 300 years later, armies of a hundred to hundreds of thousands of conscripts who would fight battles that could last a year or more along fronts of many miles. The role of the commanders necessarily changed, but the armies were still composed of united squads of five with their integrated combinations of long and short weapons. However, unlike the old heroic days, recklessness was reprehended and absolute obedience to orders was enforced. These changes will be looked at after some of the technical “progress” that enabled them is discussed.

As mass infantries replaced the unwieldy sportsman-like chariots of the aristocrats, state-sponsored “factories” replaced the private manufacture of weapons and cheaply-made cast iron weapons replaced the bronze weaponry of the Spring and Autumn period, during which iron had only been used for agricultural tools.

Inspired by the devastating arrow-shooting, horse-riding northern barbarian enemies, an (unpopular) change of clothing styles from robes to pants was ordered by first one and then many kingdoms after c. 300 BC, although when and where the stirrup was imported or invented is still unknown. However, cavalry charges, with a few exceptions, didn't become important because of the simultaneous mass production of powerful composite, reflex crossbows that made the horses easy targets while their riders could only shoot back with light bows. The crossbows were made especially lethal because they didn't generate recoil and fatigue for the shooters.

The crossbows were thus the most significant element of the new style of war. Apparently originating in the proto-Thai/Vietnam area, they began appearing in Chinese tombs in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, but were not used extensively until around 350 BC, when mass-produced, precision-honed bronze triggers made their appearance. Later Warring States armies employed upwards of 50,000 crossbow-men. Then, to make matters better (or worse!), in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, repeating crossbows made their appearance. These were capable of shooting four arrows with an effective range of 50-75 yards in a matter of seconds.



*Four arrows could fit into the box*<sup>28</sup>

Lamellar armor, (rows of leather plates sewn together), shields made of straw or other materials such as tough rhinoceros hides (which nearly caused their extinction), and iron helmets were made to provide protection.

Meanwhile, as the cities grew and made themselves richer targets, siege engines, mobile shields and towers, battering rams, catapults, superior methods of tunneling, new uses of fire, the altering of rivers and other techniques for assaults and defenses of cities were simultaneously invented and developed.

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<sup>28</sup> [http://www.atarn.org/chinese/rept\\_xbow.htm](http://www.atarn.org/chinese/rept_xbow.htm)



As military historian Ralph Sawyer noted:

*In one decisive battle between Ch'in and Ch'u, the total combatants apparently exceeded a million, an astounding figure of several hundred thousand even when discounted by a factor of two or three. Numerical strength had become critical because in the previous campaign 200,000 soldiers from Ch'in had suffered a severe defeat. Naturally, casualties also escalated rapidly with 100,000 from Wei reportedly dying at the battle of Ma-ling in 342 BCE; 240,000 in the combined forces of Wei and Han perishing at Yi-ch'üeh in 295; and 450,000 men of Chao reported as having been slaughtered at Ch'ang-p'ing in 260 [after they had surrendered].*<sup>29</sup>



王克伟油画 - 火牛

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<sup>29</sup> Ralph D. and Mei-Chun L. Sawyer; *The Tao of Deception; Unorthodox Warfare in History and Modern China*; Basic Books; 2007; p. 13

<sup>30</sup> <http://my.opera.com/sy911/albums/show.dml?id=5926062>



王可伟油画 - 车战

Hillfox ArtSeries 31

*Note the crossbow on the left*

When the count was down to nine states, even the weakest could field 100,000 men and when the number of states dropped lower, Qin, the strongest, reportedly maintained an army of 1,000,000 men, using 600,000 in a single campaign, (although those numbers may have been exaggerated).

Sawyer added:

*. . . peasants had long been subjected to military training on a seasonal basis and conscripted for combat when needed. However, this rapid expansion in force size required the army's core to be composed of trained officers and disciplined soldiers. Drill manuals, deployment methods, and the tactics they would be designed to execute suddenly became indispensable. . . .*

*[As] the civilian realm became increasingly estranged from the realities of war . . . [warfare's] objectives changed because states no longer sought to capture prisoners or plunder for riches, but focused on vanquishing their enemies by exterminating their armies, annexing their lands, and subjecting their populace.*<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> <http://my.opera.com/sy911/albums/show.dml?id=5926062>

<sup>32</sup> Sawyer; p. 14



# Oaths and Bonds Between Unequals Replace Covenants Between Equals

Mark Lewis wrote:

*. . . In the states created through universal military service, [the] blood oaths [of the covenants] took on a new nature and functions. [During the late Spring and Autumn Period] . . . the social role of these oaths had steadily expanded until they became the primary mode of establishing political ties between men, and this continued into the Warring States period. However, the manner in which they were employed and understood radically changed. The two primary features of this change were: 1) the denial or decentering of the importance of the sacrifice and an emphasis on the intent of the participants and the written text of the oath, and 2) the heightened one-sidedness of the oath, which increasingly bound servants to masters rather than jointly binding leaders and followers in the common service of the spirits. We have already seen the beginnings of the second feature in the Spring and Autumn period, where the use of covenants to secure the obedience of the capital populace and the attempts at Houma [an archeological site in Shanxi Province] to bind the people to the new ruler both signal a shift from covenants as alliances of proximate equals towards their use as a means of establishing control over a subject population.*<sup>33</sup>

In other words:

*. . . As participants in military service, blood oaths, vengeance, and punishments, the common people of Warring States China obtained not authority but discipline and obedience. While all men engaged in violence, the authority it had once conferred [on the aristocrats], lay elsewhere.*<sup>34</sup>

Lewis also commented on the new rulers and added some more comments on the “glue” that began to hold things together.

*The belief that the appropriate actions and moral potency of the ruler rather than the divine sanctions of sacrifice bound men to obedience were marked by the appearance of a new term for oaths: “bonds” (yue). These bonds were used in the same circumstances as the old blood covenants and even employed similar rituals, but they also exhibited several new features that reveal changes in the political order. These new features were: 1) bonds were texts and the basis of codified, written law; 2) bonds took on a broader, philosophical meaning which applied to any consciously formed ties between men; 3) bonds were linked through certain elements of marriage ritual and popular magic to the new sexual imagery of the political realm, in which the rule of husband over wife was regarded as the paradigm of all authority; 4) bonds*

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<sup>33</sup> Lewis; p. 67

<sup>34</sup> Lewis; p. 96



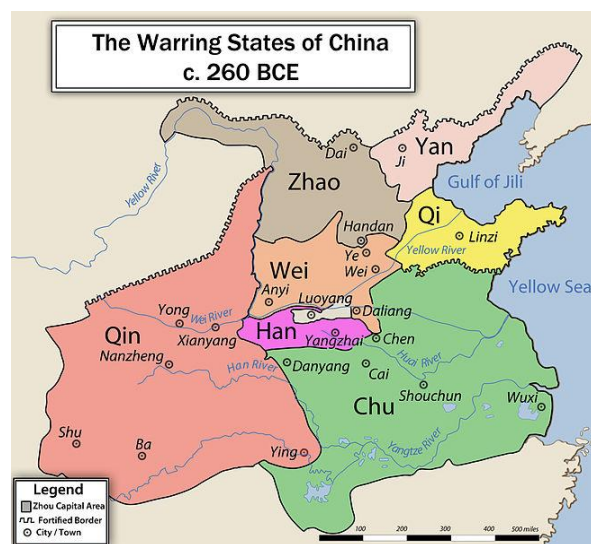
created personal ties between servant and master based on the exchange of total devotion in return for recognition.

The Warring States Chinese employed bonds for the same purposes that their ancestors had used covenants. First, they formed alliances between two or more independent states. The "horizontal" and "vertical" alliances that defined Warring States diplomatic structure were simply multi-state bonds, and like the earlier leagues they had a master (zhu) or "senior" (zhang) who directed their concerted actions.

Bonds, like the oaths (shi) . . . were also proclaimed to stipulate the rules to be observed and the punishments to be imposed when an army assembled for battle. The biographies of Sun Wu and Sima Rangju both consist of single stories in which they execute favorites of the king for violating the army's bonds. That these accounts of the prototypes of the Warring States military commander should focus entirely on the bonds shows their fundamental importance in the new forms of military organization. The military treatise attributed to Wu Qi identified the bonds as one of the five features to which the general must pay attention, and "making clear" and enforcing the army's bonds remained one of the chief hallmarks of the true commander into the period of the Three Kingdoms (184 or 220-280 A.D.).<sup>35</sup>



36



37

*Changes from 350 to 260 BC*

<sup>35</sup> Lewis; p. 68

<sup>36</sup> [www.somalinet.com](http://www.somalinet.com)

<sup>37</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven\\_Warring\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Warring_States)

## Geopolitics in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC

*In 270 BC, King Zhaoxiang [of Qin] (324–251 BC) was actively endeavoring to campaign against the state of Qi, the eastern most part of China, mostly utilizing the mighty Qin army to his own benefit. King Zhaoxiang's visitor advisor, Fan Ju, advised King Zhaoxiang to abandon these fruitless campaigns and shifted the Qin policy to maintain good diplomatic relationships with distant states such as Qi, and concentrate forces against its direct neighbors of Han and Wei, the so called "Befriend A Distant Enemy To Attack One Nearby" policy. [There is a detailed description later in the Thirty-six Strategies Part].*

*Under this policy, Han and Wei found themselves plagued with decades of Qin advances and saw their land lost to Qin in chunks followed by hundreds of thousands of soldiers killed. The Qin territory had advanced deep across the east shore of the Yellow River and beyond. The very existence of Han and Wei was merely a strategic balancing buffer zone between Qin in the west, Zhao in the north, Qi in the east, and Chu in the south. Their troops were used as spearheads pointing west by the alliance of the eastern states against Qin, as well as the same puppet spearheads, but pointing east, aiding Qin advances mostly against Chu. Had Qin not worried about a united retaliation against herself from these three states (which seemed unlikely since these three states were also busy struggling with each other), Han and Wei had ended their royal houses decades before their eventual conquest by Qin.*<sup>38</sup>

The result of this maneuvering was the famous "Horizontal" (East-West) alliance that was dominated by Qin and the "Vertical" (North-South) group composed of Qi, Chu, Yan, Han, Zhao and Wei.

Hanfeizi (d. 233 BC), the supreme "objectivist" had this to say about it:

*Vertical Alliance supporters encourage the weak multitude to attack the one strong side whilst the Horizontal Alliance promote the one strong side attacking the weak multitude. They are all fickle and capricious, change sides frequently and are unable to decide who their master is. Both Su Qin of the Vertical Alliance clique and Zhang Yi of the Horizontal Alliance clique issue many plans and schemes that are politically subjective.*<sup>39</sup>

However, as in Peru, Mexico and Mesopotamia, the seven were reduced to one—the Qin. (Note: Qin is pronounced "Chin," the root word for "China"). Its tragic epitaph concludes this essay as an exemplar of the ancient art that all go players know of—how to lose a "won" game. Their dynasty lasted less than 15 years after their victory in 221 BC.

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<sup>38</sup> <http://www.1155815.com/english/cultures/200804/1067.html>

<sup>39</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School\\_of\\_Diplomacy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School_of_Diplomacy)



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*The Final Conquests of Qin*

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.friesian.com/choustat.htm>

## IV. The One Hundred Contending Schools of Thought

*The war of nature is creative.*

Charles Darwin

To say the least, the fermented times of the Warring States brewed a need for philosophical and practical organizers that the old aristocracy was incapable of furnishing. Naturally, opinions differed on how to fulfill this goal in different places and at different times, and thus different theories were spawned that tried to deal with the evolving nature of the new reality—what it was and what it was not, and what should be done or not done about it to make it better, or to put a stop to it.

### Was Warfare a Natural or Unnatural Condition of Humanity?

Mark Lewis wrote about Huangdi, the Yellow Emperor, who first appeared in fourth century BC literature that was attempting to justify and rationalize the ever-increasing violent aspects of statecraft:

*As the fundamental political and social institutions of China were transformed during the Warring States period, the emerging elite sought sanction and precedent for their vision of society through re-imagining the history of Chinese civilization. Perhaps noting the creation of institutions in their own day, they came to realize that the practices that defined their world were not given in nature but had to be created through conscious effort. This recognition was transposed into history through the emergence of a shared conviction that in earliest times men had not been naturally separated from animals, but that the work of this separation had been accomplished by the "former kings," superhuman sages who physically expelled the animals, invented the technologies necessary for civilized existence, and introduced the moral practices and social hierarchies that defined humanity. The various schools presented the innovations of different sages as the key to the creation of human society, but they shared a general mythology in which certain sages were linked to specific innovations and feats, and the ensemble of these creations defined the Warring States elite's understanding of a proper social order.*

*The sage who created human forms of warfare and punishments was the Yellow Emperor, and in several histories and genealogies he was credited with the creation of Chinese civilization and described as the primal ancestor of the Chinese people. This figure, like many of the sages, had originally been a deity invoked in the religious ceremonies of earlier times. He had been a spirit of the storm invoked by shamans or*

*shamanesses in rainmaking rituals, and the return of the rain at the end of the New Year season had been imagined in the form of a cosmic battle between this lord of the storm and a lord of drought who was linked to him in cult and later identified as his brother [or minister in some accounts]. The shamans who were the votaries of this god dressed themselves in animal skins and hideous masks as elements of their ceremonies, and wearing these costumes they staged mock battles to exorcise evil influences and perhaps expel the drought demon.*

*As the Zhou elite gradually replaced shamanic rituals devoted to anthropomorphic deities with rationalizing philosophy and the cults of more abstract spirits like Heaven and Earth, these ancient gods were employed as the raw material for the emerging "history" of the creation of Chinese civilization. Their feats in myth and story became the technological inventions and political or moral innovations that separated humanity from brute nature. These innovations, not surprisingly, echoed the social programs and institutional changes pioneered by the political reformers or advocated by the philosophical schools in the Warring States. The emerging elite took over the deities of shamanic cults and transformed them into historical exemplars for their own claims to wisdom and authority.*

*The tales of the Yellow Emperor and his battles were reinterpreted as accounts of the origins of violence in the world of men and its subsequent use by the sages to create a proper political order. In these stories the disguised shamans, or rather the powerful demons and tomb-guarding beasts whom they invoked, became the hideous, bestial Chi You, who created weapons and plunged the world into chaos through his savage, unstoppable violence. In the account of the origins of law, the Yellow Emperor destroyed the original makers of savage punishments and then reinstituted the "punishments of Heaven" that were based on proper legal procedure and the rules of evidence. In his military defeat of Chi You, the Yellow Emperor [trained and then led an army of animals and was thereby] . . . credited with the ancient prototypes for all the major innovations in warfare that took place in the Warring States: the creation of armies based on collective action through instruction, the introduction of a combat based on mental skills transmitted through books, the extension of the ruler's potency to the beasts through animal combats, and the modeling of military action [and punishments] on the natural cycle of the year [that is, conveniently after the harvests in August, whose phase in the Five Elements theory was metal]. The defeated Chi You, for his part, became a god of combat and fighters, and he set the pattern for later Chinese history in which mighty warriors who had been defeated in battle, like Xiang Yu and Guan Yu, became the gods of war. In the disposal of Chi You's corpse, the Yellow Emperor was also credited with the creation of several of the major military rituals and of the practice of using blood oaths to secure loyalty. These tales of the Yellow Emperor's defeat and sacrifice of Chi You also formed one element in a set of tales that sought to rationalize the violence of dynastic transition through the imagery of the sacrifice of an evil monster.*

*In its earliest forms the story of the defeat of bestial but unstoppable fighters through moral instruction, strategic skills, and imitation of the patterns of Heaven was probably a critique of the heroic, martial ethic of the Zhou nobility, men who equated*

*manhood with martial prowess and saw battle as a field for the winning of glory. The military treatises and the legalist texts both contain extended critiques of heroism on the field of battle, and the tales of the Yellow Emperor presented these same critiques in dramatic form. As the aristocracy and their values were forcibly driven from the political stage, the criticisms of heroism and martial prowess were readily transferred to the avengers, "wandering swordsmen," brigands, and rebels who threatened the imperial order. The claims for the indispensability of moral instruction, textual military skills, and the patterns of Heaven were used to rationalize and justify the government's mobilization and control of the peasant populace. In this way the tales of the Yellow Emperor became a charter myth for the absolutist state.*

*This authoritarian character, indeed, was the very essence of the mythology of the sages. The message that in the beginning men were not separate from beasts, and that humanity had been created by rulers through their superhuman powers and perceptions was perhaps the most radical claim to political authority that has ever been made. If men were made men solely by a set of technologies and moral teachings created by former kings and maintained by the present rulers, then subjects were human only through the authority of their masters. Without the controls and institutions imposed by the elite, the common people would be nothing but beasts. In accounts of ancient history, the Warring States elite thus justified their political power as the very definition of humanity, the only barrier or dividing line between civilization and the savage world of the beasts.*<sup>41</sup>



*Chi You*<sup>42</sup>

These were the underlying assumptions of *all* the philosophies that will be examined below which emerged in the transition from the fiefdoms of the Zhou to the emerging centralized states that eventually became literally and figuratively embodied in the Qin.

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<sup>41</sup> Lewis; pp. 211-12

<sup>42</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chi\\_You](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chi_You)

Lewis continued:

[The new, emerging system of relationships between superiors and inferiors mirrored that of the changes in the military] . . . *These bonds were equated with the ties of marriage in a new sexual imagery of political power which equated the power of a lord over his ministers with that of a husband over his wife [and a general over his soldiers—see below]. On the basis of these new ties political authority took on an absolute, authoritarian character quite different from the collegial, kinship-based rule of the Zhou nobility.*

*The emerging states extended their rule into the countryside through the steady expansion of the bases of recruitment for military service [as was outlined above]. In an interlinked series of reforms, various states allocated land to individual peasant households, or recognized land that peasants had already made their own, in exchange for taxes and military service. At the same time, in order to make up for the relatively small numbers of officials in the service of the states, households were grouped into units of five for purposes of military recruitment, mutual surveillance, and collective responsibility for crimes. These reforms culminated in the state of Qin, where the entire free, adult, male population was registered and ranked on the basis of military service, and the territory of the state divided up into fixed plots of land for purposes of allocation. The various philosophical schools of the period accepted the identity of the population with the army as a fact of life, an aim of policy, or an unspoken assumption. During the late Warring States period this identity of the army with the populace marked the high degree of the state's claims upon its subjects, who were subject to the discipline of military life and also obliged to risk their lives for their rulers. This creation of the state through military recruitment and the emphasis on total obedience in the military thought and training of the period increased further the authoritarian character of rule noted above. The high degree of devotion and obedience marked by the identification of the subject with the soldier had a lasting impact on the nature of the Chinese empire, even though universal military service vanished under the Han.*

*The other forms of sanctioned violence that had defined the Zhou elite also continued under the Warring States, and, like military service, they were gradually extended throughout the population. However, rather than marking authority, they were employed to define and substantiate the new forms of hierarchical human relationships that constituted the Warring States social and political order. Thus sacrifice was reinterpreted as a form of ritualized drama in which men learned obedience and devotion to their elders and superiors through acting out their social roles in the microcosm of the sacrificial rite. Vengeance became a debt of blood owed to one's immediate kin, thereby defining the limits of the households that were the basis of the new political order, and to one's political superiors, thereby defining the total devotion incumbent upon an official. The range of collective liability for punishments likewise defined the primary groupings that constituted the new order: the household, the*



*neighborhood unit for military recruitment, and the ties of superior to subordinate amongst officials.*<sup>43</sup>

However, Michael Puett in *The Ambivalence of Creation* disputes the arguments that in ancient China, unlike in the West, nature and culture were considered to originally have been one, and that therefore there was one original myth for the creation of violence created by wild *qi* energy that was later “channeled” into constructive outlets. He thinks that this kind of theory ignores a long series of Warring States debates over the role of the sages in which the “natural evolving process” of nature under the benevolent gaze of Heaven was crucial in taming the violence and tempering punishments.<sup>44</sup>

For example, one early writer argued that just as scorpions are born with stingers, man has always had weapons—it was part of human nature to want to be powerful and human nature comes from Heaven. Some people misuse them and others use them correctly so there was nothing to be done about it.

Another speculated that it is proper to use war, killing and killers to eliminate war, killing and killers and that heavy punishments would get rid of punishments, presumably through fear.

Still another denied that the sages could create proper law in the sense that Law is “born” from the Way and is not “created” by the sage. That is, Law appears naturally and “is there”—the sage only follows the Way of Nature.

Others blamed some barbarian tribes for overusing excessive punishments to separate disorder from the moral order of God-on-High. However sages correctly guided Chinese rulers to make laws and lawful punishments that “naturally” kept their populaces in order and enabled them to destroy the Heaven-offending tribes.

Yet another view was that disorder is a perfectly natural by-product of the generation of the world and didn’t come from the disparate body of Chi You. The original state of being was dark and formless but as it became differentiated; activities, desires and language emerged so there was cause for injury. Enter the sage:

*Therefore [everything] emerges together in darkness. Some thereby die, and some thereby live; some are thereby defeated, and some are thereby completed, Misfortune and fortune come from the way, but no one knows whence they were generated. The way to see and know is simply to be empty and have nothing . . . Therefore the one who holds fast to the way observes all under Heaven without grasping, without being in a fixed position, without consciously acting, without being selfish.*<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Lewis; p. 244

<sup>44</sup> Michael Puett; *The Ambivalence of Creation: Debates Concerning Innovation and Artifice in Early China*; Stanford Univ. Press; 2001. See also: Thomas Michael’s review of Puett’s *To Become a God: Cosmology, Sacrifice, and Self-Divinization in Early China* in *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 83, No. 3 (Jul., 2003); pp. 421-429 at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1205711>

<sup>45</sup> Puett; p. 119 (*Jingfa in Mawangdui Hanmu Boshu*, vol. 1;p. 43, lines 1b-3b p. 119)



In this state of mind the sage can discern the patterns of Heaven and model acts of civility and martiality based on them during the proper seasons, the sage being an organizer of natural products but not a creator of them. One manuscript applied this formula to the battle between Huangdi and Chi You. First, a minister described to Huangdi how the rectification of the world that will necessarily involve conflict must begin with self-cultivation, so he reposed for three years on a mountain top and observed in peace all that was below him. Finally, he was told it was time and after conquering Chi You, he set forth a covenant that whoever acts out of season, or against property, or opposes the ancestors will be punished as was Chi You.

Contradicting the Mohist (see below) arguments that sages created metal weapons and other ways of controlling nature through farming, there were arguments that in order to create political unity, natural resources had to be controlled by the state. However, it was Chi You who seized control of the metals in the mountains and made weapons used by rebels. In due time, Huangdi put a stop to that.

In other words, when authors wanted to claim that a certain element of statecraft that required violence was separate from nature or the sages, a “rebel” such as Chi You or a barbarian tribe was called upon to create it.

On the other hand, it was argued that only sages could create the artifacts of civilization and since Chi You was not a sage, he could not have invented weapons.

In other words, Puett thinks that the Mark Lewis theory that Chi You as a minister originated in Shang rituals regarding storms and drought is wrong. He points out that Huangdi appears as a creator in narratives where Chi You is a minister, and he is not when Chi You is a rebel. This dichotomy naturally enters the debates of whether kings should pass on their thrones to ministers (based on merit) or sons (based on heredity) i.e. which was “natural” and which was not.<sup>46</sup>

During the period where these debates were going on, the aristocracy was disappearing and the newly centralized and expanding states (that were left) were also centralizing rulership in the form of hegemons and princes and in the new types of commanders and armies and hence battles that will be discussed below. Thus, the source of these debates was over whether these new developments were part of a natural process or not.

Last of all, a note should be made of the ways the system of correlative reasoning applied to a game in which the elements of go appear. This will be examined in full later on in a discussion of the relation of go to the cosmos.

Mark Lewis wrote:

*In addition to the simple attribution by Liu Xiang, other texts preserve a tradition that the game of kickball was a ritual commemoration of the Yellow Emperor’s victory*

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<sup>46</sup> The “naturalist” aspect is magnified in the Yao *weiqi* myth since the non-human Yao ignored his therefore half-human son Dan Zhu when he abdicated and passed his throne to his minister, Shun. See Appendix V.

*over Chi You. Until recent years the only evidence of this idea was a statement in the preface to a Japanese work on [Han period Chinese] kickball written in the Tokugawa period. This work said, "some compared [the ball] to the head of Chi You." However, this isolated statement has found dramatic confirmation in the silk Huang-Lao manuscript discovered [in a 168 BC tomb] at Mawangdui. [It said that:]*

*"Thereupon [Huangdi] [the Yellow Emperor] took out his axes of punishment and mobilized his troops. The Yellow Emperor in person encountered Chi You and slew him. He stripped off his skin and made it into an archery target; he had men shoot at it and rewarded those who had the most hits. He cut off his hair, mounted it in Heaven, and called it "Chi You's Banner" [an astral phenomenon that pre-saged the coming of war]. He stuffed his stomach and made it into a ball; he had men kick it and rewarded those who scored the most. He fermented his bones and flesh, threw them into a bitter meat stew, and had all the men drink it. Thus the Supreme Emperor [shang di] made his prohibitions."*

*This passage, which has been dated as early as the fourth century and is certainly no later than the early second century B.C., shows that not only the game of kickball but also the regular archery contests and the practice of pickling and devouring gross malefactors were traced to the Yellow Emperor's victory over Chi You. Since . . . this battle was regarded as an archetypal event marking the introduction of organized warfare into human society, it is not surprising that many of the chief rituals pertaining to combat were interpreted as commemorations of the primal conflict. The appearance of kickball among these other rituals clearly demonstrates its military character. . . .<sup>47</sup>*

## **The Six Philosophies Organized by Court Historian Sima Tan (165-110 BC)**

One result of the long, dreary centuries of war was that over time an often wandering group of "philosophers" emerged from the *shi* class of educated administrators of the Zhou, of whom Confucius and Laozi (6-5<sup>th</sup> century BC?) are the most famous. Later on, their ranks were joined by commoners who could afford the educational process and Mozi (470-c. 391 BC), and Lu Buwai are the best known of this group. Thus, the conflux of interstate wars became the mid-wife of the birth of the "One Hundred Schools of Thought," the "Golden Age" of Chinese philosophy, one group of which developed new forms of military and political strategies that became the flexible basis for dealing with adversaries, including those on the go board.

To understand how and why this happened and how the military teachings which *weiqi* strategies emulate cannot be easily separated from the rest of classical

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<sup>47</sup> Lewis; p 148

Chinese thought and language, it is necessary to make a background survey of the major schools of thought that developed. In doing so, it should be kept in mind that the content of these schools is how *we* look at them and not necessarily how they were first conceived.

As will be explained in more detail after the philosophies are discussed, after the fall of the Qin dynasty and the establishment of the Han dynasty in 206 BC, the court historian, Sima Tan began to write the first history of China, which was finished by his son, the great Sima Qian (145 or 135-86 BC) in 91 BC. Under the influence of Huang-Lao ("Yellow Emperor-Laozi") thought, a semi-mystical belief system that mixed ruler-worship with authoritarian and mystical elements, Sima Tan added the term "Daoism" to the already established terms of "Confucianism" and "Legalism," while delineating six major groupings of the "Hundred Schools of Thought." Again, it is impossible to understand the thinking of this age without a working knowledge of them.<sup>48</sup>

## **The School of Confucianism (*Rujia*)**

Confucius and the writers who wrote most of the "works" in his name after his death (see Appendix V) looked back to the early days of the Zhou dynasty for what they perceived of as an ideal socio-political order, the lack of which they thought was causing the world around them to fall apart. He and his best-known follower, Mencius (372-289 BC), believed that people were born with "good-natures" but could be influenced to become evil and that therefore the aim of a successful state within the emerging reorganization of personal, political and economical contexts should be to win over the peoples "Will" without the use of force. This would have been the authoritarian state that Mark Lewis so aptly described in Section III.

The Confucians felt that this goal could be attained by implementing a "pecking order" of duties and obligations that would unite "superiors" and "inferiors" by showing "respect to those above, and compassion to those below" within a pattern of the Five Great Relationships. These were: ruler/subject; father/son; husband/wife; elder/younger sons; friend/friend and would pertain to every role one played in life—for example, one could be at once a son, a brother, a husband, a supplicant, a student, a teacher, etc. An illustration of what they thought was "proper conduct" comes from the *Mencius*, written by his disciples after he died:

*The people of Zhang sent Yu Cizhuo to make a stealthy attack on the kingdom of Wei, and the kingdom of Wei sent Si Yugong to pursue Yu Cizhuo. Yu Cizhuo said, "Today I feel unwell, so that I cannot hold my bow. I am a dead man!" Then he asked his driver, "Who is that pursuing me?" The driver said, "It is Si Yugong." Yu Cizhuo exclaimed, "I shall live!" The driver said, Si Yugong is the best*

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<sup>48</sup> Those interested in more detailed information than is presented here could begin by exploring *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* at <http://plato.stanford.edu>

*archer of Wei, what do you mean by saying "I shall live?" Yu Cizhuo replied, "Si Yugong learned archery from To Yingong, who learned it from me. Now, To Yingong is an upright man, and the friends of his selection must be upright also." When Si Yugong came up, he said to Yu Cizhuo, "Master, why are you not holding your bow?" Yu Cizhuo answered, "Today I am feeling unwell and cannot hold my bow." On this, Si Yugong said, "I learned archery from To Yingong, who learned it from you. I cannot bear to injure you with your own science. The business of today, however, is [the Prince's business], which I dare not neglect." He then took his arrows, knocked off their steel points against the carriage wheel, discharged four of them and returned home.<sup>49</sup>*

Within this social and cultural framework, Confucian teachings between the Zhou and Han periods included the feudal arts of ceremony, music and dance, archery, charactering, writing and mathematics while advocating the correct transmission of proper and unchangeable moral codes of proper duty, tradition, morality, justice, sincerity, and language. Regarding the latter, it included the famous idea that the names of things should, after being "rectified," become permanent as public standards that would help prevent social chaos.

Confucius and the followers who wrote his books for centuries afterwards believed that a falling away from these ideals had caused the collapse of the Zhou, and that therefore, the *junzi* ("honorable gentlemen" or "superior persons" who followed these prescriptions—like himself) were the only ones who were qualified to advise the people and their rulers. He did seek employment but was never hired as a chief advisor for rather obvious reasons.

Nevertheless, his writings and the writings of his followers in the *Analects* and other works over the centuries provided the "baseline," as sinologist Chad Hansen calls it, for a great deal of what philosophically followed because, while the fundamental system of modeled behavior from ancient texts formed its philosophical core, interpretations allowed for flexibility and there were many accretions to its thought that inspired the development of as many as eight distinct sub-schools.

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<sup>49</sup> James Legge; *Chinese Classics II: The Works of Mencius*; Clarendon Press; 1895; p. 329

Mark Lewis elaborated:

*These features of the shift from covenant to bond parallel the new theory of sacrifice developed in the ritual and philosophical texts of the Warring States Confucians. Although various aspects of this theory are scattered through many texts, its clearest expression appeared in Xun Kuang's discussion of sacrifice in his chapter on ritual.*

*Xun Kuang defined sacrifice as the ritual that gives proper form to reverence and as the "reverent service of the spirits." Sacrifice stemmed from the accumulation of human intentions and longings, and in order to give proper expression to these feelings, the former kings established fixed forms for the sacrifices, which were "the height of the hierarchical duties of treating one's superiors as superiors and one's parents as parents." The role of sacrifice was to create and enforce the proper hierarchical relations among men through serving the three "roots" of sacrificial ritual: Heaven and Earth, ancestors, and rulers. Although it appeared as the service of the spirits, sacrifice was actually the Way of man, for through serving the dead one learned the service of the living.<sup>50</sup>*

More specifically, Lewis had discussed earlier how:

*As Marcel Granet noted, in the official religion that arose in imperial China the old ceremonies of the nobility in which one physically shared a meal with the ancestors in the guise of their grandsons were replaced by a moral, political cult which was primarily symbolic in character. The sacrifices to the ancestors became theatrical microcosms in which men acted out and thereby created the proper hierarchical relations within the family and, by extension, in the larger political order. The meaning of the sacrifices lay in the hierarchical relations defined by them, the roles people assumed in them, and the feelings of duty and devotion fostered by those roles. The true role of sacrifice, as Xun Kuang stressed, was learning how to serve.<sup>51</sup>*

## **The School of Legalism (*Fajia*)**

Xunzi, a Confucian who lived from c. 300 to 237 BC was diametrically opposed to Mencius's thoughts in regards to human nature—according to him we are incorrigibly selfish, corrupt and responsive only to rewards and punishments. He closed the more "liberal" Mencian schools in Lu (see Appendix V) and it was his interpretation that was molded by his students, Hanfeizi and Lisi (d. 208 BC) into the tenets of Legalism as they became ministers in the Qin government. However, there were differences as to the ideas of these three on the origin of the innate badness.

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<sup>50</sup> Lewis; p. 110

<sup>51</sup> Lewis; pp. 78-9

For Xunzi, it was psychological and inborn, but the legalist Hanfeizi gave a sociological reason—he thought that no laws were necessary in the early days of mankind, but by the Age of the Sages, increasing population increased pressure on the resources. He felt that this called for rulers who, in order to rule effectively should show as little benevolence as possible. He approached this argument from many directions, feeling that the people's concern for each other, which Confucian and Mohist thinking depends on, is a weak motive even at its most intense as family love.

*The mother's love for the son is twice the father's, but the father's orders to the son are ten times more effective than the mother's. The magistrate has no love for the people at all, but his orders to the people are a myriad times more effective than their fathers . . . .*

*Now of families making a livelihood, if here they are callous about each other's hunger and cold, and force each other to work hard, the family which even if they happen on the troubles of military occupation or the hardships of famine will have warm clothes and fine food is sure to be this one; if there they clothe and feed each other out of pity and let each other idle out of kindness, the family which in the famine of a bad year marries off the wife and sells the children into slavery is sure to be that one. Therefore the Way proper to the law is to be harsh at first but beneficial in the long run; the Way proper to benevolence is to be indulgent in the short run but afterwards run out of resources. The sage weighs light against heavy and extracts the most beneficial, so he employs the callousness of the law and rejects the pity of the benevolent man.”<sup>52</sup>*

Hanfeizi added:

*The Way may be compared to water; if a drowning man swallows too much he dies, if a thirsty man swallows just enough he lives. Or it may be compared to a sword or halberd; if a fool uses it to wreak revenge misfortune is born, if the sage uses it to punish crime good fortune results. So*

*"You get it to die by,  
You get it to live by.  
You get it to perish by,  
You get it to succeed by."*

[A.C. Graham comments:] *The poetic chapters "Way of the Ruler" and "the Grand Total" use a superficially paradoxical language like [the Daoist] Lao-tzu [see below] but without its ambiguities; such terms as "the Way", "empty", "still", "Doing Nothing", "so of itself", become a code with a precise meaning within the Legalist scheme.*

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<sup>52</sup> A.C. Graham; *Disputers of the Tao*; Open Air Press; 1989; pp. 277-8



*"The Way is the beginning of the myriad things,  
The skein of the right alternatives and the wrong.  
Hence the clear-sighted ruler holds fast to the beginning  
To know the source of the myriad things.  
He orders the threads in the skein  
To know the origins of good and ill.  
Therefore he waits in stillness and emptiness,  
Lets the names of themselves command,  
Lets the tasks of themselves be fixed.  
Being empty he knows the facts about the object,  
Being still he becomes corrector of the moving.  
The one who has the words, of himself makes the name;  
The one who has the task, of himself makes the shape.  
Shape and name align as the same.  
Then the ruler has no task to do, refers it to the facts."*<sup>53</sup>

Thus, this type of ruler should stay out of sight, his actions, thoughts and plans should remain a mystery, while his officials had only follow in their duties—their "shape" had to fit their "name," that is, their actions had to fit into the system based on power and not morality that would run itself for the benefit of all.

Within this system was a novel approach of combining rewards and punishment that kept officials and the people in a constant state of fear. "Shape and name aligned" meant that, for example, if subjects ranging from artisans to governors of provinces produced too little (or too much!), both they and their immediate superior were punished. This, indeed, let the ruler rule "without doing anything."

After Li and Han become high ministers in Qin, they carried out the programs initiated by Lord Shang (390-338 BC) and four centuries before them, the warfare-aimed "reforms" of Guan Zhong (720-645 BC), the chief minister of Qi who was mentioned before. That is, the State existed for war and the agricultural produce to support it so the State's needs far exceeded the needs of the population. This was a logical and natural course of action given the circumstances and the war-like aims of their neighbors—it was just that the Qin were better at it than anyone else.

[Lord Shang] . . . *commanded that the people be divided into tens and fives and that they supervise each other and be mutually liable. Anyone who failed to report criminal activity would be chopped in two at the waist, while those who reported it would receive the same reward as that for obtaining the head of an enemy. . . .*

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<sup>53</sup> Graham; p. 288

*Those who had achievements in the army would in proportion receive an increase in rank [in the twenty rank hierarchy in which the entire populace was rated]. . . .*

*Those who devoted themselves [to farming and weaving] . . . would be remitted [from taxes and corvee], while those who worked for peripheral profits [in trade and crafts] and those who were idle or poor would be confiscated as slaves. . . .*

*And he commanded that among the people, fathers, sons, and siblings should not reside together in the same house. He collected the small xiang towns into large xian and established officials for them [in order to increase the number of farms and break up village and city kinship systems].<sup>54</sup>*

As mentioned in Part One, the land he divided into square or rectangular units oriented north-south and east-west which were surrounded by footpaths still recognizable today from the air. These were of the size that one man could farm and, as Hanfeizi explained, within this system, military service was the only "gate" through which a man could leave the land and a lifetime of agricultural toil.

Because of a multiplication of severe laws and an extensive punishment system, the well-supplied prisons also provided a path of "escape," but it was to worse conditions of forced labor, most famously at the Great Wall and Qin Shihuangdi's tomb. To keep men from running away, restraints have been found by archaeologists. The simplest were heavy iron shackles that sometimes have been found to have worn down to the shoulder bone. A worse way was to affix a heavy iron collar around the neck with a long, sharp-pointed "tail" that curved in toward the bottom of the back. This forced the prisoner to keep bent forward, but not enough to prevent him from working for the rest of his life.

As for the laws, a new idea was to make them public and apply them equally and publically to all. Needless to say, the traditionalist Confucians were shocked since there was to be no separation of inferiors or superiors. In their frame of mind, the lower classes did not have the time to learn perfect ceremony and the upper classes should not have to suffer the (inhuman) punishments given the commoners. (That is, in capital cases they should be allowed to kill themselves in seclusion, a practice that was revived under the Han).

Unfortunately, the Qin royal family accepted their ministers' advice and all three of these ministers lost their lives because of the political machinations and treacheries that inevitably result from this form of government.

It is said that after humiliating a prince who later inherited the throne, Lord Shang was caught while attempting to flee because his laws required all hotel guests to register with the local officials. Much to the glee of the populace, after being tied to five horse-drawn chariots, he was torn apart.

Hanfeizi was poisoned by the jealous Lisi, whose life also ended very painfully after he was treacherously turned upon by a ruler who thought his minister

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<sup>54</sup> Lewis; p. 61

had become too powerful. This was after Lisi had helped him murderously and illegitimately ascend to the throne following the death of his father, the First Emperor Shihuangdi, had died. His own invention—the “Five Pains”—were administered to him in order. First, his nose was cut off, then a hand and a foot. This was followed by castration and what was left was then sawed in half.

Mark Lewis harshly comments:

*In this way the centralized autocracy sought to control a large population with a relatively small number of officials, but it had the paradoxical effect, as noted in the book attributed to Shang Yang, that governing the state depended on the active participation of the entire population.*

*“In regulating the state, if the judgments are made in the families then it attains the kingship; if they are made among the officials then it will be merely strong; if they are made by the ruler it will be weak .... If a criminal is invariably denounced, then the people pass judgment in their minds. If when the prince gives a command the people respond, so that the method of enforcing the law takes shape in the families and is simply carried out by the officials, then the judgments over affairs are made in the families. Therefore, with a true king reward and punishments are decided in the people’s minds, and the means of enforcing the law are decided in the families .... If it is regulated then the people judge; if it is chaotic then the prince judges. Those who regulate states deem it valuable that inferiors pass judgments. Therefore if judgments are made at the level of a unit of ten towns, then the state will be weak; if they are made at the level of five towns, then it will be strong; if they are made by the families then everything will be in abundance .... Therefore in a state which has the Way those who regulate affairs do not listen to the prince and the people do not follow the officials.”*

*This extraordinary passage, which read out of context sounds like an appeal for democracy or anarchy, expresses the ideal of the authoritarian, legalist state. Through the institutions of collective responsibility and mutual surveillance the legalists sought to fashion a people who would of their own accord enforce the legal dictates of their master. In such a political system the people would judge and punish their fellows, or more precisely, they would judge and punish those to whom they were bound through ties of kinship or common membership in the local units of collective responsibility. In the state advocated by Shang Yang a man would judge and punish those people whom he would avenge in the world of the . . . [Warring States].*<sup>55</sup>

The end result of the powerful forces that these three ministers unleashed on Chinese society is discussed in more detail in at the end of this essay when the reasons for the downfall of Qin will be looked at. Suffice it to say now that in the

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<sup>55</sup> Lewis; p. 93

end, Legalism greatly influenced the philosophical basis for the imperial form of government during the early Han dynasty as the most practical elements of Confucianism and Legalism were taken to form a synthesis, marking the creation of a new form of “top down” government that would remain largely intact until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and whose latent elements can still be seen today.

## **The School of Mozi (*Mojia*)**

Originally, as mentioned, in the early Spring and Autumn period, the *shi* were the lowest class of aristocrats and served as warriors and officials in state governments and noble houses or lived off the land, sometimes even cultivating it themselves. Confucius, who died in 479 BC, had changed all that (although he did have military training), and so, later on, following the example of Mozi who was thought to be a commoner, wealthy plebeians could be taught by the best teachers and join the emerging class of scholar-gentry—the *literati*.

Meanwhile, Mohism or Moism was developed by followers of Mozi, also referred to as Mo Di, and his teachings were a major rival of Confucianism and Legalism in the ensuing period of the One Hundred Schools of Thought. His philosophy and that of his followers rested on the idea of universal equality and universal love, that people should be treated as they would wish to be treated.

Another basic tenant was that human cognition ought to be based on what one saw and heard instead of adding abstract imaging or internal logic. Thus, when one perceived reality in terms of distinct objects and the social customs surrounding them—for example, the elaborate Confucian use of rites and music—one should be able to improve human behavior by eliminating untruthfulness and waste. This, he thought, would imitate the “Goodness of Heaven,” as opposed to the Confucian emphasis on human hierarchies, the Legalist’s suspicious repression of people and the Daoist concerns about living a “natural” life with distrust about the goodness of it all (see below).

Since their ideas were new, the Mohists had to give reasons for their thoughts and thus was born systematic philosophical argumentation. *Pien* (“argue out alternatives”) was cognate with another *pian* (“distinguish”) which became the standard term for rational discourse about which choice was the right alternative and which was the wrong one.

The decisions arrived at had to meet the criteria of the “three Gnomens” as A.C. Graham translated it. The first was the “root” that had to be discovered in the practices of the sage kings and then spoken and/or written down as one thought the sages would have expressed it. This was then put to the test of whether the “One Hundred Clans” could see and hear how it would benefit them. Only then could it be incorporated into the social fabric and the system of punishments and rewards.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> A gnomon is the pin or finger of a sundial that points to the time of day which is a never-ending process during the light of day.

This last consideration precluded the dependence on tradition. For example, the Mohists vehemently protested wastefully excessive funeral rites and the Confucian mourning period of “three years” (actually 25 months) that followed a father’s death. Understandably, they also advocated listening to music only for pleasure instead of ritual and advised even rulers to live frugally.

However, there was a strand of conservatism in Mohist thought in that they had to at least superficially posit spirits, ghosts and a Heaven that dealt out punishments and rewards based on one’s behavior. On the other hand, the Confucians could maintain that an indifferent Heaven has given us our individual “Nature” and it “watched over” earthly matters without the influence of ghosts. Thus, morality (for the nobles—the people who mattered) should be based on the peer pressure of an aristocratic code based on shame rather than guilt.

A.C. Graham pointed to the opening words of the Confucian *Doctrine of the Mean*, and wrote that they:

*. . . spell out the implications for those who remain satisfied that Heaven is on the side of human morality.*

*"It is the decreed by Heaven which is called one's 'nature', it is the course in accord with one's nature which is called the 'Way', it is training in the Way which is called 'teaching'."*<sup>57</sup>

Thus, that Heaven handed out one’s “Destiny” or “Nature” was real for the Confucians but the Mohists argued that the belief was evil because it didn’t benefit the people—if one was fated to live a long or short life and everything that implied, why try? If one was to be poor, why try to be rich and improve a country’s agricultural wealth to everyone’s benefit? If one was fated to be rich, why think about anyone or anything else in the pursuit of enjoyment? This, they argued, was how kingdoms fell apart. Moreover, since Destiny couldn’t be heard or seen, how could it exist? <sup>58</sup>

This kind of thinking ultimately resulted in the belief that offensive warfare was wasteful and that the grabbing of small states and cities by the larger ones was immoral, so the Mohists became best known as the developers of the social and technological techniques needed to defend cities under siege. These were honed into a “science” during the Warring States period by technical advisors who offered their services and did their best to make these kinds of wars unprofitable.

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<sup>57</sup> Graham; p. 108

<sup>58</sup> Graham; pp. 37-50

The centerpiece of their tremendously innovative principles was summed up in the *Mohist Canon*:

[The *Ru*, the Confucians, say that] . . . *"the gentleman follows and does not originate."*

*We answer: in ancient times Yi originated the bow, Chu armour, Hsi Chung the carriage, Ch'iao Ch'ui the boat. Does it follow that the armourers and wheelwrights of today are all gentlemen, and the four originators all vulgar men? Moreover whatever they now follow someone must have originated, so everything they follow is the Way of the vulgar man."* . . . <sup>59</sup>

However, there were divisions in Mohist thought, although all of them believed that rulers should be obeyed. There were "purists" when and where it was possible; "compromisers" who didn't mention peasants and workers because they were seeking employment in courts. Also, in the southern state of Chu there were "primitive reactionaries" because this was the last state to give up the principle of hereditary office—meritocracy being one of the chief and over-riding Northern Mohist concerns.

Ultimately, Mozi's criticisms resulted in a changing and softening of Confucian attitudes towards language and war, however, when the wars ended with the victories of the Qin and then the Han, popular faith in Mohism faded. Nevertheless, its views were strongly echoed in some aspects of Legalist thought—for example, the need for meritocracy in the formation of a strong state where subjects obeyed their rulers, but who, in turn, were subject to changes of the Will of Heaven.

However, their enduring legacy lay in their writings that have survived. They constitute the first attempts at "science" in China and they come from the later writings in the *Mohist Canon* which were very different than those purportedly written by Mozi himself. The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* explains:

*. . . Written and compiled most likely between the late 4th and mid 3rd century B.C. . . . the "Neo-Mohist" canons . . . [and] their accompanying Explanations, and other later Mohist writings are among the most important texts in the history of Chinese ethics, philosophy of language, epistemology, logic, and science. They present elements of a sophisticated semantic theory, epistemology, consequentialist ethics, and theory of analogical argumentation, along with intriguing discussions of causality, space and time, and mereological ontology. Also recorded are inquiries in such diverse fields as geometry, mechanics, optics, and economics. . . . the later Mohists decisively refute the once widespread view that ancient Chinese thinkers were concerned exclusively with ethics, moral psychology, and nature mysticism and uninterested in language, epistemology, and logic.* <sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Graham; p. 38

<sup>60</sup> <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/mohist-canon>



To round out the description of the *Mohist Canon*, in *Names and Objects II* it is explained how they constructed their arguments using parallelization rather than logic (as we know it). (More on this subject will be discussed in the section on Rhetoric).

A.C. Graham first quotes the *Canon*:

*... "Illustrating" is referring to another thing to make it clearer.  
"Parallelising" is putting sentences side by side and letting all proceed.  
"Adducing" is saying "If it is so in your case, why may it not be so in mine too?"  
"Inferring" is using something in which the one he rejects is the same as those he accepts to make him accept the former."*

*But neither here nor in his art of argumentation (which does claim logical necessity) is the Mohist interested in establishing logical forms. He lays out his parallels, not in a fumbling search for the syllogism, but to show where the mutability of words in different combinations vitiates inferences, by false parallelism in the descriptions from which the inferences start. It is this which gives much of Names and Objects its curiously Wittgensteinian look. The resemblance to Wittgenstein is not altogether fanciful, if we think of Western and Chinese thought as moving in opposite directions past the same place. The West, after seeking necessary truths by logic for some 2,000 years, becomes aware of questionable assimilations and differentiations behind the formulation of the questions themselves, and discovers that instead of refuting a proposition you can undermine it by uncovering implicit paradigms and unnoticed distinctions. One might say that the West is now venturing out of logic into the Mohist art of discourse, which does not pretend to logical necessity. Chinese philosophising on the other hand, conducted in a language without the morphological distinctions which call attention to the logical relations in sentence structure, is very aware of discourse as a patterning of like and unlike in which the most visible danger to thought is from false parallels. The Mohist therefore develops procedures for testing description, but when he goes on to the argumentation which does have logical necessity he sees that as a quite separate discipline, in which the clarity and inevitability of every step makes it unnecessary to lay down procedures.*<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Graham; p. 155

## The School of *Yin-Yang*

Sometimes called the School of Naturalists, its proponents explained the cycles of the universe in terms of the basic forces of nature: the revolving, complementary agents of *yin* (dark, cold, female, negative) and *yang* (light, hot, male, positive), and later, the Five Elements or Five Phases (water, fire, wood, metal, and earth) which produce or overcome one another. Thus, as will be explored later, everything from the workings of the body to historical change to everything else in the ancient Chinese universe are related to each another in terms of the balance or imbalance these entities.

Robin R. Wang in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* adds:

*According to . . . [Sima Tan], this school focused on omens of luck and explored the patterns of the four seasons. In other words, the yinyang school was concerned with methods of divination or astronomy (disciplines that were not distinct from one another in early China, as elsewhere in the ancient world) and the calendrical arts (which entailed study of the four seasons, eight locations, twelve du [measures] and twenty-four shijie [time periods]). Just as the Confucians (rujia) arose from the ranks of rushi ("scholar-gentlemen") who excelled at ritual and music, those of the yingyang school came from the fangshi ("recipe-gentlemen") who specialized in various numerological disciplines known as shushu ("number-arts") [and were from Shangdong, the home of Confucius]. These shushu included tianwen (astronomy), lipu (calendar-keeping), wuxing ("five phases" correlative theory), zhuguai (tortoise-shell divination), zazha (fortune-telling) and xingfa (face-reading). The Han dynasty chronicle Shiji (Records of the Historian) lists Zou Yan (305-240 BCE) as a representative of the yinyang school who possessed a profound knowledge of the theory of yinyang and wrote about a hundred thousand words on it. However, none of his works have survived.*<sup>62</sup>

Details of the system of *Yin-Yang* and its School are in Appendix III and later in this essay.

## The School of Names (*Mingjia*)

The seven (or eight) scholars who composed the School of Names or Logicians were not really a "school" since each acted independently and are known, with one exception, only through other texts. Because reflection on language in ancient China centered on "names" (*ming*—words) and their relation to "stuff" (*shi*—objects, events, situations), 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. Han dynasty archivists dubbed these thinkers the "School of Names." However, to their contemporaries, they were known as "the Disputers."

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<sup>62</sup> <http://www.iep.utm.edu/yinyang>

Yet another name, "Sophists," has been applied in the West for these thinkers since both groups were active when the new tool of reason came about in early China and Greece. In their way of thinking, because of the relationship between words and objects, anything could be proven. The paradoxical results or "sophistries" of both were on the one hand frivolous and on the other, of lasting philosophical significance.

*The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* explains that:

*The disputers' focal activity appears to have been a form of public debate or persuasion called "disputation" or "distinction drawing" (bian), which often took place in the court of a regional lord or a state sovereign. Disputation appears to have been rooted partly in the practice of litigation, partly in the rhetoric used by court advisors in the "explanations" (shuo, also "persuasions") through which they tried to influence political policy. Primarily a type of analogical argumentation, disputation, like much legal rhetoric, often took the form of citing a precedent, analogy, or model (fa, also "law") and explaining why the case at hand should be treated similarly or not.*

*Disputation could be pursued for a variety of ends, some extolled by ancient writers, some condemned. Constructively, it could be a means of clarifying and defending the right way (dao). Through it, one could lead others to distinguish shi/fei (this/not-this, right/wrong) correctly and thus obtain knowledge . . .*<sup>63</sup>

Later on, in what remains of their writings, their disputes turned to four themes that appeared in such linguistic conundrums as Gungson Long's (325-250 BC) proposal: "A white horse is not a horse." (Or is it? This has been argued about for over 2000 years and their linguistic themes became catch-phrases. This will be discussed later).

In the *Zhuangzi*, Gungson referred to three of them:

*When young, I studied the way of the former kings. When I grew up, I understood the practice of kindness and duty. I united the same and different [the different but inseparable features of the same object], separated hard from white [the two things or two features of a thing or an event that are inseparable such length and width; space and duration], made so the not-so and admissible the inadmissible [by ignoring conventional language, judgments, morality, and courtesies in speech and actions]. I confounded the wits of the hundred schools and exhausted the eloquence of countless speakers. I took myself to have reached the ultimate.*<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/school-names>

<sup>64</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gongsun\\_Long](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gongsun_Long)

The Disputers attacked the weak point in Mohist thinking concerning the separation of things. For example, the last moment of life is the first moment of death. As for the White Horse Argument, if, as Chad Hansen has pointed out, "horse" is an uncountable mass noun (such as "sand" and "water") then instead of a class/member separation, it becomes a whole/part separation in which "White" and "Horse" become parts—"Horse" is a shape and "White" is a color and the two cannot be separated. Thus, a "white horse" is not a "horse."

Looked at another way, this created a serious problem for the Confucian doctrine of one-name-for-one-thing because white horses are neither just White or Horse, but distinct sorts of objects. Following along this argument, the Mohists had to argue that since between two things there are always similarities and differences, therefore the world is one body, therefore we should love all things equally.

And, "tongue in cheek," Zhuangzi (369-286 BC) might have had the last word:

*Rather than use the horse to show a horse is not a horse, use what is not a horse.*<sup>65</sup>

## **The Schools of (Philosophical) Daoism (*Daojia*)**

The following is a quick preview of some of what will be dealt with later about Daoism.

As opposed to its later, more mystical forms, what is now called "Philosophical Daoism" developed into the second most significant stream of Chinese thought next to Confucianism. The principals of its initial formulation began in the Shang and Zhou dynasties with the *Daodejing*, and the *Zhouyi*, which later became the *Yijing* or *Book of Changes*. It was then further developed in the *Laozi* which is often attributed to Laozi, ("the Old Master" or "Mister Lao"), perhaps a contemporary, or even a teacher of Confucius. On the other hand, perhaps "Laozi" never existed and his work was composed by many writers over a period of time since its earliest rendition dates only from c. 250 BC. Thus, although it appears as a "book" in translations, as A.C. Graham commented, it has a few coherent chapters and the rest looks like it was spoken by someone who had forgotten what he was saying.<sup>66</sup>

A leading Daoist scholar, Chad Hansen, sums up the "way" of Daoist thinking:

*[It] . . . consists of wise, obvious, or well-known sayings that take the traditional Confucian distinctions and flip-flop the preference ordering. When conventional wisdom normally invites us to value you ("have"), Laozi invites us to reflect on the value of wu ("lack"). Where all previous daos [i.e. of Confucius and Mozi] have agreed in advocating ren ("benevolence"), he notes that heaven is not*

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<sup>65</sup> Graham; pp. 75-90

<sup>66</sup> See Graham; pp. 215-235 for details.

*benevolent. Where all conventional daos inevitably stress purposive action and involvement, [i.e. yang methods] his sayings illustrate the wisdom of quietude: wu-wei ("lacks deed: do") [i.e. yin]. Where conventional value assignments favor [the male,] the upper, the strong, the wise, the dominant, Laozi's sayings help us appreciate the value of [the female,] the lower, the weak, the ignorant, the submissive.*<sup>67</sup>

Daoist thought was said by Sima Qian to have been further developed by Zhuangzi in the *Zhuangzi*, although there are many questions regarding the actual authorship or authorships.<sup>68</sup>

In any case, while the Confucians concentrated on how one should think, speak and act according to one's position in society, the Daoists considered how people should speak and think (Laozi) and live and act (Zhuangzi) purely within Nature with the goal to adjust and adapt to nature's rhythms. In other words, one should conceive and follow in thought and speech and achieve in action *dao* ("guides" or "ways"), or, as we write about it incorrectly in the West, by imitating the *Dao* (the "Way" with a capital "D" and "W") of the universe. This will be discussed later.

The reason there were many "ways" was because the Daoists were relativists who did not trust the ability of people to know the Truth or that there was even a Truth to be known. It wasn't that the senses could not be trusted, but it was what was said about the things and situations the senses encountered and how they were named that couldn't be trusted. Names change over time (Laozi) and so does everything else (Zhuangzi)—summer turns into winter, rivers turn into desert, kings come and go, and change can happen to everything.

A.C. Graham postulates further:

*Chuang-tzu is traditionally classed as the second great Taoist, after Lao-tzu, the supposed contemporary of Confucius. However, the book Lao-tzu is unattested until about 250 B.C., much later than the King Hui of Liang (370-319 B.C.) who had Chung-tzu's friend Hui Shih as minister. Moreover the two books differ considerably in thought, and it was some time before they came to be classed together. Chuang-tzu is the one ancient collection of writings of and for outsiders who preferred private life to office, while Lao-tzu, although attractive to the same readership, presents itself as another guide to the art of rulership. The two names were not at first associated; Hsun-tzu mentions them separately in different lists of philosophers and the classification of five schools in the "Below in the Empire" chapter of Chuang-tzu puts them apart in fourth and fifth places. The Taoist school, like all the others except the Confucian and Mohist, is a retrospective creation, and*

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<sup>67</sup> Chad Hansen; *A Daoist Theory of Chinese Thought*; Oxford Univ. Press; 1992 p. 223 See also

<http://www0.hku.hk/philodep/ch/index.html>

<sup>68</sup> See the Wikipedia article for details <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhuangzi>

*the most confusing of them all.*<sup>69</sup>

Elsewhere, Graham mused:

*This poet [Lao-tzu] is not, like Lucretius or Dante, the versifier of a philosophy borrowed from elsewhere. His interweaving of metaphors, water, valley, root, gate, mother, with Way itself as only another of them, is not the illustration of abstract thoughts, it is the thinking itself. Lao-tzu is the masterpiece of a kind of intelligence at the opposite pole from the logical. It concentrates instead of explicating, starkly juxtaposes instead of filling in gaps; a "therefore" or "this is why", almost arbitrarily placed, is no more than a signal that there is action at a distance between the aphorisms however disconnected. At the root of the thinking, pervading this book of evasions and retreats disguised by a pseudonym, is one dominant emotion, fear. In Lao-tzu we are breathing an air very different from the perfect fearlessness of Chuang-tzu ("the test that one holds fast to the Beginning is the fact of not being afraid"). The pressing concern is with how the small state and the small man survive in a world of murderously competing powers. It is in searching for a pattern in things which opens a prospect of eluding danger that the author finds his own approach to the two great concepts for which each school has its own interpretation, the Way the sage walks and the Potency in him which empowers him to walk it. Like Chuang-tzu he holds that we discover the Way by abandoning the prescribed courses of conduct which Confucians and others try to formulate in words, unlearning the rigid divisions fixed by names, and training the spontaneous harmonising of the ch'i which sets us on the course of heaven, earth and the myriad things which are "so of themselves". This position sets both thinkers the problem of finding a language adequate to deal with a fluid whole with which we lose touch in dividing ourselves from it by the distinguishing, naming, and immobilisation of parts. To cope with it Chuang-tzu moves freely between many styles, Lao-tzu perfects just one.*<sup>70</sup>

Graham continues his observations:

*The mystical statecraft of Lao-tzu quickly attracted the attention of the Legalists and already influenced Han Fei (died 233 B.C.). Of the varieties of Lao-tzu-centered syncretism competing for acceptance at court from the use of Han in 206 B.C. the most influential at first was called "Huang-Lao" after Lao-tzu and the Yellow Emperor (Huang-ti). Little was known of it until the discovery in an early Han tomb at Ma-wang-tui of a manuscript Lao-tzu with the attached documents connected with the Yellow Emperor. With this new evidence we can recognise the doctrine as a fusion of Legalism with the teaching of Lao-tzu, the latter still not*

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<sup>69</sup> Graham.; p. 170

<sup>70</sup> Graham; p. 218-9



*associated with Chuang-tzu. Since the Yellow Emperor was the legendary inventor of the state and of war (denounced as such in certain chapters of Chuang-tzu) he was presumably chosen to give ancient authority to the Legalist strand.*

*With the classification of the Six Schools by the court historiographer Ssu-ma T'an (died 110 B.C.) [see below] we arrive at last at the Taoist School, the Tao-chia—the "school of the Way". The historiographer, who prefers it to the other schools, evidently understands by it the Lao-tzu-centered syncretism of his own time. As a court official he is classifying schools by their respective advantages and disadvantages as guides to statecraft, and he would not be counting Chuang-tzu among the thinkers who really matter. However, with the full apportioning of philosophers among a finite number of schools there would be no room for Chuang-tzu except in the Taoist, and this is where he appears in the bibliographical chapter of the Han History [the Han Shu which comes after the categorization by Sima Tan (165-110 BC) that is discussed below]. The fang shih "men of secret arts" who, using the Yin-Yang cosmology, were promising Emperors the secret of immortality, would be classed by Ssu-ma T'an not as Taoist but as "school of Yin and Yang." It seems however that Huang-Lao was already absorbing Yin-Yang, and that the appeals to the Yellow Emperor and Lao-tzu throughout the later literature of alchemy, medicine, and magic go back to this period, when these names carried special authority at court. That the tendencies gathering around Lao-tzu were coming to centre on the elixir of life implies that Chuang-tzu was still seen as marginal, reconciliation with death being at the very heart of his philosophy. It is from about A.D. 200, with the breakdown of the Han and a new period of political disunion and disillusion, that the School of the Way ceases to be judged primarily by its relevance to government, and Chuang-tzu comes into his own. From this time Chuang-tzu with the commentary of Kuo Hsiang (died c. A.D. 312) stands in the classical literature beside Lao-tzu with the commentary of Wang Pi (A.D. 226-249) as one of the classics of philosophical Taoism. [This will be discussed below].*

*In the sub-culture despised by the literati, the fusion of Huang-Lao and Yin-Yang mingling with folk belief generated the popular religion called Tao-chiao "Doctrine of the Way", the foundation of which by Chang Tao-ling is traditionally dated to A.D. 142. Here we do find a persisting organisation, not indeed a philosophical school, but a church of which the sects to the present day trace their ancestry to Chang Tao-ling. Michel Strickmann has proposed to clear away confusions by confining the label "taoist" to this religion, which was long dismissed by scholars as a degenerate descendant of the noble philosophy of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu, but is nowadays studied on its own terms as the indigenous religion of China over nearly two millennia.*

*Beyond the generalisation that since the victory about 100 B.C. of Confucianism, which is public, respectable, conventional and practical, that other side of Chinese culture which is private, disreputable, magical, spontaneous, poetic, has tended to cohere around the name of Lao-tzu, it would be pointless to look for features common to everything called Taoism.*

*. . . [However they] do share one basic insight, that while other things*

*move spontaneously on the course proper to them, man has separated himself from the Way by reflecting, proposing alternatives, and formulating principles of action. This has generally impressed Westerners as the most remarkable, the most distinctively Chinese of exportable thoughts of ancient China.*<sup>71</sup>

## Yang Zhu

Yang Zhu is thought to have lived in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and is known only through the words of his enemies, such as Mencius. His dialogues were part of the accumulated works in the *Liezi* of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>72</sup> If his writings are authentic, he was the first to talk about human nature (*xing*) in a philosophical way.

A.C. Graham relates:

*It is the nature of water to be clear, mud dirties it, so it fails to be clear. It is man's nature to live out his term; other things disturb him, so he fails to live out his term. A "thing" is a means to nourish one's nature, not something one uses one's nature to nourish. Of the confused among the people of this age, most are using their natures to nourish other things, which is failing to know the weighty from the light. If you don't know the weighty from the light, the weighty is deemed light and the light weighty. . . .*

*"Therefore the sage's attitude to sounds, sights and tastes is that when beneficial to his nature he chooses them, when harmful to his nature he refuses them. This is the Way of "keeping one's nature intact."*<sup>73</sup>

Earlier in *Disputers*, Graham gave some background:

*The Analects has several stories of Confucius meeting hermits who refuse to contribute to good government by taking office. These may be later dramatisations of an issue which had not yet arisen in Confucius' time, but a shirking of what for Confucians, Mohists, and later for Legalists is the responsibility of all who are of the knightly class is increasingly common from at latest the 4th century B.C. Two tendencies to withdrawal from politics to private life are discernible throughout the age of the philosophers. On the one hand we have the moralistic hermit who retires to plough his own fields in protest against the corruption of the times, and clings to his principles even if the price is starvation or suicide. On the other we have the man who simply prefers the comforts of private life to the burdens and perils of the increasingly murderous struggle for power and possessions. A syncretistic writer in Chuang-tzu classifying five ways of life damaging to good government sharply distinguishes the two types, as his second and fourth categories.*

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<sup>71</sup> Graham; pp. 170-2

<sup>72</sup> <http://www.sacred-texts.com/tao/ycgp/index.htm>

<sup>73</sup> Graham; pp. 56-7

*"To have finicky ideas and superior conduct, to be estranged from the age and different from the vulgar, to discourse loftily and criticise vindictively, interested only in being high-minded—such are the tastes of the hermits of mountain and valley, the condemners of the age, who wither away or drown themselves ....*

*"To head for the woods and moors, settle in an untroubled wilderness, angle for fish and live untroubled, interested only in doing nothing—such are the tastes of the recluses of the riverside and seaside, the shunners of the age, the untroubled idlers."*

*The image of an untroubled idler fishing in the river rather suggests Chuang-tzu himself. But before the rise of Taoism, and to some extent right down to 200 BC, the name associated with the second tendency is Yang Chu.<sup>74</sup>*

Will Durant, writing in *Our Oriental Heritage: The Story of Civilization* summed up Yang's arguments which, for many, seemed to be a logical answer to the chaos of the times:

*Life is full of suffering, and . . . its chief purpose is pleasure. There is no god and no after-life; men are the helpless puppets of the blind natural forces that made them, and that gave them their unchosen ancestry and their inalienable character. The wise man will accept this fate without complaint, but will not be fooled by all the nonsense of Confucius and Mozi about inherent virtue, universal love, and a good name: morality is a deception practised upon the simple by the clever; universal love is the delusion of children, who do not know the universal enmity that forms the law of life; and a good name is a posthumous bauble which the fools who paid so dearly for it cannot enjoy. In life the good suffer like the bad, and the wicked seem to enjoy themselves more keenly than the good. The wisest men of antiquity were not moralists or rulers as Confucius supposed, but sensible sensualists who had the good fortune to antedate the legislatures and philosophers, and who enjoyed the pleasures of every impulse. It is true that the wicked sometimes leave a bad name behind them, but this is a matter that does not disturb their bones. . . .<sup>75</sup>*

Yang goes on to discuss how honorable men like Yu, Shun and Confucius all suffered in their lives but were remembered later as great men, whereas rich men like Zhou Xin and Jie were profligate dissipaters who thoroughly enjoyed their inherited wealth and power and have been reviled through the ages.

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<sup>74</sup> Graham; pp. 53-4

<sup>75</sup> Will Durant; *Our Oriental Heritage: The Story of Civilization* (Vol. 1); MJF Books; 1963; p. 681

In a famous, imagined dialogue, Yang gave "Robber Zhi" a diatribe to conclude his argument against Confucius:

*Now let me tell you what man essentially is. The eyes desire to look on beauty, the ears to listen to music, the mouth to discern flavours, intent and energy to find fulfillment. Long life for man is at most a hundred years, at the mean eighty, at the least sixty; excluding sickness and hardship, bereavement and mourning, worries and troubles, the days left to us to open our mouths in a smile will in the course of a month be four or five at most. Heaven and earth are boundless, man's death has its time; when he takes up that life provided for a time to lodge in the midst of the boundless, his passing is as sudden as a thoroughbred steed galloping past a chink in the wall. Whoever cannot gratify his intents and fancies and find nurture for the years destined for him, is not the man who has fathomed the Way.*

*"Everything you say I reject. Away with you, quick, run back home, not a word more about it. Your Way is a crazy obsession, a thing of deception, trickery, vanity, falsehood. It will not serve to keep the genuine in us intact, what is there to discuss?"<sup>76</sup>*

### **Primitive Daoism**

A branch of Daoism which looked back to the thinking of Shen Nong, a semi-mythical predecessor to the thoughts of Laozi, emphasized the negative value of language, saying that it sets up the institutions that organize our societies which enslave us, so the answer is to live in small, isolated farming communities at peace with nature and ourselves. (Shen Nong was also a god who taught people agriculture).

However, the Primitive Daoists, or rather the person who wrote the "Primitivist" chapter in the *Zhuangzi* in the chaotic period that followed the collapse of the Qin empire, had much different ideas. The following lyrical description is from Lin Yutang's translation:

*. . . So in the days of perfect nature, men were quiet in their movements and serene in their looks. At that time, there were no paths over mountains, no boats or bridges over waters. All things were produced each in its natural district. Birds and beasts multiplied; trees and shrubs thrived. Thus it was that birds and beasts could be led by the hand, and one could climb up and peep into the magpie's nest. For in the days of perfect nature, man lived together with birds and beasts, and there was no distinction of their kind. Who could know of the distinctions between gentlemen and common people? Being all equally without knowledge, their virtue could not go astray. Being all equally without desires, they were in a state of natural integrity. In this state of natural integrity, the people did not lose their (original) nature. And*

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<sup>76</sup> Graham; p. 64

*then when the Sages appeared, crawling for charity and limping with duty, doubt and confusion entered men's minds. They said they must make merry by means of music and enforce distinctions by means of ceremony, and the empire became divided against itself. Were the uncarved wood not cut up, who could make sacrificial vessels? Were white jade left uncut, who could make the regalia of courts? Were Tao and virtue not destroyed, what use would there be for charity and duty? Were men's natural instincts not lost, what need would there be for music and ceremonies? Were the five colors not confused, who would need decorations? Were the five notes not confused, who would adopt the six pitch-pipes? Destruction of the natural integrity of things for the production of articles of various kinds—this is the fault of the artisan. Destruction of Tao and virtue in order to introduce charity and duty—this is the error of the Sages. . . . [In the early days,] the people did nothing in particular at their homes and went nowhere in particular in their walks. Having food, they rejoiced; tapping their bellies, they wandered about. Thus far the natural capacities of the people carried them.*<sup>77</sup>

However, the Legalist interpretation of Laozi, in what I would call “the paradox of Daoism,” ended up with the same goal of attaining peace in the kingdom by keeping the people “ignorant with full stomachs” so that therefore they would be “without doubts.”

### **Military Daoism (*Bingjia* or *Guidao*)**

This school will be discussed in greater detail in the next section. What follows here is only meant to contrast it to the rest of the schools.

Sometimes known as the “Dark School of Daoism,” the “Way of Deceit,” or the “Left-handed Way,” the *Bingjia* (“*Bing* means “swords” implying “infantry,” “*Gui*” means “deceitful” and “*Dao*” means “school”) was a branch of Daoism whose writings emphasized Daoist “yinnish” attitudes, principles and ways of thought as a way to successfully wage war and by implication, to succeed in one’s affairs whether they involved business, politics or even love.

The military writings were in their own “philosophical” category in the early bibliographies.<sup>78</sup> However, as time passed, they came to be considered penurious forgeries and their down play was not surprising, considering that the Han (and all later) emperors were interested in preserving their hegemony by separating the spheres of *wen* (the civil) from *wu* (the military)—the latter being considered unfit for cultured men to study (hence, as will be examined later, the intense playing of go by the armchair generals of the *literati* using the military strategies).

This attitude was first fostered by the semi-mystic, ruler-worship Huang-Lao cult of the top Han officials and especially by the short-lived Wang Bi (226-249), just after that dynasty’s fall. He tried to mold the Daoism of the *Daodejing* into an

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<sup>77</sup> <http://www.vl-site.org/taoism/cz-list.html>

<sup>78</sup> See <http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Diverse/bingjia.html> for a complete list and explanation

acceptable form for the Confucians and his rulers, for example, by reversing the order of its political and moral teachings, and thereby making it easier to portray philosophical Daoism as mystical, paradoxical, nonsensical and incomprehensible. Thus, there are many factors that have led to distortions, even for the Chinese, of what Daoism is really all about and which this essay will attempt, in the next section, at least in part, to correct.

Meanwhile, the teachings of the Dark Daoists lived on with “the people” through the theater, novels, poetry, and now TV and movies and became the basis for dealing with those one didn’t trust and the principles behind all subsequent Chinese revolts, including that of the recent Falun Gong.

On the other hand, the Han installed a pope-like figure to lead a Daoist “church” by his dreams, which is the type of Daoism commonly found in the temples of the Chinese Diaspora and in Taiwan—the type that features trips to the underworld by priests in trances to advise those who are unsure of what to do, where to bury a relative and how to make money.

## **Four Schools of the *Hanshu***

Demonstrating the complexity of early Chinese thought, the *Hanshu*, (*The Book of Han*), written in part by Ban Gu (32-92) and completed in 110 AD, listed four more schools.

### **The School of Diplomacy**

or

### **The School of Vertical and Horizontal Alliances**

This group specialized in political and diplomatic tactics without assuming any moral principles, therefore they emphasized debating and lobbying skills. The members of this School sometimes played a decisive role in political decisions and were described as extremely powerful and capable, constantly struggling to manipulate the situations they found themselves in because, along with the military judgments, the ever-shifting elements of bribery, deceit, treachery, hostage taking and releasing always had to be taken into consideration.

Following the theme that war is only an extension of politics as detailed in the *Annals of the Warring States Period*, a rhetoric-based account of the plotting strategies, the Horizontal alliance that was seen in Part One was dominated by Qin (“The one strong side to smash the weak multitude”) and the Vertical was composed of Qi, Chu, Yan, Han, Zhao and Wei (“The weak multitude against the one strong side”).



## **The School of Miscellany**

This School integrated the meritorious teachings from different schools while trying to avoid their perceived flaws.

## **The School of Small Talk**

It consisted of the thoughts discussed by people on the street which were written down and reported by Han government officials.

## **The School of the Agriculturalists**

They advocated peasant communalism in small fiefdoms governed by kings who would earn their keep by tilling their own fields rather than plundering their subjects. They looked back to a Golden Age during which Shen Nong became the second of three “sovereigns” c. 5000 BC. First mentioned around 400 BC, and also admired by the Primitive Daoists, he was known as the father of agriculture. This was part of a process of inventing or adopting prehistoric emperors that represented new philosophical or political ideals—Confucius had introduced Yao and Shun, not mentioned previously, to be the predecessor of Yu who founded the Xia dynasty. (The more practical Mohists, who had followed along with this belief, later switched back to Yu, the drainer of floods).

There are many variations in the royal lines of succession and their stories, but before or at the beginning of the Shen Nong period people were said to live in trees at night for fear of animals, to not know clothing so they had to save wood for the winters, picked chestnuts and acorns for food and, although they knew their mothers, they did not know their fathers. Shen Nong apparently solved those problems but he created others so a third Emperor had to be added.

Lord Shang, the Legalist, around 240 BC explained in his own terms:

*In the age of Shen-nung, [the people] . . . were fed by the ploughing of the men, clothed by the weaving of the women; he ruled without the use of punishments and administration, he reigned without resorting to weapons and armour. When Shen-nung died, they took advantage of strength to conquer the weak, of numbers to oppress the few. Therefore the Yellow Emperor instituted the formalities of ruler and minister and of superior and inferior, the ceremonies for father and son and for elder and younger, the union of couples as husband and wife. At home he put to work the executioner's axe, abroad he employed weapons and armour. So it was a change in the times. Seen from this viewpoint, it is not that Shen-nung was loftier than the Yellow Emperor; that his name is none the less honoured was because he was suited to his times.*<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Graham; p. 73

## Changing Over Time: The Passage from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Centuries BC

"From Social to Metaphysical Crisis: Heaven Parts From Man" was the title of Part II of A.C. Graham's *Disputers of the Tao*, the classic work of its kind. There he wrote:

[Towards the end of the 4th century B.C, the] *trends which we have so far considered may be seen as responses not to philosophical but to social crisis, Confucians from the old knightly class trying to renovate the old order, Mohists entering it from the crafts formulating a program for the new, hermits disillusioned with politics experimenting with a social Utopia or developing a rationale for withdrawal to private life. Already however the sharpening of controversy has generated Sophists fascinated by logical puzzles, and Sung Hsing has been moved by the problems of converting rulers to attend to the inside of man.*

[Thus,] . . . *we begin to find ourselves in a quite different intellectual climate. The Confucians, who had seemed incapable of debating any issue more momentous than "Did Kuan Chung understand ceremony?", are now obsessed by the question whether human nature is morally good, or a mixture of good and bad, or neutral, or good in some but bad in others. The Mohists, who had been content to judge a heterogeneous mixture of moral and political issues by a utilitarian rule-of-thumb, are using the tools of the Sophists to build a utilitarian ethical system which will be logically impregnable. Chuang-tzu, who seems to have begun as a Yangist with the simple aim of protecting his own life, is seeking a view of man's place in the cosmos which will reconcile him to death. At the back of all three is a profound metaphysical doubt, as to whether Heaven is after all on the side of human morality. Mencius as a Confucian tries to dissolve it by confirming that the nature with which we have been generated by Heaven is indeed morally good; the Later Mohists escape it by shifting the justification of morality from appeal to Heaven's Intent to a priori demonstration; Chuang-tzu welcomes it, and throws away all conventional conceptions of the good for an ecstatic surrender to the spontaneity which irradiates us from Heaven.*

[Now the] *dichotomy of Heaven and man is one of the constants of Chinese thought. Whatever is within the control of deliberate action derives from man, whatever comes from outside it derives from Heaven.*<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Graham; p. 107

## Several Hundred Years Later: Sima Tan's Thoughts While He Organized the "Schools" for Posterity

Besides working on the *Yaozhi*, a sweeping history of China that was completed by his son, Qian, part of Sima Tan's program was to try to unify and make coherent the philosophical spectrum of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods before the Qin emperor simply reduced all the bickering to one point of view—his own.

The usefulness of Sima's endeavor is evident in the confusion of the Mohist writer Lu Buwei (291?-235 BC) in the 239 BC *Lushichunqiu*, a great compendium of all knowledge assembled by him and a large group of scholars.<sup>81</sup> Lu wrote:

*If one listens to the views of the many, then there is no day that the state will be free of danger. How to know who is right? Lao Dan (Laozi) values the soft, Confucius values humanity, Mo Di values the inexpensive, Guan Yin values clarity, Zi Liezi [a Daoist] values vacuity, Chen Pian values things equally, Yang Sheng [Yang Zhu] values himself, [and of the military writers] Sun Bin values strategic configuration, Wang Liao values being ahead, Ni Liang values being behind. . . .*

[Recalling a passage of the *Sunzi*, he continues:] *To unify the ears [of one's troops], use metal drums. To unify their minds, make standards and commands the same. To unify their intelligence, keep the wise from being crafty and the stupid from being clumsy. To unify their strength, keep the brave from going ahead and the cowardly from lagging behind.*<sup>82</sup>

Keep in mind that the *Lushi* named people and not movements or "schools"—in his time only the Ru (Confucians) and the Mo (Mohists) were considered to be affiliated groupings. Sima Tan looked at the matter differently because he was trying to show his ruler how to fashion a national belief system for the new Han dynasty that would ensure that internal wars would not reappear. Thus, he chose the politically relevant parts of the philosophical traditions represented by these men (but not mentioning them by name except for Mo Di), rejected others, and gave these configurations six names in which all significant knowledge had been included or excluded.

He also noted that each grouping had split into many factions, none of which could claim to be the true inheritance of, for example, the thoughts of Confucius and Mozi who had been dead for centuries. This was even less so of Yao and Shun, the

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<sup>81</sup> It was meant as instruction for a universal ruler and perhaps he was following the advice of his friend, the Legalist Lisi. Both became chancellors of Qin, but both of their lives were terminated by royal decree before the Qin king became the universal ruler of all of China.

<sup>82</sup> Kidder Smith; "Sima Tan and the Invention of Daoism, "Legalism," "et cetera";

*The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 62, No. 1 (Feb., 2003); 129-156; p. 132

See John Knoblock and Jeffrey Riegel.; *The Annals of Lü Buwei: A Complete Translation and Study*; Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press; 2000

two sage exemplars of *dao* who, if they ever lived, had been dead for thousands of years.

The material presented comes from "Sima Tan and the Invention of Daoism, 'Legalism,' *et cetera*," an essay by Kidder Smith. Sima Tan begins by discussing *Yin-Yang* adherents and the following selections are Smith's translations from the *Shiji*.

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*Benightedly I have observed the techniques of the Yinyang. They emphasize omens and multiply taboos and prohibitions. They cause people to be constrained and increase their fears. But their ordering of the great sequence of the four seasons must not be lost.*

In his auto-commentary, Sima Tan relates:

*Now, yin-and-yang, the four seasons, the eight directions, the twelve asterisms, the twenty-four solar nodes, each has its instructions and orders. Those who go along with this sequence prosper. Those who go against it, even if they do not die they will be lost. But it is not necessarily so. Thus I said, "they cause people to be constrained and increase their fears."*

*Now, in spring things are born, in summer they grow, in autumn they are harvested, in winter they are stored. This is the great warp of heaven's dao. If one does not go in sequence with this, then there will be nothing from which to make the great webbing of all-under-heaven. Thus I said, "the great sequence of the four seasons must not be lost."*

The Confucians came next.

*The Ru . . . are wide ranging but with few of the essentials. They labor but to small result. Hence their programs are difficult to follow completely. But their ordering of the rites of sovereign and minister, father and son and their arrangement of the distinctions between husband and wife, old and young must not be changed.*

The auto-commentary reads:

*Now, the Ru take the Six Classics as their model. The texts and commentaries of the Six Classics number in the thousands and tens of thousands [of words]. In several generations one could not get through their teachings; in one's whole lifetime one could not fully investigate their rites. Thus I said, "Wide ranging but with few of the essentials, laboring but to small result." But if one would "arrange the rites of sovereign and minister, father and son, and order the distinctions of*

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<sup>83</sup> Smith; pp. 129-156

*husband and wife, old and young," then even the many wise men could not change it.*

Kidder Smith comments:

*As either a historical or intellectual summary of the Ru, this passage would receive very low marks. For example, the scope of li (ritual, ceremony, etiquette) is severely restricted, while another characteristic Ruhist doctrine, renyi (humanity and duty), is entirely absent.*

*No Ru, of course, would accept this as a positive description of his project. While there never seems to have been an organization of yinyang practitioners, we might reasonably speak of Warring States and Han Ru as forming self-conscious collectivities with teachers, lineage, texts, etc. These Ru are not at all what Tan has in mind. Instead, he has selected a few ideas originating in those groups and represented them as one of his six configurations. Thus in an important way Tan's Ru are as synthetic, and as novel, as his Yinyang configuration. In both cases, he has taken a term with a centuries-old history and given it a new referent. The fact that his reduction is so radical suggests the extent to which these labels were up for appropriation in early Han China.*

Sima continues:

*The Mo . . . are too frugal to be easily followed. Hence their projects cannot be observed in every respect. But their strengthening of the root [occupations] and sparing use [of resources] must not be discarded.*

The auto-commentary:

*The Mo also revere the dao of Yao and Shun and speak of their virtuous actions. They say: The foundations of their halls were three meters high with three steps of earth leading up. Their halls were roofed with untrimmed thatch, and their timbers and rafters were untrimmed. They ate from earthen plates and drank from earthen [clay] bowls. Their food was coarse grain with a soup of greens. In summer they wore clothes of coarse fiber and in winter the skins of deer.*

*[The Mo] . . . see off their dead in tong-wood caskets three inches thick. Raising their voices [in mourning,] . . . they do not fully express their grief. They teach that these funeral rites must be the standard for all people. But if all-under-heaven modeled themselves on this, then honored and base would be without distinction.*

*Now, the generations differ and times change. Programs and occupations will not necessarily be the same. Thus I said, "Too frugal to be easily followed." But their essentials are "strengthening the root [occupations] and the sparing use [of resources]," so this is a dao in which the people are provided for and households*

*are plentiful. That is the strength of Mozi. Even the many wise men could not discard it.*

As for the *Mingjia*, the School of Names:

*The Mingjia cause people to be constricted and are apt to lose the truth. But their rectification of word (ming) and substance must be examined.*

The auto-commentary:

*The Mingjia engage in petty investigations and twisting entanglements preventing people from returning to their original intent. They decide matters solely on the basis of words . . . i.e. what has been contracted and thereby lose the actual human circumstance. Thus I said, "They cause people to be constricted and are apt to lose the truth." But if one "accuses" the words [i.e. what has been contracted] by holding someone responsible to the substance [of his performance], then in ambiguous situations one is not at a loss. This must be examined.*

Sima Tan wants to examine the issue because the use of correct and accurate terminology in business contracts and the performance of inner- and intra-government duties is vital.

Kidder Smith comments:

*Thus ming has profound implications for morality, epistemology, and the law. Mingjia concerns, then, are squarely in the domain we associate with our later concept "Legalism." Mingjia is simply that portion of administrative practice that emphasizes the formal relations between an official and his supervisor. However, since we know that there was no "Legalism" yet, I should probably say it this way: given his political concerns, it is not surprising that Tan selects both ming and fa from the administrative repertoire of the Warring States and Han eras to establish as separate jia.*

Sima's program becomes clear when he arrives at the *Daojia* since *Ruism* was the strongest competitor to his own political agenda. Thus a significant element of his discussion of *Daojia* is its attack on the *Ru* as can be seen in this truncated version of his long discourse:

*The Daojia cause the spiritual essence of human beings to be concentrated and unified. . . .*

*In the practice of their techniques they accord with the great sequence of the Yinyang, select the good of the Ru and Mo, and adopt the essentials of the Ming and Fa.*



*They move with the seasons  
And respond to the transformation of things.  
There is nothing unsuitable  
In the practices they establish and projects they carry out.  
Their points are simple and easily applied,  
Their programs few but results many.*

*The Ru are not like this. They hold that the ruler of men is the model for all-underheaven. The ruler sings and the ministers harmonize, the ruler precedes and the ministers follow along. In this way the ruler labors and the ministers are at ease. It is the essence of the great dao to abandon strength and desire and to deprecate cleverness, to discard these and rely on techniques. Now, spirit if greatly used will be exhausted, the [human] form if greatly labored will be worn out. With form and spirit in commotion yet wishing to last as long as heaven-and-earth-this is unheard of.*

## **“Daoist” to “Daoism”**

Because of the importance of Daoism to this essay, this section ends with the account by Kidder Smith of what happened to Daoist thought under the Han and, by extension, up to modern times.

*. . . [The function of the Yaozhi] . . . is to identify a set of ideas in such manner as to make them attractive to the Han Emperor Wu. Jia are somewhere between our idea of concrete and abstract, a bit contorted-seeming because Tan’s project depends on distinctions his language does not allow him to make. It was therefore easy for jia to lose these original meanings and come to stand for something quite different in new historical circumstances one hundred years later.*

*[Given that neither Laozi, Confucius or their followers would recognize themselves and that the term “Legalism” is as good (and as bad) a translation of “Mingjia,” if] . . . from Sima Tan’s perspective, we can find one Daoist among the hypothetical Daojia—it is Tan himself.*

One hundred years later, after texts, men and lineages had been added to Tan’s account and the reconstruction into what was first presented in this section as the *jia* was complete. Tan’s configurations had become the “schools” of Warring States political thought, each school being said to have descended from the official functions of the Zhou court. For example, the *Fajia* (the Legalists) emerged from the *liguan* or chief of prisons. The *Daojia* instead of being the center of everything had been reduced to being only one of ten *jia* and was scoffed at by the conservative Confucian Ban Gu (32-92). In Part Two, he will be seen praising *weiqi* as having a *dao*, but he was also one the Han writers who criticized Tan as being “too Daoist.” In *Hanshu* Gu wrote that the Daoists were:

*. . . those who wish to cut off and eliminate ritual learning and concurrently abandon humanity and duty (renyi), saying that the employment of purity and vacuity (xu) alone can be used to rule.*

Smith sums the historical process up:

*Finally, the term "Rujia," which we have seen to be ungrammatical in Tan's usage, appears for the first time, meaning not "people who specialize in the Ru" but "the Ruhist specialty." Thus the Hanshu fuses person, text, practice, school, and history into a single category. And thus for the first time we have a term, "Daojia," that we could accurately translate as "Daoism."*

## V. The Daoist School of the Military— Sunzi, Sunbin, the Arts of War and the *Bingjia* or *Guidao*

### Background and Review

Keeping in mind the evolution of warfare from the Spring and Autumn to the Warring States periods in Part One and the development of the One Hundred Contending Schools of Philosophy, the emergence of the School of the Military can now more easily be understood. Following this, in Part Two, the role of language in shaping military thought and consequently the strategies of go and chess will be looked at. Then, the practical application of those methods in the ancient wars will appear in Part Three with a look at the Thirty-six Strategies that are a summation and encapsulation of the philosophical thoughts of the militarists.

As outlined in Part One and the end of the last section, the *Bingjia* or *Guidao*—the “School of the Military” or “Left-handed Way of Deceit” (depending on who was describing it)—was developed between c. 500 and c. 300 BC by the warrior/philosophers of the so-called “Dark School of Daoism.” Of these, Sunzi and Sunbin, who both wrote books called *The Art of War*, are the most famous. Despite the intensive use and development of their strategic thinking in the wars leading up to the consolidation of the Han dynasty, many of the works were understandably suppressed by the ensuing emperors as subversive and derided by *literati* as forgeries, a conclusion only refuted after two thousand years with archeological discoveries.

However, the darker tradition not only survived but flourished as a folkish “counterbalance” to State-sponsored Confucianism (and also to State-controlled “Mystical” Daoism). In other words, Confucianism (“Respect for Superiors and Compassion for Inferiors,” etc.) was for “normal” times, while the Daoist strategies were used for taking advantage in times of change and unrest. Confucianism was for dealing with people you trusted and Dark Daoism was used with people you didn’t.

Most Asians began learning its lessons as children since they were often disguised in folk expressions and tales. Appearing also in plays, novels and histories (such as *The Records of the Historian*, *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* and *Water Margin*), and now in *lungful* movies, comic books and on TV, these ideas actually constituted a mental martial art. As such, they were applied, often unconsciously, to every aspect of Chinese life—war, politics, business, bedrooms and, as will be dealt with in detail later on, on the go board. The strategies and their legacy also formed the basis of all subsequent Chinese revolts, including the present day *Falun Gong*, which explains the ferocity and urgency of its suppression, even though the present government is not Confucian-oriented.

In fact, it is not well known that probably 70% of the classical Chinese philosophical works concerned military matters. The works of Confucius, Mencius, the *Daodejing* of Laozi and the *Yijing* were redolent with military discussions, though often

in a veiled manner (to us), as were the books of Masters such as Mozi, Hsun, Guanzi, Lu, Huainan, Hanfeizi, Lord Shang and the Yellow Emperor. Although the military writers, probably because of political reasons, were not listed as a separate “school” of philosophy in the *Hanshu* (*The Book of Han*), they were, nevertheless, seen as “philosophers.” As the previously quoted Chad Hansen remarks:

*Where all conventional daos inevitably stress purposive action and involvement, [i.e. yang methods, Laozi’s] sayings illustrate the wisdom of quietude: wu-wei (“lacks deed: do”) [i.e. yin]. Where conventional value assignments favor [the male,] the upper, the strong, the wise, the dominant, Laozi’s sayings help us appreciate the value of [the female,] the lower, the weak, the ignorant, the submissive.*<sup>84</sup>

The result in go, which will later be examined in detail, is summed up by artist-polyglot J. Bowyer Bell:

*. . . there are slow variations of position, incremental gains and losses, and no clearly defined arena boundaries—no sides. Victory is eventually gained by means of evasion after great protraction. There is triumph in delay. The sly, the subtle, the patient tend to win. Ambitious players must curb their impatience, compose their souls, husband their assets to maximize each small gain, flee when attacked and avoid confrontation. Extended tactical pauses, constant flexibility, mobility always and concentration only when safe, and diffusion produce a game movement nearly invisible to the Western eye. It is a game nearly as far from [Western] . . . war games as possible to imagine.*<sup>85</sup>

However, the Confucians seized on this to decry this kind of thinking as “scheming,” but this was twisting the intentions of the *Daodejing* and *Zhuangzi*. Laozi was not setting up a third alternative to Confucianism and Mohism (which, if he was the author, didn’t exist in his time)—they simply maintained that things can change and that one should recognize this when dealing with situations—that, in the language of the militarists, one should look not only for “orthodox” methods for preceding, but also the “unorthodox.” There was nothing “conspiratorial” about that kind of thinking as later Han writers began to demonstrate also about playing *weiqi*, a subject which, again, will be dealt with in detail later on. Nor was it thought to be “conspiratorial” when Daoism united with Neo-Confucianism and Buddhism a thousand years later in the Song dynasty (960-1279 AD) as described in detail in the main article.

## **Two Generals and Two *Arts of War***

The “progress” of early Chinese warfare that began in the late Spring and Autumn period which was described in Part One necessarily called not only for new

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<sup>84</sup> Chad Hansen; *A Daoist Theory of Chinese Thought*; Oxford Univ. Press; 1992; p. 223 See also <http://www0.hku.hk/philodep/ch/index.html>

<sup>85</sup> J. Bowyer Bell; *To Play the Game: an Analysis of Sport*; Transaction Publishers; 1987; p. 119

kinds of philosophies but new types of leaders. Instead of heroic, individualistic nobles seeking honor or revenge or the approval of their ancestral spirits, strategists, whether hired or homegrown, were needed who could ruthlessly merge the political and military spheres of the states they were fighting for. No longer were “the great affairs of the State” the sacred cooked meats eaten by Lord Liu after the hunt, or the raw meat sacrificed to the wars as described in Part One.

The *Sunzi bingfa* ominously begins:

*The use of the military [bing] is the great affair of the state. It is the terrain of life and death, the Way [dao] of survival and ruin. It must be studied.*<sup>86</sup>

And those who didn’t study it were absorbed by those who did.

Even though every chapter of the *Sunzi bingfa* opens with the words, “Sunzi said . . . ,” there are many stylistic and historical reasons to doubt it was written by the purported author, Sunwu, a general who lived around 500 BC, or even that “Sunzi” was one man. Instead, it is likely that the book was the accretion of many years, decades or even centuries of emendations and that Sunwu’s name was probably appropriated to enhance the book’s prestige, since it would have made him a contemporary of Confucius, who died in 479 BC.

Along that line, although *zi* was an honorific conferred on Confucius’ students, it is odd that it was attached to Sunwu’s name since until the late Warring States period, it was typically only confirmed on great philosophers such as “Masters” Kongzi (Confucius), Mingzi (Mencius) and Hanfeizi (the Legalist), but not on military commanders.

However, the choice of the term *bingfa* does date the *Sunzi* because, while *fa* meant “methods,” (in Legalism, it also meant “standards” or “law”), *bing* meant “swords,” which implied “infantry.” As discussed in the evolution of wars section, this was the weapon that resulted from the improvement of iron smelting and, along with crossbow, was a major force that helped create the methods of mass warfare that replaced the chariots, spears and common bows of the aristocrats of the Spring and Autumn era.

The other *Art of War* was by “Master Sunbin,” which can also be dated by weaponry, methods of fighting and, unlike Sunzi, the date of his death—316 BC. However, his *Sunbin bingfa* was unearthed only in the 1972 and the book’s very existence had been a matter of debate until then. There are theories that he was a son of Sunzi since his work reflects a later age—the greater use of cavalry and mobile tactics, the heavy use of crossbows (which play an insignificant role in the *Sunzi*) and a willingness to besiege at least certain types of cities, perhaps because there were increasing riches to be plundered. This had been something that “Sunzi” strongly warned against as a waste of human and other resources.

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<sup>86</sup> This rendering is a combination of translations and emendations from various traditional sources.

# The Waging of War as an Intellectual and Psychological Endeavor

Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Weiliaozi*, one of the seven Chinese military classics, has much to say about the military commander who has mastered his art:

*"He who has mastered military arts is like one hiding in the Earth or concealing himself in the depths of Heaven. He appears out of nothingness. . . .*

*"Above the commander is not controlled by Heaven, below he is not controlled by Earth, and in the middle he is not controlled by man. He is broad, so that he cannot be provoked to anger. He is pure so that he cannot be controlled with material objects. . . .*

*"The commander is the officer of death, so he is only employed when there is no alternative. He has no Heaven above him, no Earth beneath him, no ruler behind him, and no enemy in front of him. When this one man leads the army, then they are like wolves or tigers, like wind or rain, like thunder or lightning. Shattering like an earthquake, dark and mysterious like the primeval chaos, the whole human world is terrified."*<sup>87</sup>

Sunzi said that the new type of commander had to know that:

*. . . if one knows the enemy and knows himself, then in one hundred battles there is no danger or defeat. If one does not know the enemy and yet knows himself, then there is one victory for every defeat. If one does not know the enemy and does not know himself, then every battle will end in certain defeat.*<sup>88</sup>

He proclaims that managing a war has become a massive intellectual and psychological enterprise. Instead of requiring a bold, honorable and highly visible leader of an army of loyal nobles, the new commander was advised to stay out of sight, disguise his personal movements, and learn what the enemy was doing by employing the formerly despised spies. Then he had to invisibly direct his masses of conscripted peasantry with bells, drums, flags, banners and smoke signals which had become the means of communicating and directing massive troop maneuvers.

He also had to command and coordinate the activities of a new entity—a staff that included weather forecasters, map makers, commissary officers, engineers for tunneling and mining operations along with experts for attacking and defending against attacks by fire and inundation, and for crossing rivers and other amphibious operations.

The result was that the nature of the armies these men commanded had changed. Instead of impetuous acts of bravery and unregulated movements, the needs of the day demanded total obedience and control, so troops had to become "feminized"

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<sup>87</sup> Lewis; p. 70

<sup>88</sup> Sunzi; *Art of War* III,1; Lionel Giles (trans.); Modern Classics Archive; <http://classics.mit.edu/Tzu/artwar.1b.txt>



in the Confucian language of the day—they had to become obedient as wives were to their husbands.

Military historians Andrew Meyer and Andrew Wilson wrote:

*This is where the genius of the . . . [Sunzi bingfa] lies: the ultimate goal is to create a social role for the commander, to carve out a realm for the professional military officer. Thus, when the Sunzi enjoins the commander to fight only when he knows victory is certain, we must realize that this is as much a rhetorical justification for the authority of the professional commander as a dictum to be practically applied. To apply this principle consistently, a commander would have to possess an almost preternatural insight into the tactical situation and the contents of his opponent's mind. Indeed, at points the text describes the commander as if he were possessed of mystical powers: [As Sunzi wrote,] "subtle subtle! to the point of formlessness; spirit-like! spirit-like! to the point of soundlessness, thus he can be the enemy's "arbiter of fate." <sup>89</sup>*

However, Sunzi was not as "mystical" as this sounds. In another passage, Frank Kierman and John Fairbank noted that:

*As the Sun-tzu makes plain, violence is only one part of warfare and not even the preferred part. The aim of war is to subdue an opponent, in fine, to change his attitude and induce his compliance. The most economical means is the best: to get him—through deception, surprise, and his own ill-conceived pursuit of infeasible goals—to realize his inferiority, so that he surrenders or at least retreats without your having to fight him. <sup>90</sup>*

And, paradoxically, while the Confucians implicitly advised rulers of feudal states with the idea of preserving them, the Daoist warrior/philosophers, particularly of the states of Qin and Chu, were implicitly seeking the ultimate goal of peace that could be achieved only when all of China had been conquered by one state. What was the basis of the strategic methods that were used over the many centuries of warfare to try to obtain that goal?

## The Way of the "Dark Daoists"

The way Daoist strategic thinking works and what makes it different from typical Western stratagems (which, with their relationship to chess, will be discussed in Part Two) is that they are aware that there is always something of both *yin* and *yang* in a situation. Those astute in these ways will try to perceive the imbalances in a situation

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<sup>89</sup> Andrew Meyer and Andrew Wilson; "Sunzi bingfa as History and Theory" in *Strategic logic and political rationality: essays in honor of Michael I. Handel*; Bradford A. Lee, Karl-Friedrich Walling (eds.); Frank Cass Publishers; 2003; p. 109

<sup>90</sup> Kierman; p. 11

and then act accordingly. That is, they had learned how to take into consideration what is strong and impervious and cannot be changed (*yang*), and what is weak and vulnerable and can be changed (*yin*). Their concerns included, to name a few, the conditions of the terrain, the weather, the spirit, formations and traits of the leadership of the enemy troops, and, most important, the information brought in by spies and observation. All this was balanced by a need to know one's own strengths and weakness i.e. self-knowledge on the part of the commander was as important as knowledge of his opponent.

Then, by successfully planning combinations of the "orthodox" ("standard" or "fixed" positions and strategies) and the "unorthodox" ("surprising" and "unexpected" methods), *shi* or "overwhelming" strategic, psychological and positional advantage (*xing*) could be built up. This type of thinking is opposed to *li* strategies which emphasize the taking of immediate, obvious profits. In using *shi* strategies, the taking of *li* profits comes afterwards.

*The ability to manipulate shi had several elements. First, the commander had to assess the season, the terrain, and the foe. These were originally part of the calculation and manipulation that preceded or ideally supplanted the actual battle, but once in the field the commander's mental ability manifested itself through his powers of "expedient assessment" (quan). This word etymologically signified a horizontal balance and had the verbal meaning of "to weigh" or "to judge." Perhaps through extension it also came to mean that which was expedient to the moment as opposed to unchanging principle. In the military treatises it carried both these meanings and signified the commander's capacity to judge or assess the balance of forces and the dynamic tendencies in a given situation at a given moment and to select the appropriate action. Because of its root sense as a horizontal balance, quan often had the narrower meaning of an assessment or judgment based on the weighing of two opposed factors, such as "fear and shame" or "many and few," that would affect the conduct of battle. The sense of "expedient" or "answering to the needs of the moment" is shown in various passages which associate quan with "change" (bian) or with the "extraordinary" (qi).*

*The situation examined through "expedient assessment" was to be analyzed into various polarities such as normative and extraordinary, empty and full, hard and yielding, far and near, many and few, or orderly and chaotic. The key to tactical success lay in the matching of opposites or complementarities one against the other.*

*The concentrated overcomes the dispersed; the full overcomes the empty; those on the quickest path overcome those who follow the main road; the many overcome the few and the rested the weary.*

*The commander ascertained which of these "poles" characterized his opponent and then matched him with its correlate: concentrated where the foe was dispersed, taking short cuts where he followed the main roads, and sending fresh troops against weary ones.*

*This reading of polarities and the matching of correlates was "expedient assessment," and its use distinguished the true commander from the incompetent in the new tactical doctrine. The Sima fa flatly proclaimed, "All war is expedient*

*assessment. "The Sun Bin bingfa said, 'the Way of military action has four [aspects]: formations, power of circumstances, changes, and expedient assessment. The Wei Liaozi devoted separate sections to the expedient assessment of attack, those of defense, and those of warfare. . . .*

*The calculations were performed within the temple and determined whether a war would be won or lost. This "internal" calculation then had to be assisted by an "outer" performance that manipulated the circumstances over the course of the campaign and on the field of battle. . . . The central act that translated assessment into successful maneuver was the identification of the "pivots" (ji). This word concretely signified the firing mechanism of the crossbow, but it had the more abstract meaning of a moment of change, or more precisely the moment just before a new development or a shift in direction became visible. These "pivots," which are also translated as "seeds" when applied to processes where an organic metaphor seems more suitable, constituted the nodal points of a situation in flux, and it was a characteristic of the "sage" or "superior man" to recognize them before they became manifest. Thus the "Da zhuan" of the Yijing says:*

*"The Master said, to know the pivots, that is divine (shen) indeed .... The pivots are the first, imperceptible beginning of movement, the first trace of good or bad fortune that shows itself. The superior man perceives the pivot and immediately acts. He does not wait for even a day."*<sup>91</sup>

However, most Western interpretations of *shi* cannot escape being a single-minded and simplistic because the fluidity of Chinese strategic thinking is not conveyed. Examples from Appendices VI and VII are Henry Kissinger's *On China* (which discussed only part of it), Scott Boorman's *The Protracted Game* (which did not) and hedge fund financier Mark Spitznagel's article in the *Wall Street Journal* (which misinterpreted it).<sup>92</sup> For example, Sunzi strongly emphasized that the orthodox and the unorthodox are ever-changing into each other as if they were joined together in a ring. Each situation is different and ever-evolving so that thinking in these terms is only advice to try to determine which is which at the appropriate time.

Sunzi's description of what follows the "tipping of the balance" is a little different from Sunbin's. If one was poised with built-up *shi* it was like having one's finger on the hair-trigger of a loaded crossbow. When it tripped, Sunzi metaphorically suggested that the power that was released was like "raging water" so that huge boulders and logs that were immobile on a flat surface could be made to roll down a mountainside as an unstoppable force.

From the *Sunzi bingfa* chapter *Shi* which Lionel Giles translated as "Energy:"

*The onset of troops is like the rush of a torrent which will even roll stones along in its course. The quality of decision is like the well-timed swoop of a falcon which enables it to strike and destroy its victim. Therefore the good fighter will be terrible in*

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<sup>91</sup> Lewis; pp. 118-9

<sup>92</sup> Appendix VII [http://www.usgo.org/files/bh\\_library/originsapdxVII.pdf](http://www.usgo.org/files/bh_library/originsapdxVII.pdf)

*his onset, and prompt in his decision. Energy may be likened to the bending of a crossbow; decision, to the releasing of a trigger.*

*Amid the turmoil and tumult of battle, there may be seeming disorder and yet no real disorder at all; amid confusion and chaos, your array may be without head or tail, yet it will be proof against defeat. Simulated disorder postulates perfect discipline, simulated fear postulates courage; simulated weakness postulates strength. Hiding order beneath the cloak of disorder is simply a question of subdivision; concealing courage under a show of timidity presupposes a fund of latent energy; masking strength with weakness is to be effected by tactical dispositions. Thus one who is skillful at keeping the enemy on the move maintains deceitful appearances, according to which the enemy will act. He sacrifices something, that the enemy may snatch at it. By holding out baits, he keeps him on the march; then with a body of picked men he lies in wait for him.*

*The clever combatant looks to the effect of combined energy, and does not require too much from individuals. Hence his ability to pick out the right men and utilize combined energy. When he utilizes combined energy, his fighting men become as it were like unto rolling logs or stones. For it is the nature of a log or stone to remain motionless on level ground, and to move when on a slope; if four-cornered, to come to a standstill, but if round-shaped, to go rolling down. Thus the energy developed by good fighting men is as the momentum of a round stone rolled down a mountain thousands of feet in height. So much on the subject of energy.*<sup>93</sup>

It should also be noted that “orthodox” and “unorthodox” have had shifting meanings throughout Chinese military usage (and, moreover, were not referred to in terms of *yin* and *yang*). At times, as described above, orthodox meant “fixed” or normal methods of direct confrontation, so unorthodox would then mean using unexpected trickery and deceit. In other cases, orthodox methods was the term used for the day-to-day governance of a state, while the unorthodox (based on deceit) were those to be used in war. And, of course, there were many classifications of unorthodox maneuvers such as in the anonymously written 15<sup>th</sup> century *One Hundred Unorthodox Strategies: Battle and Tactics of Chinese Warfare*.<sup>94</sup> They included situations for times when someone is or expects to be the “guest” or the “host,” has large or small numbers, is weak or strong, is in a situation of being able to reward or punish, etc.

Sunzi adds some context to these goals of building *shi* and then releasing it with comments at the beginning of his chapter on *Shi*.

*In general, it is organization that makes managing many soldiers the same as managing [or fighting against—the wording is ambiguous] a few.*<sup>95</sup> *It is communicating with forms and names that makes fighting with many soldiers the same as fighting with a few. It is “surprise” and “straightforward operations that enable one’s army to*

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<sup>93</sup> Adapted from Lionel Giles; *Sun Tzu on The Art of War*; Taylor & Francis Ltd; 2005; pp. 20-1

<sup>94</sup> Ralph Sawyer; *One Hundred Unorthodox Strategies: Battle and Tactics of Chinese Warfare*; Westview Press; 1998

<sup>95</sup> Sawyer; p. 177

*withstand the full assault of the enemy force and remain undefeated. It is the distinction between "weak points" and "strong points" that makes one's army falling upon the enemy a whetstone being hurled at an egg.*<sup>96</sup>

Cao Cao (155-220) of the Three Kingdoms period, the earliest commentator on the *Sunzi*, mentions that "Forms and Names" was a Warring States euphemism that originally meant "flags and pennants," indicating the ease of communicating over distances with them so the number of men was irrelevant. However, the relation between forms that are named and forms that are not takes on a much deeper meaning in the famous beginning lines of the *Daodejing* (which will be returned to later):

*The Dao that can be spoken of is not the ineffable Dao;  
The name that can be named is not an ineffable name.  
The nameless is the beginning of Heaven and Earth;  
The named is the mother of the myriad [10,000] things.*<sup>97</sup>

Sunbin took these thoughts a bit further:

*Thus, as for the disciples of forms, there are none that cannot be named. As for the disciples that are named, there are none that cannot be conquered. . . .*

*The key is the nature of the visible, of that which has attained form. Once something is visibly formed, it can be described, once described, characteristics can be appended, predictions become possible and plans may be formulated.*<sup>98</sup>

Sunbin elaborated on the subject when he discussed the thinking behind the core of his book—the manipulation of the enemy by segmenting its troops and using flanking and encircling attacks.

*When form is employed to respond to form, it is orthodox. When the formless controls the formed, it is unorthodox. . . . Things that are the same are inadequate for conquering each other. Thus employ the different to create the unorthodox. Accordingly, take the quiet to be the orthodox for movement; ease to be the unorthodox for weariness, satiety to be the unorthodox for hunger; order to the unorthodox for chaos; and the numerous to be the unorthodox for the few.*

*[Sawyer comments that this kind of advice] . . . primarily applies to situations in which strengths are equal or one is outnumbered, rather than those in which the enemy is outnumbered by a significant factor and more "orthodox" tacks, such as convergent attacks, would be advisable.*<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Roger T. Ames; *Sun Tzu: The Art of Warfare*; Ballantine Books; 1993; p. 119

<sup>97</sup> Sawyer; p. 86

<sup>98</sup> Sawyer; pp. 84-6

<sup>99</sup> Sawyer; pp. 86-7

Sunzi usually said that the idea of managing successful warfare was to maneuver oneself into a position of numerical and strategic superiority, so that “10,000 could defeat one.”

*Au contraire* was another warrior/philosopher, the mysterious personage called “Guiguzi” whose name translates as “The Master of the Valley of Death [or Ghosts].” He was said to have lived 300 years and, along with his student Wuqi (Sunbin), only appeared to be Confucian-oriented in advising that, in the same way a good go player can kill a large group with one well-placed stone, generals could properly manage affairs with correct “spiritual attitudes” and organizational skills such as taking advantage of passes in the mountains or narrow valleys and other strategic strongholds. This way, “One could defeat 10,000.”

However, “10,000” in Chinese literature has never referred to merely soldiers, but alludes, as in the *Daodejing*, to general world phenomena—“the 10,000 Things and Affairs of the World.” Thus, “10,000” implies “10,000 Dangerous Entanglements” to be avoided, so this manner thinking can paradoxically be labeled as another method for seeking not war, but peace. The winner of “one hundred battles” will be exhausted and therefore vulnerable. And this type of thinking was seen as extending into all spheres of life.

This style of thinking—that acquiring *shi* and using it is the result of having a general, flexible attitude towards the world and not a matter of “doing this” or “doing that”—is still very much a part of modern Chinese strategic thought, as attested to in many ways, for example, by looking at the numerous writings of Ralph Sawyer and the Table of Contents of Christopher Detweiler’s PhD thesis, *An Introduction to the Modern Chinese Science of Military Supraplanning*.<sup>100</sup>

## Summation

Relativistic strategic thinking and problem solving—where the problem is defined not as a free-standing entity but is analyzed by its elements that are not monolithic—did not evolve in the West until more than 2000 years later in the equilibrium theories of Stephen Nash. He theorized that in a non-cooperative game, no single player will be better off switching strategies unless the others do the same. (He derived this theory by watching men trying to pick up women in a bar). It also appeared in the General Semantics program of Alfred Korzybski, who posited that there is a fundamental distinction between the sensory world of experience and the verbal world of symbols and language. This will be discussed in Part Two in reference to the Chinese language.

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<sup>100</sup> *An Introduction to the Modern Chinese Science of Military Supraplanning*; Inaugural-Dissertation zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde der Philosophischen Fakultät der Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg i. Br.; Vorgelegt von Christopher Detweiler aus den USA.

<http://www.freidok.unifreiburg.de/volltexte/7726/pdf/ScienceOfMilitarySupraplanning2010SEP23.pdf>

<sup>101</sup> <http://communication.ucsd.edu/berman>



In China, on the other hand, the relativism of *yin-yang* thought developed into Daoism which then, on its “dark” side, developed into the military strategies, which then appeared on go boards beginning in the Han period. A thousand years later, after being adapted by all the major power groups, religions and philosophies, *weiqi* became the “sanctified,” “spiritual” game that we know today. However, this chain of development did not spring out of nowhere during the five-and-a-half centuries of unceasing warfare. It developed only in China largely because Classical Chinese had no abstract nouns and no verb “to be” that developed in the West.

## PART TWO

# LANGUAGE AND THE GREAT CULTURAL DIVIDE BETWEEN CHINA AND THE WEST AS REFLECTED IN DIFFERENT WAR STRATEGIES AND THE PLAYING OF GO AND CHESS

## I. Introduction and General Overview

*As noted in the Preface, the "West" refers to countries in Europe and the Americas where chess is intertwined into the cultures and which includes Russia, but not India where chess was probably invented but is not widely played. It will be necessary to repeat some of the points brought up in the Preface but they will be greatly expanded.*

*As outlined in the Preface, this part will look at how the ancient languages of China and Greece helped shape very different attitudes and perspectives about the world and what took place in it. That is, in the West, where having abstract nouns and the verb "to be" along with some social and cultural factors forced those who spoke its languages to naturally adopt a "two-tiered" world, one that was abstract, hypostitized and made "real." In China, without these two factors and isolated as it was from the rest of the world, this did not happen.*

*This dichotomy in turn shaped the philosophies and hence the early war strategies of those two areas as they changed from feudal-style to mass warfare. Thus, it was thus very natural that the war games of go, which is not abstract, and chess, which is, became seamlessly interwoven into their respective "cultures of thought."*

### **"Abstract" Greek vs. "Non-abstract" Classical Chinese**

Whether the structure and content of languages influences thought has long been the subject of heated debate. Most famously, the arguments swirl around the Sapir-Worf "hypotheses" and their modern versions, which, to varying degrees, claim that they do. These are opposed by Noam Chomsky and his followers who claim that they don't i.e. that there is a universal common structure to the world's languages. This question has been discussed by some of the best known sinologists, including Hu Shi, Lin Yutang, Joseph Needham, Arthur Wright, Derk Bodde, Marcel Granet, A.C. Graham, the team of David Hall and Roger Ames, Chad Hansen, D.C. Lau, Chen Chung-ying, and

others. They have all noted connections between certain aspects of the Chinese language and the texture of Chinese thought and culture.

However, to my knowledge, none have taken the approach that David J. Moser used in his 1996 University of Michigan PhD thesis, *Abstract Thinking and Thought in Ancient Chinese and Early Greek* under the supervision of noted philologist Victor Mair. Moser's conclusions seem to be irrefutable—that classical Chinese did not express abstractions while early Greek did, and that this deeply affected their thinking and outlooks on the world.

However, neither Moser nor any of the other analysts that I have encountered have discussed the effects of how the differences in language affected the styles of war strategies and, by extension, the choice of board games that Eastern and Western cultures chose to play.

Before discussing the technical reasons for the development of abstraction of “essences” or “true meanings” of actions and things in the West and the lack of this development in the East, a discussion of abstraction and its influences comes first, followed by an overview of the games of chess and go in that regard.

Moser began by concisely summing up the state of the field:

*The theory is that the structure and vocabulary of the language call attention to certain aspects of reality and that this results in native speakers developing cognitive predispositions that to some extent reflect linguistic distinctions. . . . But while the question of the effects of language structure on cognition is still controversial, the effect of language on philosophical discourse (particularly theories of language) is, I believe, less so, in fact, as I hope to show, the effects of linguistic structures are quite evident, explicit, and pervasive in the Greek texts [of Plato and Aristotle, and in the Chinese texts, particularly in the *Mobian*, the *Canon* of the Mohists].*<sup>102</sup>

However, Moser says it is not that language “channels” thought through semantic space but that it can present possibilities and:

*. . . obstacles [that call] attention to features of the conceptual and semantic landscape that might have otherwise gone unnoticed.*<sup>103</sup>

As for abstraction:

*. . . If we think of abstraction as involving the high-level attention to and flexible manipulation of categories and qualities of the physical and mental world, then it goes without saying that there are no non-abstract languages . . . [However, abstractions codify the features of the world and once done] . . . they can be used by the Greeks to develop a theory of essences and qualities, or by Chinese correlative cosmologists to*

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<sup>102</sup> David J. Moser; *Abstract Thinking and Thought in Ancient Chinese and Early Greek*; University of Michigan PhD Thesis; 1996; p. 46. Moser compiled the list of sinologists.

<sup>103</sup> Moser; p. 59

*catalogue the various objects in the world according to the principles of yin and yang, or by the Neo-Mohists in order to expound a theory of how names relate to things.*<sup>104</sup>

*. . . My attempt is to demonstrate how the Chinese language was an adequate vehicle for abstraction, yet did not motivate thinkers to make theories about abstractions. We may indeed characterize Chinese thought as non-abstract, as long as the above points are kept in mind.*<sup>105</sup>

As for how this point influenced thought:

*. . . It is trivially easy to provide examples of where language (by some definition of language) influences thought (by some definition of thought), and vice-versa. The real questions are, what kinds of thinking can be influenced by language structures, and how, exactly, does this interaction take place? . . . [In other words, how can] language . . . play a conscious and unconscious role in focusing or shaping the philosophical tradition (thought) [and the concerns of those speaking it?].*<sup>106</sup>

If language affects thinking and by implication, cultural world views, it stands to reason that the influences in the area of strategic thinking might be profound, especially if the languages involved in a comparative study are very different. This notion would extend to the choice and techniques of playing strategic games that cultures choose to perpetuate in the sense that, consciously or unconsciously, they deem it a worthwhile activity for them and their children to passionately continue playing. This part then, will try to trace the process that led up to the intense playing of *weiqi* that began in the Han period and which followed its humble beginnings as used by early Confucians to illustrate their evolving ideas about filial piety, and the equal European fascination with chess that began around the 12<sup>th</sup> century in its feudal phase and blossomed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>107</sup>

To put things into focus, the end point of this discussion is brought up first.

Thoughts on factors relevant to the reasons for the playing of go or chess **are in bold.**

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<sup>104</sup> Moser; p. 219

<sup>105</sup> Moser; p. 220-1

<sup>106</sup> Moser; p. 222

<sup>107</sup> As noted before, the early Confucians, who were writing history in the *Zuozhuan* and under the names of Confucius and Mencius from 312 to 260 BC, used go to illustrate their evolving theories about filial piety. Go at that time was something everyone “knew” about since they didn’t have to explain the game to their readers. See Appendix V for more details: [http://www.usgo.org/files/bh\\_library/originsapdxV.pdf](http://www.usgo.org/files/bh_library/originsapdxV.pdf).

## Preliminary Remarks on the Basic Elements of “Concrete” *Weiqi* vs. “Abstract” Chess

After the basic differences between chess and go from the point of view of language are examined, it will become easier to see in what follows why the Chinese style of thinking—its cultural “matrix” so to speak—would absorb *weiqi* so readily after it was developed and why the West would be similarly attracted to chess. Questions about the ancient dice game *liubo* and the much more recent *xiangqi* (Chinese chess), though more widely played, can be left out because, as will be seen, they don’t possess the deep culturally resonating qualities of *weiqi* that attracted the early Chinese with its Daoist-Confucian-Buddhist-oriented *yin-yang* roots. Similarly, checkers can be left out even though it is probably more popular than chess in the West.<sup>108</sup>

First of all, *weiqi* is “concrete”—each piece has only one meaning and is added to the whole, one by one. As will be seen, this is much as the early Chinese regarded all the objects in their universe. These were “immanent”—their meaning was in-dwelling in the things themselves. They are just stones taking on meaning only when related to other stones in the “real world.”

From a similar point of view, this one-by-one process was like the characters written in Classical China because it was an “isolating” language. This was because the Chinese language was composed of mostly monosyllabic morphemes, was uninflected in terms of number, person, mood or tenses, had no distinctions between verbs, singular or plural nouns, no definite articles, no clear demarcations between verbs, adjectives and nouns and adjectives, no default subject-predicate sentence structure, and also no paragraphs proceeding in an orderly march from a beginning to an end, as in Western languages.<sup>109</sup> The result is that the characters act like word stems or even the figures of symbolic language as they are placed down one-by-one.

Without thinking about board games, Moser ruminates further on the background of the language context:

*If it is difficult to tease out underlying singular-plural mental schemas in modern Chinese with regards to such functions as the generic, it is well-nigh impossible in classical Chinese. In a highly context-dependent language like classical Chinese, the*

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<sup>108</sup> *Liubo* was a raucous game played in a largely unknown way (although there are theories). Despite the fact that it had religious and divinatory connotations in that the board was a map of the cosmos, the game was never commented on philosophically as having an interior meaning outside of its use in divination and gaining power over spirits. It became extinct by around 700 AD. See Mark Lewis; “Dicing and Divination in Early China”; *Sino-Platonic Papers*; No. 121; July 2002 and the *liubo* Wikipedia article at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liubo>. See also, [http://www.academia.edu/2212938/The\\_Development\\_and\\_Regional\\_Variations\\_of\\_Liubo](http://www.academia.edu/2212938/The_Development_and_Regional_Variations_of_Liubo)

<sup>109</sup> The last remark is evident to anyone who has taught English composition to native Chinese students. The biggest problem is always trying to get them to organize their thoughts into a “beginning, middle and an end” in a march of orderly paragraphs that progress down in an orderly “straight line.” In Chinese, the most important points, as in their grammar, tend to be put first and, to our eyes, what follows does not proceed in a logical pattern.

*lack of markings means that there is much more "behind the scenes" to be ferreted out. Presumably in the spoken language there was a host of syntactic or intonational devices combined with the usual component of redundancy which would serve to disambiguate utterances, but in wenyan [Classical Chinese], with its premium on extreme economy of means, there is much less to go on. Pronouns, like nouns were ambiguous as to number. Demonstratives like shi "this, those", bi "that/those there", ci "that/these here", and so on, also carry no singular-plural distinction. There is always the possibility of quantification and number marking but these are often optional, even in texts as rigorous as the neo-Mohist canon.*

*There is also a high degree of what Li and Thompson . . . call "rampant zero anaphora": that is subjects and referents, once introduced into the discourse, are seldom repeated or represented with pronouns. Singularity and plurality which absolutely pervade nearly every Greek and English sentence, was a very minor part of the surface level linguistic structure of classical Chinese.*<sup>110</sup>

One can get an idea of what it is like to read such a language through the following example:

*Yxx cxn xndxrstxnd whxt x xm wrxtxng xvxn xf x rxplxcx xll thx vxwxls wxth xn "x" (t gts lttl hrdr f y dn't vn kn whr th vwls r).*<sup>111</sup>

In other words, **it is like *weiqi* stones being put down on the board** as the meaning comes almost solely from the syntax as groups are built. (This can produce *hui wen*, or palindromic poetry, the most famous example of which came from the Song dynasty between 960 and 1279 AD. There were 841 characters on a 29x29 **grid that could be read in all directions like a *weiqi* game**).

Another feature of the game is that it springs from its basic rule **which is like life**—as the game "grows," stones or groups are taken off the board if their "breaths" or "lungs" in China, "eyes" in Japan or, "liberties" in the West are eliminated. In fact, this process of building groups can be looked at as a perfect illustration of the School of Phenomenology's theories on discourse. If carried out with the understanding that players alternate play in which "I speak" and then "You speak," the meaning of what is said is always in constant "motion" and only emerges from a cooperative effort and is never "objective." If each player is surrounding the other, eventually two internal "breathes," (or in Japanese, "eyes") create a living group.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>110</sup> Moser; p. 194-5 / Li, Charles N., Sandra A. Thompson, and R.M. Thompson; "The Discourse Motivation for the Perfect Aspect: The Mandarin Particle *LE*", In Hopper, Paul (ed.), *Tense-Aspect: Between Semantics and Pragmatics*; Amsterdam; Benjamins; 1982; pp. 19-44

<sup>111</sup> Steven Pinker; *The Language Instinct*; Harper-Collins; 2010; p. 178

<sup>112</sup> This automatically allows snapbacks but disallows suicides as a "non-moves." Phenomenology studies conscious experience as experienced from the subjective or first person point of view. This ontology can be differentiated from the Cartesian method of analysis which sees the world as objects, sets of objects and objects acting and reacting upon one another. See my article and its appendix on cognition and go for further details.



**The way these groups intertwine and finally reach a stasis point at the end makes for a constructive game that models life in an ideal way that Chinese philosophical thought has embraced.** Due to the game's war-like aspects that, after all, only mirrored the Daoist "practical philosophies of action" used in other areas of life, there was some Confucian hesitancy at first. However, as mentioned, by the Song period, c. 1000 AD, all the religions had embraced the game in terms of their belief systems, as did every other major power group, such as the military, nobility and now, first in Japan and then in China and Korea and probably in the future, the USA, major commercial interests who sponsor professional *weiqi*. This is why the game has survived and prospered for so long and continues to do so on the Internet.

Chess, on the other hand, is an "abstract" game in the sense that there are qualities in each piece that are not apparent unless you know their meaning but are there at the start.

Both *weiqi* and chess were war games from the beginning but in vastly different ways. Sunzi's *yin* strategies became naturally attached to the anonymous *weiqi* stones and boards in the Han period and developed over time to the point where a lengthy treatise could be written by the Song period, c. 1000, which will be quoted at the end of Part Two.

## Chess in the Middle Ages

In the case of chess, there are a number of theories as to its age and where it was invented, but the most common theory is that it was abstract from the beginning when it developed in India probably around 600 AD. The game was called *chaturanga* or "four ranks" which referred to the warfare organization of infantry, cavalry, elephantry, and chariotry that were represented by pieces that would evolve into the modern pawn, knight, bishop, and rook. It remained a war game when it was passed on to Arabic Persia between 638 and 651 during the reign of Caliph Omar and kept the same pieces as it became part of the educational process of the nobility. Chess champions were noted in historical records by c. 800 and clever women played the game and appeared in Arab literature. As early as the 10th century Muslims, Christians and Jews mingled in the glorious and tolerant court of Caliph Abd al-Rahman III at Córdoba, Spain where chess was an established part of the proceedings. This was when the game came to West and it was played in every European country by c. 1000, reaching out to all levels of literate society as evidenced by countless romances, *chansons de geste*, and moral tales from then through the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

Thus, where the Arabs generally only saw war in the game or, as in some legends, a substitute for war, the Middle Ages tried to "see itself" in the game and its features especially during the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>113</sup>

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[http://www.usgo.org/files/bh\\_library/goandpsych.pdf](http://www.usgo.org/files/bh_library/goandpsych.pdf) and

[http://www.usgo.org/files/bh\\_library/Cog%20Psych%20Appendix%201.pdf](http://www.usgo.org/files/bh_library/Cog%20Psych%20Appendix%201.pdf)

<sup>113</sup> The Arabs learned to play the game during the conquest of Persia in the mid-7<sup>th</sup> century. See the chapter, "The Invention of Chess in Muslim Legend" in H.J. Murray's *A History of Chess*; Clarendon Press; 1913.

The first changes in its abstract symbolism came soon after its transmission and spread in the late 10<sup>th</sup> century. The male Muslim vizier was replaced by a queen (but was still only allowed diagonal one-space moves so that, other than the pawns, it remained the weakest piece on the board). A fortress or castle (nowadays the rook) replaced the Arabic military carriage and a knight replaced the simple horse but both retained the moves they still have today. Lastly, an elephant (little known in Europe) became first a "messenger" and then a "fool" in France, and "judge" or "wise man" in Italian, Germanic and English literary texts. It was allowed to move two diagonal spaces, though it had the ability to leap over any piece that stood in its way and it could not be captured by an opposing similar piece.<sup>114</sup>

Symbolically, more than changes of the pieces and their abstract names came about as the game spread and became widely accepted as a natural element in the symbolical world of the cultural matrix of the later Middle Ages. In 1474, the allegorical *The Game and Playe of Chess* was the second book published by the pioneering English printer William Caxton. This was his translation of the political treatise *Liber de moribus hominum et officiis nobilium ac popularium super ludo scachorum* (*The Book of the Morals of Men and the Duties of Nobles and Commoners, on the Game of Chess*) by Jacobus de Cessolis (1250-1322). Its importance is signaled by the more than 300 manuscripts and incunabula that have survived and the fact that it became the second most popular printed book next to the Bible. Medieval historian Jenny Adams edited it and she wrote in her Introduction:

*Despite its title, Caxton's The Game and Playe of the Chesse does not, in fact, have much to say about a game or about playing it. . . . Neither the Liber nor Caxton's translation contains any diagrams of boards set up for play, nor does the text itself suggest any advice for a player's improvement. Instead, the work uses the chessboard and its pieces to allegorize a political community whose citizens contribute to the common good. Readers first meet the king, queen, bishops (imagined as judges), knights, and rooks, here depicted as the king's emissaries.*

*"Thus the king has limited movement on the board because he holdeth the dygnyt above alle other and the seignorye royall. . . . For whan he wyl meve hym, he ought not to passe at the first draught the nombre of three poyntes. [He had been allowed to move two spaces since the 13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>115</sup>] . . . And the queen, who under medieval rules advanced diagonally like the bishop, does so because she should have parfyte wysedom as the alphyngs [bishops] have, whiche ben juges, as hit sayd above in the chappytre of the queen. . . ."*<sup>116</sup>

<sup>114</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop\\_%28chess%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop_%28chess%29)

<sup>115</sup> This rule eventually turned into the castling which consists of moving the king two squares towards a rook on the player's first rank, then moving the rook onto the square over which the king crossed.

<sup>116</sup> See footnote 118.

A Wikipedia article can be used to introduce the pawns:

*Going from the left to right, before the rook or castle were messengers but also gamblers and other "lowlifes," that direction being literally sinister. City guards or policeman were in front of the knight as they trained city guards in real life. Innkeepers were placed in front of the bishop and a doctor was always the queen's pawn, In front of the king were merchants or moneychangers, then came weavers or clerks in front of the bishop, for whom they wove or clericked. Blacksmiths were in front of the knight, as they cared for the horses, and workers or farmers were in front of the castle, for which they worked.*<sup>117</sup>

Adams again:

*Paired with each profession is a list of moral codes. The pawn who represents the moneychanger, for example, handles gold, silver, and valuable possessions, and thus ought to flee avarice and covetyse, and eschewe brekyng of the dayes of payment . . . The knights, entrusted with the safety of the realm, must be wyse, lyberalle, trewe, strong, and ful of mercy and pyt. . . The queen, charged with giving birth to the community's future ruler, should take care to be chaste, wyse, of honest lyf, wel manerd. . . And so on. These pairings reinforce the idea of a kingdom organized around professional ties and associations, ties that are in turn regulated by moral law, rather than around kinship. . . .*

*Most scholars would describe the work as a speculum regis, or a mirror for a prince [and it replaced the idea of kingdoms as biological bodies inherited most likely from St. Paul whereby the head (the king) controlled the totality and the various appendages and organs represented various levels of government and occupations ending with the peasants as toes i.e. When the head wanted to move, the arms and feet had to obey.] A standard genre throughout Middle Ages, such specula reached an apex of popularity in the second half of the thirteenth century, a time when dozens of advice books appeared across Europe. . . . many specula also served as a [philosophical] forum for thinking about the nature and organization of government itself . . .*<sup>118</sup>

From the oldest of the chess moralities, *Quaedam Morality de Scaccario*, or *The Innocent Morality*:

*The world resembles a chess board which is chequered white and black, the colours showing the two conditions of life and death, or praise and blame.*

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<sup>117</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pawn\\_%28chess%29#Etymology\\_and\\_word\\_usage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pawn_%28chess%29#Etymology_and_word_usage)

<sup>118</sup> The online Introduction by Jenny Adams of William Caxton; *The Game and Playe of the Chesse*; Jenny Adams (ed.); Kalamazoo Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications; 2009  
<http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/ajgpint.htm> It is significant that Caxton's second edition in 1483 contained "wholesome wisdom necessary for every estate and degree" and addressed not its rulers as in the first edition, but the people of England.

*The chessmen are men of this world who have a common birth, occupy different stations and hold different titles in this life, who contend together, and finally have of common fate which levels all ranks. The King often lies under the other pieces in the bag.*

*The King's move and power of capture are in all directions, because the King's will is law.*

*The Queen's move [of one square] is aslant only, because women are so greedy that they will take nothing except by rapine and injustice.*

*The Rook stands for the itinerant justices who travel over the whole realm, and their move is always straight, because the judge must deal justly.*

*The Knight's move is compounded of a straight move and an oblique one; the former betokens his legal powers of collecting rents etc., the latter his extortions and wrong-doings.*

*The aufins [our modern bishop] are prelates wearing horns (but not like those that Moses had when he descended from Sinai). They move and take obliquely, because nearly every bishop misuses his office through cupidity.*

*The Pawns are poor men. Their move is straight, except when they take anything; so also the poor man does well so long as he keeps from ambition. After the Pawn is promoted he becomes a Fers [a queen] and moves obliquely, which shows how hard it is for a poor man to deal rightly when he is raised above his proper station.*

*In this game the Devil says "Check" when a man falls into sin; and unless he quickly covers the check by turning to repentance, the Devil says "Mate" and carries him off to hell, whence there is no escape. For the devil has as many kinds of temptation to catch different types of men, as the hunter has dogs to catch different types of animals.*<sup>119</sup>

The second chapter of Adams' other chess-oriented book, *Power Play: The Literature and Politics of Chess in the Late Middle Ages* looked at the Liber's remodeling in the anonymous late-14<sup>th</sup> century *Les Echecs Amoureux*, where Vice and Virtue poetically battled it out on a chessboard in imitation of the 13<sup>th</sup> century *Roman de la Rose*. An intricate commentary probably by Evrart de Conty followed half a century later that explained the poem on three allegorical levels, correlating regulation of individual passions to civic and to cosmological order. In other words, Adams argues that these French works:

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<sup>119</sup> A paraphrase from Murray; p. 530. Quoted from Alexander Cockburn; *Idle Passion: Chess and the Dance of Death; Village Voice/Simon and Schuster*; 1974; pp. 115-6

. . . *reinscribe the Liber's contractually based (i.e., nonorganic) society within the framework of organic order (lover's body as civic community) and natural structure (cosmos as chess game).*<sup>120</sup>

There were also two cultural movements that attached themselves to the European "Chess Psyche" which were unrelated to the actual playing of the game **but not in the way that Sunzi's strategies attached themselves to early Chinese *weiqi***. Instead, they were related to the pieces and hence they were abstractly emotive and evocative. These were the Cult of Mary ("Mariolatry") and the Cult of Romantic Love. In her brilliant *Birth of the Chess Queen*, Marilyn Yalom writes:

*A second passage in Gautier's Miracles, the song "Mother of God, Wise Virgin," picks up the chess queen analogy. A supplicant [playing White] begs Mary to save him from being trapped by the Devil [playing Black] in the corner of the chess board. Being pinned in the corner is equivalent to falling into "the pit of Hell." Only through Mary's intercession can the player be saved from checkmate and eternal damnation. Thus he throws himself upon her mercy and acknowledges:*

We cannot move without you.  
[We are] your pawns,  
Teach us to play, God's Chess Queen,  
And take such care of us  
That to the great King  
We may all arrive.

*. . . Only through her protection can we, the pawns of this earth, hope to be united with the great King. This song ends with an ascent from the chessboard to the heavenly realm inhabited by Jesus and Mary.*<sup>121</sup>

As for Romantic Love:

*. . . At first promoted by the troubadours in Southern France and somewhat later by trouverers in Northern France and the minnesingers in German, courtly love brought something utterly new into the Western world. It reversed traditional masculine and feminine roles, granting the woman power over the man.*<sup>122</sup>

*. . . A successful troubadour had to be sophisticated, witty, skilled as a poet, singer, musician and—let us not forget—chess player. . . . Not surprisingly, some of the*

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<sup>120</sup> Jenny Adams; *Power Play: The Literature and Politics of Chess in the Late Middle Ages*; (The Middle Ages Series); University of Pennsylvania Press; 2006; p. 81

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=6669192>

<sup>121</sup> Adams; p. 114

<sup>122</sup> Adams; p. 124

*vocabulary of chess entered into troubadour verse. Bernard de Ventadour, complaining of the indifference of the beloved, compared himself to the loser in a chess match. . . . [Thus the] two "games" paralleled each other, and were destined to end in a checkmate—mat in Arabic meaning "dead." In courtly parlance, it was appropriate for the man to be mat—to suffer, to become as if dead under the stunning effects of his lady.*<sup>123</sup>

*. . . When troubadour verse established the analogy between chess and love, it propagated two enduring ideas: that love was a combat between two noble adversaries, and that it was also a ritual played according to rigorous, complex rules. Initially, the mere use of a single word—"checkmated", (matz in Provençal)—signaled the relation between the poet/lover and the chess player. Later the analogy became more elaborate. Bernart d'Auriac, a thirteenth-century troubadour, insisted he was ready to cede the chess match to his female partner—to be "vanquished and checkmated" if that was her pleasure. [No wonder the strong queen of today was later accepted so readily!]*<sup>124</sup>

If poetry initiated the concept of eroticized chess, chivalric romances made it popular for both playing at a war between miniature armies during long winter nights in the castles and reading or listening to tales about the chess playing of Roland, Parsifal, Gui of Nanteuil, Raoul of Cambrai and Ogier the Dane, where chess was an attribute that distinguished the noble from the merchant.<sup>125</sup>

[Thus, as a reviewer wrote, Adams' *Power Play* was the first book] . . . *to ask why chess became so popular so quickly, why its pieces were altered, and what the consequences of these changes were. More than pleasure was at stake, Adams contends. As allegorists and political theorists connected the moves of the pieces to their real-life counterparts, chess took on important symbolic power. For these writers and others, the game provided a means to figure both human interactions and institutions, to envision a civic order not necessarily dominated by a king, and to imagine a society whose members acted in concert, bound together by contractual and economic ties. The pieces on the chessboard were more than subjects; they were individuals, playing by the rules.*<sup>126</sup>

The abstract symbolism of chess was also re-enforced by the highly abstract qualities of the boards when they became bi-colored sometime after 1200. The boards came to have strict meanings for the bishops who can only move diagonally on one

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<sup>123</sup> Adams; p. 125

<sup>124</sup> Adams; p. 127

<sup>125</sup> Servants who played chess in the romances were invariably assumed to be of aristocratic origin.

<sup>126</sup> From the synopsis of *Power Play* by the publisher. [www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/14222.html](http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/14222.html)



color, the Queen who must begin the game on her own color and even the orientation of the board with a white square required at the right corner of the board.

## The Strong Queen Arises

However, in 1475 a poem from Valencia, Spain, *Scachs d'amor*, "The Love of Chess" that was written by three chess players was the first clarion call of a profound revolution in the game and its abstract meanings.

*Diu que la reyna vagui axi com tots sino cavall (I declare that the queen moves like all (the pieces) except the knight).<sup>127</sup>*

Suddenly:

*The queen is an anomaly. Sole female on a field of male monarchs, ecclesiastical oligarchs, horsemen and armed peasants, she is more forceful than them all. She strikes fear into the opposing king, yet is still subservient to her own. The queen and king begin at each other's side; then the king hides in a fortress while the queen roams free in battle. Most glamorous of her possible destinies is to sacrifice herself to bring victory to her husband. Oedipally inclined analysts might make much of a male chessplayer gleefully immolating his "lady" in order to kill his male opponent at the board. They might require more ingenuity to theorise the transsexual metamorphosis whereby a peasant, having conquered enough territory, may himself become a queen.*

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The Church briefly objected to the idea of two queens for one king—it was polygamy—but that feeling did not last very long. Moreover, the queen had a new, powerful companion in the bishops who lost the ability to jump over pieces but could

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<sup>127</sup> <http://www.origenvalencianodelajedrez.com/en/interior.php?pk=3> It has been commonly thought that the inspiration for the powerful queen was Isabella of Castile because the first printed book of those rules by Luis Ramirez Lucena was published in 1496 or 1497, but this poem was composed when she was only 24 and had been on the throne only one year. However, there were other queens to find inspiration for feminine dominance of the game. To name a few, Quern Guinevere of the Arthurian Legend was a strong player and there was also the real-life Urraca de Galicia, Margaret of Denmark, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Blanche of Castile and earlier, "La Grand Contessa" Matilda of Toscana, Toda of Navarre, and Adelaide and Theophano, two empresses of the Holy Roman Empire. Learning to play chess was also part of the regular education of Adelaide in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Isabella in the 15<sup>th</sup> and Elizabeth in England in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. However, the dominant queen and the changes to the rooks, knights and bishops only came to Russia during the reign of chess-playing Catherine the Great in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Significantly, several Scandinavian chess queens rode horses and did not sit on the thrones as they did in early Western European chess sets.

<sup>128</sup> [http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/85272.Birth\\_of\\_the\\_Chess\\_Queen](http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/85272.Birth_of_the_Chess_Queen)

now move over the entire board on the diagonals. This was derived from the variant of courier chess and it imitated the freedom of the rook in India and Arab Persia as a war chariot that could dash all over the battlefield (which, however, was given the medieval icon of a staid castle).

From a cultural point of view, the most important effect was that the new “Mad Queen’s” chess could be won in a matter of several moves, minutes, or hours because checkmates were now easier to make. Within fifty years, everyone was playing it so gone were the days when games could go on and on and allowed a man and a woman plenty of time to steal a touch under the table, take time out for a meal, or break away for a secluded walk.<sup>129</sup>

With all the new changes, chess quickly lost its symbolic and rhetorical character and returned to its previous status as a simple war game now played largely by men. It attracted different abstract qualities, however, that made the game still attractive to Westerners. For example, historian Paul Metzner commented in *Crescendo of the Virtuoso: Spectacle, Skill, and Self-Promotion in Paris during the Age of Revolution*:

*While many Europeans who lived before the Age of Revolution [and after the Middle Ages] had looked upon chess as merely a game, others had regarded it as a symbolic representation of battle. “Everyone knows that this noble and ancient game is a model of war,” asserted Philippe Stamma’s Essai sur le jeu des échecs (1737), echoing Gioachino Greco’s Jeu des eschets (1669) and Joseph Bertin’s Noble Game of Chess (1735), these three being the most important chess books of the second half of the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth century.*<sup>130</sup>

Embodied in this new feeling about chess were abstract temporal, spatial and directional elements that, as will be shown, are absent in *weiqi* since chess pieces move over space like an army with the single intent of assisting each other to kill the other king. As will be discussed in the next section, this style of thinking in the West echoes the military thought of Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831), Antoine Henre de Jomini (1779-1869), Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) and other influential Western ‘philosophers of war’ who developed their theories after mass armies led by Napoleon began fighting in Europe following the French revolution in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

As for the development of playing the new kind of chess, **it is interesting that it followed the same pattern that *weiqi* did when the peace of the Han period**

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<sup>129</sup> The only difference from modern chess is that the king could move up to three squares on his first move (if not in check), which eventually was replaced by castling. People rejected giving the queen the same powers as the knight “on account of their frailty.”

<sup>130</sup> Paul Metzner; *Crescendo of the Virtuoso: Spectacle, Skill, and Self-Promotion in Paris during the Age of Revolution*; Univ. of California Press; 1998 This and the next two passages are from the e-version in the UC Press E-Books Collection, 1982-2004. <http://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft438nb2b6&chunk.id=ch1>

**gave the *literati* the leisure time to begin to take the game seriously.** From its apparently simple origins, by about 139 BC, Liu An could state in his *Huainanzi*, "To play but **one game of *weiqi* is insufficient to know wisdom.**"

In the case of chess, it was in places of repose in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, such as the Café de la Régence in Paris, that provided an ambient atmosphere complete with coffee and food for extended popular and serious playing.

Paul Metzner again:

*The "royal game" had been accepted for hundreds of years at face value, as just a game, an amusement, a diversion. The few who ascribed a deeper significance to it considered it a symbolic representation of war, an activity generally associated with the aristocracy, and the game itself was also generally thought to belong to the aristocracy. In the eighteenth century, however, intellectuals took an increasing interest in chess, so that by the end of the century it had become as much or even more their game than the nobility's. The philosophes [French philosophers who lived during the Enlightenment of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries], who had a collective reputation for questioning everything, began to wonder whether there might be something in the game other than mere amusement or symbolic war.*

The great champion of the period that followed was André Danican Philidor (1726–1795) and his play and his 1749 book, *Analyse des échecs*, presaged the way the game was to change after the time of Napoleon's introduction of mass-army warfare in the passage from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, which, as mentioned, will be discussed more in more detail later on. This revolution of military theory from feudal to mass-warfare is exactly what had happened in China after which it was attached to *weiqi* playing just as the development of chess "reflected," (which will be explained later), the theories of Napoleon. However, the two processes had entirely different mental foci.

Metzner continues:

*In another break with tradition [Philidor's] . . . book emphasized good use of one's pawns, pieces relatively neglected in the royal game until then. In a revolutionary maxim Philidor wrote that pawns "are the soul of chess [an example of which was shown in the Preface]."*

Extending further into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, chess continued to be "modernized" as different ideas arose about the relationship between pawns and pieces. Also, as mentioned there, it is tempting to surmise that there was a connection or inspiration from Napoleon's revolutionized war theories. After all, they were a hot topic in the salons and general discourse of the times. In an Internet blog spot, two amateur

players with greater than 1800 ratings looked at these theories in a summary done by Will and Ariel Durant in their *The Age of Napoleon*.

*Napoleon expressed part of his strategy in a mathematical formula: "The strength of an army, like the amount of momentum in mechanics, is estimated by mass times the velocity. A swift march enhances the morale of an army, increases its power for victory." . . . His motto was "Activité, activité, vitesse" – action and speed. . . . "It is axiomatic," he had said, far back in 1793, "that the side which remains behind its fortified line is always defeated"; and he repeated this in 1816. To watch for the time when the enemy divides or elongates his army; to use mountains and rivers to screen and protect the movement of his troops; to seize strategical elevations from which artillery could rake the field; to choose a battleground that would allow the maneuvers of infantry, artillery, and cavalry; to concentrate one's forces – usually by swift marches – so as to confront with superior numbers a segment of the enemy too far from the center to be reinforced in time: these were the elements of Napoleonic strategy.*

*The final test of the general is in tactics – the disposition and maneuvering of his forces for and during battle. Napoleon took his stand where he could survey much of the action as his safety would allow; and since the plan of operations, and its quick adjustment to the turn of events, depended on his continued and concentrated attention, his safety was a prime consideration, even more in the judgment of his troops than in his actual practice; if he thought it necessary, as at Arcole, he did not hesitate to expose himself; and more than once we read of men being killed at his side in his place of observation ...*

*In battle, he believed, soldiers acquired their value chiefly through their position and maneuverability. Here too the aim was concentration – of massed men and heavy fire on a particular point, preferably a flank, of the enemy, in the hope of throwing that part into a disorder that would spread. "In all battles a moment comes when the bravest troops, after having made the greatest efforts, feel inclined to run ... Two armies are two bodies that meet and endeavor to frighten each other; a moment of panic occurs, and that moment must be turned to advantage. When a man has been present in many actions, he distinguishes that moment without difficulty."*<sup>131</sup>

Two 1800 ranked players on the Internet likened Napoleon's principles of successful warfare strategies to modern chess in terms of:

- *" . . . action and speed" – which strike me as initiative and tempo respectively*
- *" . . . that the side which remains behind its fortified line is always defeated" – active versus passive play*
- *"The final test of the general is in tactics" – self explanatory*

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<sup>131</sup> Will and Ariel Durant; *The Age of Napoleon* Volume XI: A history of European civilization from 1789 to 1815; Simon and Schuster; 2011; p. 248

- ". . . if he thought it necessary, as at Arcole, he did not hesitate to expose himself; and more than once we read of men being killed at his side in his place of observation" – the role of the king as an attacking piece
- "In battle, he believed, soldiers acquired their value chiefly through their position and maneuverability." – positional play and piece coordination
- ". . . of massed men and heavy fire on a particular point, preferably a flank, of the enemy, in the hope of throwing that part into a disorder that would spread." – Building pressure in one area to create weaknesses in another (especially if you have the advantage in space or maneuverability)
- ". . . to choose a battleground that would allow the maneuvers of infantry, artillery, and cavalry; to concentrate one's forces – usually by swift marches – so as to confront with superior numbers a segment of the enemy too far from the center to be reinforced in time" – This strikes me, although it may be a bit of a stretch, as analogous to the battle for space. The analogy comes from the resulting advantage rather than the means – the superior maneuverability of your pieces.
- There are also numerous allusions (and outright references) to attacking on the flanks, (typically because it was assumed that the opponent had a strong centre)

132

As Alexander Cockburn wrote:

[In other words, all this was] *a sign of the degeneration of the feudal system and the undermining of the feudal mode of warfare by more advanced technology, which transferred the advantage from defense to attack.* <sup>133</sup>

One can clearly see this in *fianchetto* tactics developed by Howard Staunton (1810-1874) as illustrated in the Preface where the bishops can rake the central pawns. That chess had passed from a tactical to a full board strategic phase is inherent in a 1964 comment by Bobby Fischer:

*Staunton was the most profound opening analyst of all time. He was more theorist than player but none the less he was the strongest player of his day. Playing over his games I discovered that they are completely modern. Where Morphy and Steinitz rejected the fianchetto, Staunton embraced it. [As did the Hypermodern School of the 1920s.] In addition he understood all those positional concepts which modern players hold so dear, and thus with Steinitz must be considered the first modern player.* <sup>134</sup>

<sup>132</sup> <http://www.chess.com/forum/view/general/napoleon-on-strategy-striking-chess-parallels>.

<sup>133</sup> Cockburn; p. 122

<sup>134</sup> David Hooper & Kenneth Whyld; *Oxford Companion to Chess*; Oxford Univ. Press; 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1992; pp. 391-2

However, Chess proved too small a game to do much more than resemble actual war, but its strategic aims are the same as is apparent in some of the quotes that have come down over time by famous players.

*It is dangerous to maintain equality at the cost of placing the pieces passively.* - Anatoly Karpov

*Once we have chosen the right formation in the centre we have created opportunities for our pieces and laid the foundation of subsequent victory.* - Alexander Kotov

*Concentrate on material gains. Whatever your opponent gives you take, unless you see a good reason not to.* - Bobby Fischer

*The process of making pieces in Chess do something useful (whatever it may be) has received a special name: it is called the attack. The attack is that process by means of which you remove obstructions.* - Emanuel Lasker

*If the defender is forced to give up the center, then every possible attack follows almost of itself.* - Siegbert Tarrasch

*Attack! Always Attack!* - Adolf Anderssen<sup>135</sup>

Especially in political and military discussions, chess imagery is also part of our "lingual culture" with the words, "check," and "check mate," "chequered" as in "a chequered career," and "pawn."

But the pawns of chess were not like the stones of *weiqi*, coordinated as they were with the other pieces in a mass attack on the king. As will be seen when the theories of Jomini and Clausewitz are discussed, this style of single-minded strategic thinking permeates, besides the military, other areas of Western practical action such as advertising and marketing. It is the way we think about and do things.

On the other hand, in go, as discussed in early writings, the mixture of mainly *yin*-based unorthodox thinking mixed with some *yang*-based orthodoxy (i.e. the *shi-li* strategies that were described in the last Part) take on the form that the patient building of *shi* results in taking greater *li* profits at the end. This is apparent in the theories of *joseki* openings and middle-game *fuseki* which may have developed by the Three Kingdoms period (184 or 220-280), a period of intense play.<sup>136</sup> It also appears in the roles of *tesuji* (clever plays) with their *Sunzi bingfa*-like sudden-surprise attacks, in the technical terms and tactics of *sabaki* sacrifices during *jie* (invasions), in plays like *yosu-miru* that probe the intentions of the opponent *kikashi* moves that force favorable responses and even in situations of *miai*. All these are plays are common in *weiqi* and uncommon in chess. Thus, the prevailing game strategies are completely different in tone since they emanate from different attitudes about the underlying war strategies that are a result of that linguistic abstract/non-abstract divide. As mentioned, these thoughts should lurk in the background of the discussion that follows.

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<sup>135</sup> <http://www.chessquotes.com/topic-strategy>

<sup>136</sup> There is controversy whether the "oldest" recorded game, which featured a *joseki*, is from that era (196 AD) or a forgery.

## II. The Absence or Presence of Abstract Nouns, the Verb “To Be” and Other Linguistic Features Developed and Shaped the Different Philosophies and Resulting Strategic Thinking of Early Greece and Classical China

One of the notable differences of early Eastern and Western philosophies that appeared between c. 500 and c. 200 BC—the time of the Warring States—was that the Greeks and the Indians looked for abstract “Truths” while the Chinese were concerned with more practical matters, such as proper behavior and how to manage peoples, kingdoms and wars.

Many of these differences can be attributed to linguistic features of the two different languages—i.e. the lack of grammatical and syntactical markers for abstraction in Chinese, such as abstract suffixes, the direct article, the presence of “to be” used as a copula, etc.—leading to a different approach to abstract thought.

### Greece and the West—A Two-Tiered World

David Moser ruminated on some of the preliminary issues:

*The stereotype of Western philosophy as pursuing abstractions in contrast with the more this-worldly orientation of the Chinese is not without some justification. Greek philosophy, [fostered by contacts with other cultures by both land and sea] even before the classical period of Plato and Aristotle, showed a concern with a systematic and relatively dispassionate formulation of theoretical frameworks for the study of the physical, psychological, and ethical worlds. . . .*

*The longstanding Greek theoretical foci—questions of change vs. permanence, the One vs. the Many, the physical vs. the transcendental, the nature of ethics, the reality of mathematical objects. etc.—all involved to some extent the isolating and abstraction of aspects of the world for independent analysis. In addition, Greek philosophy from the outset showed a strong interest in metaphysical questions that later influenced theorizing about abstract entities. The philosophy of the classic period built upon religious notions first introduced by the Orphic cults, and these included a belief in an immaterial, eternal, and divine soul imprisoned in a flawed material body. Other religious tenets of the Orphics and Pythagoreans such as the transmigration of souls, the importance of purification rituals in cleansing the soul, plus the split between a physical and an immaterial world, and the strongly dualistic ontology were among Plato’s operating assumptions, appearing throughout his major works and providing the impetus for his doctrine of transcendent forms [and consequently the abstract*



Thus, the Greeks made up their categories and the language to discuss them as they “went along” and this was a process that continued also in India with Sanskrit. As evidence of that, Moser noted that it has been shown that all ten of Aristotle’s Categories paralleled grammatical aspects of Greek whose inconsistencies and idiosyncrasies forced the philosopher to deal with or reform them.

Thus, Aristotle’s Categories are not universal qualities and Moser points out that if he had been African or Chinese, they would have been quite different, and, in fact, he suggests that it would have been an easier task if the work was done in Chinese, unhindered by the grammar. In any case, this process of categorization and idealization never took place in written Classical Chinese. (Of course, it is not known how oral language differed from written, though we can assume that what was written down would have been discussed in much the same fashion).

The Wikipedia article “Theory of Forms” accurately sums up the linguistic background of early Greece that helped shape their thinking and that we have inherited. I underlined the main points for emphasis.

*The Greek concept of form precedes the attested language and is represented by a number of words mainly having to do with vision: the sight or appearance of a thing. The main words, εἶδος (eidos) and ἰδέα (idea) come from the Indo-European root \*weid-, “see”. Both words are already there in the works of Homer, the earliest Greek literature. Equally ancient is μορφή (morphē), “shape”, from an obscure root. The φαινόμενα (phenomena), “appearances”, from φαίνω (phainō), “shine”, Indo-European \*bhā-, was a synonym.*

*These meanings remained the same over the centuries until the beginning of philosophy, when they became equivocal, acquiring additional specialized philosophic meanings. The pre-Socratic philosophers, starting with Thales, noted that appearances change quite a bit and began to ask what the thing changing “really” is. The answer was substance, which stands under the changes and is the actually existing thing being seen. The status of appearances now came into question. What is the form really and how is that related to substance?*

*Thus, the theory of matter and form (today’s hylomorphism) was born. [This is the theory that there is a soul—a “form”—in every “material” body which does not have a chance of re-incarnation]<sup>138</sup> Starting with at least Plato and possibly germinal in some of the presocratics the forms were considered as being “in” something else, which Plato called nature (physis). The latter seemed as “wood”, ὕλη (hyle) in Greek, corresponding to materia in Latin, from which the English word “matter” is derived, shaped by receiving (or exchanging) forms.*

*. . . These Forms are the essences of various objects: they are that without which a thing would not be the kind of thing it is. For example, there are countless tables in the world but the Form of tableness is at the core; it is the essence of all of*

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<sup>137</sup> Moser; pp. 47-9

<sup>138</sup> See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hylomorphism> for further details

*them. . . . Super-ordinate to matter, Forms are the most pure of all things. Furthermore, he believed that true knowledge/intelligence is the ability to grasp the world of Forms with one's mind.*

## **To Be or Not to Be: Chess and the Military in the West**

The verb "to be" does not exist in Chinese as it does in Greek, Latin, Sanskrit and the Romance Languages. The result of using "is" or "are" in our sentences is perhaps one important reason for why we intuitively think we live in those two worlds that Moser and the Wikipedia article discussed. When we say, "This is a triangle," we "think we think" that we have an "idea" of what a triangle is and that the object before us is indeed one.

Plato suggested that the Ideal Forms are already present in our minds or else we abstracted them from seeing instances of them in our lives. Thus, we can postulate that an ideal, perfect triangle exists, yet, on the other hand, we can never see it or anything else that is "perfect" for that matter. It is just assumed to exist somewhere "above us." This process of turning our thoughts into a more "real" and trustworthy world than the one we live in is called "reification," or "hypostatization"—regarding something abstract as a material thing. This term comes from the Greek *hupostatos*, "placed under," "substantial," which is from *huphistasthai*, "to stand under," "to exist." When we see and say, "This is a triangle" or "This is a table," we are saying they only imitate those perfectly unreachable triangles and tables.

Here are two examples of the process:

*Then this—I mean justice—is a certain thing?*

*Certainly.*

*Then, too, by wisdom the wise are wise, and by the Good all good things are good?*

*Of course.*

*And these are real things, since otherwise they could not do what they do.*

*To be sure, they are real things.*

*Then are not all beautiful things beautiful by the Beautiful?*

*Yes, by the Beautiful.*

*Which is a real thing?*

*Yes, for what alternative is there? (Hippias Major, 287 C-D) <sup>139</sup>*

*... the eye becomes full of sight and so begins at that moment to see, and becomes, certainly not sight [opsis], but a seeing eye [ophthalmos horôn], and the object which joined in begetting the colour is filled with whiteness [leukotês] and becomes in its turn, not whiteness [leukotês], but white [leukon], whether it be a stick or stone, or whatever it be the hue of which is so coloured. And all the rest — hard [skleron] and*

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<sup>139</sup> Moser; p. 49 This and the following two passages are his translations.

*hot* [thermon] and so forth — must be regarded in the same way.” (Theaetetus, 156E)  
140

*The several rules of justice and law are related to the actions conforming them as universals to particulars, for the actions done are many, while each rule or law is one, being universal. There is a differerance between "that which is unjust" (to adikon) and "unjust conduct" (to adikema), and between "that which is just" (to dikaion) and "just conduct" (to dikalioma). Nichamachnean Ethics, vii, 6-7* <sup>141</sup>

However, in Greek “to be” is not only an indicator of existence (“There is a man Socrates”) but it has a copular function (“Socrates is mortal”) which notes the abstract essence of “mortality.” However, few people speaking in a Western language would notice the difference between “There is a teacup [that exists] on the table” and “The teacup is white,” so this problem caused confusion in Western philosophical circles for centuries.

A.C. Graham elaborated on how this feature came to us via the construction of Western languages:

*The existential/copulative distinction is reflected in the ontological contrast between existence and essence. Historically, this pair of concepts emerged first in Arabic philosophy, during the stage when the Western tradition was passing from one Indo-European language (Greek) to another (Mediaeval Latin) through the medium of Semitic languages, Syriac, Arabic, and Hebrew. Greek philosophers, with the notable exception of Aristotle, confused the existential verb with the copula. Greek ousia, a noun derived from einai “be”, is still substance (what there is) as well as essence (what it is in itself); even Aristotle, although translators resort to ‘essence’ and ‘existence’ to clarify him in English, formulates the distinction not by technical terms but by cumbersome phrasings with einai (‘whether or not it simply is, not whether it is white or not’, or (‘the ousia being not this or that but simply, or not simply but in itself or accidentally’). The Arabs, philosophising in a Semitic language which deals with the existential and the copulative by different words and constructions, had to develop a new terminology centered on wujud ‘existence’ and mihiyyah ‘quiddity’. Simply by the medium of otherwise very literal translations into Arabic, Aristotle was transformed into a thinker who speaks sometimes of existence, sometimes of quiddity, never about being and a new ontology emerged in which existence does not belong to the quiddity of anything except the single necessary existent, God, who according to Ibn Sina (Avicenna, 980-1037) creates by adding existence to the quiddities of things. Latin translators from Arabic coined quidditas for mahiyyah but also reserved for it essential (a derivative of esse ‘be’ originally coined as a general equivalent of Greek ousia), while using esse itself for urujud; the difference was further clarified as the verb existere emerged to distinguish the latter. Consequently, for the Scholastics the essence and*

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<sup>140</sup> Moser’ p. 53

<sup>141</sup> Moster; p. 53

*existence imported from the Arabs became incorporated into the Being inherited from the Greeks, even in the Latin translations of the Arabic philosophers themselves.*<sup>142</sup>

Moser adds:

*. . . Also contributing to this ontology [of the West] was the clearly delineated difference between nouns and adjectives, and between adjectives as modifiers and in their nominalized forms, all of which encouraged an ontological view in which qualities were secondary and separable entities existing apart from concrete particulars.*<sup>143</sup>

Thus, the consequence of the developing construction of our Western languages is that the “two-tiered” world we live in is cosmogenic and teleological. It means that the ideal, Perfect Form is a single God who, as an explanation of our humble existence, must have created a beginning and an end to things. Therefore it seems to us that there are goals that have been created to aspire to which seem innate to our being so we have a duty to reach them. This was exemplified by the mass, unquestioned acceptance of the Jewish, Muslim and Christian religions along with their systems of logic. And, our double worldview affects our sense not only of “reality” but of time. The two are intertwined.

The tradition-oriented Chinese YeYoung Culture Studies group looked at the situation:

*Shi is commonly translated into English as “time”. . . . There are essentially two “root metaphors” used to establish the Western conceptual schemes of time. In the Judaic-Christian tradition, God created the mortal world at a particular time and it will come to an end one day. In this scheme, God’s eternal time contrasts the bounded time of the mortal world. In other words, people conceive the lives of individuals as discrete corps, with a beginning (birth) and an end (death). . . . On the other hand, in the traditional Western philosophical-scientific tradition, both Aristotle and Newton believed in absolute time, moments of absolute time [being] . . . understood as analogous to the continuous sequence of points on the line. Such a model is associated with a progressive idea of history in which time moves forward without repeating itself.*<sup>144</sup>

**This is the underlying basis of a game of chess** and the linear thinking and the scientific methods of the West that have conquered nature, taken us to the moon and may, if we are not careful, destroy us all. It is also the basis of Western strategic thinking: in chess, there is a goal—the killing of the king—that is “real,” so we try to reach it as best and as fast as possible. The words of a Western “philosopher of war,” Carl von Clausewitz, who was in Napoleon’s entourage and elaborated on his theories, echo this refrain:

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<sup>142</sup> Graham; p. 407

<sup>143</sup> Moser; pp. 61-3

<sup>144</sup> <http://literati-tradition.com/time.html>

*Our position, then, is that a theater of war, be it large or small, and the forces stationed there, no matter what their size, represent the sort of unity in which a single center of gravity can be identified. That is the place where the decision should be reached; a victory at that point is in its fullest sense identical with the defense of the theater of operations.*<sup>145</sup>

### **And the defense of the king in chess.**

As for the use of Sunzi's style of "underhanded" surprise and unorthodox maneuvers described in Part One, Clausewitz wrote:

*While the wish to achieve surprise is common and, indeed, indispensable, and while it is true that it will never be completely ineffective, it is equally true that by its very nature surprise can rarely be outstandingly successful. It would be a mistake, therefore, to regard surprise as a key element of success in war. The principle is highly attractive in theory, but in practice it is often held up by the friction of the whole machine.*

*We say this in order to exclude certain vague notions about sudden assaults and surprise attacks which are commonly thought of as bountiful sources of victory. They will only be that under exceptional circumstances.*<sup>146</sup>

Extending the point to Western-style marketing, Al Ries and Jack Trout are advertising gurus who wrote the best-selling *Marketing Warfare* in 1997. At first, they sounded somewhat like a rumination on Sunzi by advising clients who wanted to expand product lines that:

*Marketing battles are not fought in places like Dallas, Detroit, or Denver. At least not in the physical sense of a city or a region.*

*Marketing battles are fought in a mean and ugly place. A place that's dark and damp with much unexplored territory and deep pitfalls to trap the unwary.*

*Marketing battles are fought inside the mind. Inside your own mind and inside the mind of your prospects, every day of the week.*

*The mind is the battleground. A terrain that is tricky and difficult to understand.*

*The entire battleground is just 6 inches wide. This is where the marketing war takes place. You try to outmaneuver and outfight your competitors on a mental mountain about the size of a cantaloupe.*

But then they added:

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<sup>145</sup> Carl von Clausewitz; *On War*; Michael Howard & Peter Paret (trans.); Princeton University Press; 1984; p. 198  
<http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/OnWar1873/TOC.htm>

<sup>146</sup> Clausewitz; p. 198

*. . . In World War II, offensive attacks were usually launched on a very narrow front. Sometimes down a single highway. Only when a breakthrough was achieved did the attacking forces expand laterally to occupy territory.*

*When you attack on a narrow front, you're putting the principle of force to work for you . . .*

*We think the best book on marketing was written by a retired Prussian general, Carl von Clausewitz. Entitled On War, the 1832 book outlines the strategic principles behind all successful wars.*

*Clausewitz was the great philosopher of war. His ideas and concepts have lasted more than 150 years. Today, On War is widely quoted at places like West Point, Sandhurst, and St. Cyr.*<sup>147</sup>

One is reminded of how the two sides fought in World War I and how the Russians, Americans and Germans fought in World War II. Long before this, Antoine Henre de Jomini studied the situation. Like the Austrian-born Clausewitz, his lesser-known Swiss-born successor fought in many places in Europe for many sides. Military analyst Horace F. Cocroft Jr. noted in his introduction to the English version of Jomini's 1854 book, *The Art of War*, that it was the only book taught at West Point before the Civil War, and consequently that every Southern and Northern general except the free-wheeling Stonewall Jackson followed his dictums to the letter with the inevitable results of mass slaughter.

*Although several military writers preceded Jomini, such as Marshal Saxe in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, no other military theoretician has had quite the impact on professional military thinking, doctrine, and vocabulary as the Swiss-born staff officer Jomini, whose work remains relevant even today. . . .*

*[He] wanted to . . . eliminate the unpredictable variables in making war. von Clausewitz, [his rival who died 38 years before him,] in contrast, sought to understand the fog of war rather than eliminate it.*<sup>148</sup>

As Jomini describes it, the course of European warfare seems to have followed the changes in warfare that occurred during the passage from the Spring and Autumn to the Warring States in China that was described in Part One. In other words, it passed from feudal-like tactics to mass warfare.

*By the system of positions is understood the old manner of conducting a methodical war, with armies in tents, with their supplies at hand, engaged in watching each other; one besieging a city, the other covering it; one, perhaps, endeavoring to acquire a small province, the other counteracting its efforts by occupying strong points. Such was war from the Middle Ages to the era of the French Revolution. During the*

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<sup>147</sup> Al Ries and Jack Trout; *Marketing Warfare*; McGraw-Hill; 1986; p. 44

<sup>148</sup> Antoine Henri de Jomini; *The Art of War*; G.H. Mendell & W.P. Craighill (trans.); J.P. Putnam; 1854; pp. 3-4.  
[www.arcmanor.com/FDL/AofW5674.pdf](http://www.arcmanor.com/FDL/AofW5674.pdf);

*revolution, great changes transpired, and many systems of more or less value spring up. War was commenced in 1792 as it had been in 1762: the French encamped near their strong places, and the allies besieged them. It was not till 1793, when assailed from without and within that this system was changed. Thoroughly aroused, France threw one million men in fourteen armies upon her enemies. These armies had neither tents, provisions, nor money. . . .*<sup>149</sup>

Nevertheless, the French were put into marching columns. With skirmishers protecting their flanks, they thoroughly disconcerted the methodical Austrian and Prussian generals and troops.

*Indeed, these skillful marches are but applications of the great principle of throwing the mass of the forces upon the decisive point . . .*

*From this, it may be concluded that all strategic movements which tend to throw the mass of the army successively upon the different points of the front of operations of the enemy, will be skillful, as they apply the principle of overwhelming a smaller force by a superior one. . . . The operations of the French in 1793 from Dunkirk to Landau, and those of Napoleon in 1796, 1809, and 1814 are models of this kind.*<sup>150</sup>

Jomini came as close as a Westerner could to Sunzi, **nevertheless, he is still writing in the language of chess and not *weiqi***. For example:

*One of the most essential points in the science of modern marches, is to combine the movements of the columns as to cover the greatest strategic front, when beyond the reach of the enemy, for the triple object of deceiving him as to the objective in view, of moving with ease and rapidity, and of procuring supplies with more facility. However, it is necessary in this case to have previously arranged the means of concentration of the columns in order to inflict a decisive blow.*

*This alternate application of extended and concentric movements is the true test of a great general.*<sup>151</sup>

von Clausewitz, opined about the unorthodox:

*Plans and orders issued for appearances only, fake reports designed to confuse the enemy, etc.—have as a rule so little strategic value that they are used only if a ready-made opportunity presents itself. They should not be considered as a significant independent field of action at the disposal of the commander.*<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Jomini; p. 98

<sup>150</sup> Jomini; p. 101

<sup>151</sup> Jomini; p. 129

<sup>152</sup> Clausewitz; pp. 202-3



In another passage, Clausewitz wrote that the use of cunning should come last rather than first as the *Sunzi bingfa* advocated.

*The weaker the forces that are at the disposal of the supreme commander, the more appealing the use of cunning becomes. In a state of weakness and insignificance, when prudence, judgment and ability no longer suffice, cunning may well appear the only hope. The bleaker the situation, with everything concentrating on a single desperate attempt, the more readily cunning is joined to daring. Released from all future considerations, and liberated from thoughts of later retribution, boldness and cunning will be free to augment each other to the point of concentrating a faint glimmer of hope into a single beam of light which may yet kindle a flame.*<sup>153</sup>

Thusly, after the evolvement of warfare from the tactical, feudal period to that of massive armies, the resemblance between East and West vanishes as each pursued ideas inherent in their cultural matrixes.

For example, contrast how unorthodox cunning and surprises were employed by the Sunzi-influenced Asians against the graduates of the aforementioned St. Cyr, Sandhurst and West Point and their ilk. The Japanese began with Pearl Harbor, Mao defeated the Western-influenced Nationalists in China, the British were defeated in Malaysia, and the Vietnamese triumphed over first the French and then the Americans. Today, it is the Taliban and Al Qaeda that are carrying on that tradition in Afghanistan after the Russians were defeated, and in Iraq against the Americans and multinationals. In other words, the emphasis on one strategic point gave the Westerners directionality in the beginning, but produced an ending they didn't anticipate. The many changes of the Russian and American policies and the dynamics of their pull-outs are strikingly similar as noted in a January 2013 *NY Times* article, "With U.S. Set to Leave Afghanistan, Echoes of 1989."

*. . . The Kremlin had learned that its armies could not capture political success, but Soviet commanders made the same claims upon withdrawal that are heard from NATO officers today: not a single battlefield engagement was lost to guerrillas, and no outpost ever fell to insurgents.*<sup>154</sup>

All this reminds one of the experiences of von Clausewitz and Napoleon. There is no mention of guerilla warfare in their books (nor in Jomini's writings) because they obviously didn't understand or like it. Nor did Hitler when he invaded Russia in 1941 with the largest invasion force in history.

Moreover, the common argument to defend Clausewitz's analysis of surprise—that it is no good due to technological advances of detection—was proven wrong in the

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<sup>153</sup> Clausewitz; p. 203

<sup>154</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/02/world/asia/us-war-in-afghanistan-has-echoes-of-soviet-experience.html?hpw&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/02/world/asia/us-war-in-afghanistan-has-echoes-of-soviet-experience.html?hpw&_r=0)

case of Japan in 1941 and invalid in the other cases because along with this change came the change in the nature of what an “army” was.

As for the Daoist point that, “One must adjust one’s strategies according the changing situations,” the reasons for the fall of the Qin dynasty that are discussed in the Coda of this essay can be compared to the largely stalled or failed military adventures of America since World War II. That is, the vast military machines that had brought them victory were not dismantled and therefore had to keep on being employed.

The next section will discuss the other side of the equation—the ancient Chinese perspective on the world and its activities and why and how their language shaped and developed their philosophies and military strategies and thus prepared them to play *weiqi*.

## The Chinese Perspective

In contrast to the Western style of thoughts about war, consider the comments of Edward Shaughnessy on Roger Ames’ *Sun Tzu: The Art of Warfare*:

*. . . Whereas Western thought is dominated by a “two-world” theory, whereby the phenomenal world has another directing world outside of it, and which assumes that there is some final purpose or goal to existence (pp. 45-46), Ames characterizes Chinese thinkers as assuming “that there is only one continuous concrete world that is the source and locus of all of our experience” (p. 49). And in contrast to the West, where Ames says that “knowledge tends to be understood in representational terms that are isomorphic and unambiguous” (p. 55), Chinese prefer to view the world as being in a constant state of flux, with things always influencing each other: “classical Chinese tends to favor a dynamic aural vocabulary, where wisdom is closely linked with communication.”*

*. . . [Thus, to] understand the close relationship between warfare and philosophy in classical China, then, we must look to the dynamics of an underlying and pervasive, conception of harmony (ho) that, for the classical Chinese world view, grounds human experience generally.* <sup>155</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Edward Shaughnessy; *I Ching: The Classic of Changes*; Ballantine Books; 1998; pp. 43-55/ Roger T. Ames, *Sun Tzu: The Art of Warfare*; Random House; 1993.

Moser comments on page 8: *Chinese thought . . . was more concerned with the ethical and behavioral implications of doctrines [and the] pursuit of knowledge was seldom divorced from the concrete need to construct and maintain the social and moral fabric of society. . . . The primary explanatory principle of Chinese cosmology was the qi [which will be discussed in detail below along with yin-yang theory] which was envisioned as a unitary psycho-physical substance . . . Though there were certainly mystical influences throughout Chinese philosophy, the mainstream orthodox tradition, Confucianism, was strongly humanist in outlook, showing little of the Greek fascination with pure theoretical problems.*

The idea of “harmony” in the Classical Chinese world begins in the language where there is no confusion between existence and essence—they use *you* “have” for existence and the “post-posed” copula *ye* for essence, but this essence is completely unlike its Greek counterpart. *Qing*, the quality without which something called “X” could not be named was not the equivalent of “essence” in Greek thought since it is tied to naming and not to a supra-natural “being.” Things are as they are.

A.C. Graham comments:

*. . . In the absence of an affirmative copulative verb there is no being an ox, any more than there is being white, and so no essence intervening between name and object; the term closest to Aristotelian essence, [qing] . . . covers everything in the ox without which the name “ox” would not fit it, not everything without which it would not be an ox. One begins to understand why in Chinese philosophy argumentation is conceived solely in terms of whether the name fits the object. . . . The practice of asking of something, not what it is, but what is meant by its name and what it is like, may be seen as guiding all ancient Chinese thinking towards the nominalism explicit in the Later Mohists and Hsun-tzu.*<sup>156</sup>

One might ask if there are other quasi-Platonic terms employed by the Mohists that might seem to over-lap the Greek notions of essences and Ideas. Moser describes six whose definitions I have paraphrased:

*Fa*: “standard” but which is never on a different level or equated with the thing itself.

*Mao*: “visible characteristics”—a criterion for naming, not an abstracted set of features.

*Xian*: what is known *a priori* about an object—the hardness but not the color of an unseen stone.

*Yi*: more or less “the remembered mental image of a thing”—the *yi* of tools are not known since they vary in shape; verbally “to conceive,” “to imagine.”

*Li*: the “pattern” of something that sets it off from other things—not a universal

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<sup>156</sup> Graham; pp. 409-21 According to a caution issued by Conzalo Rodriguez-Pereyra who was writing in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2011 Edition): . . . *The word ‘Nominalism’, as used by contemporary philosophers in the Anglo-American tradition, is ambiguous. In one sense, its most traditional sense deriving from the Middle Ages, it implies the rejection of universals. In another, more modern but equally entrenched sense, it implies the rejection of abstract objects. To say that these are distinct senses of the word presupposes that universal and abstract object do not mean the same thing. And in fact they do not. For although different philosophers mean different things by universal, and likewise by abstract object, according to widespread usage a universal is something that can be instantiated by different entities and an abstract object is something that is neither spatial nor temporal.* <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/nominalism-metaphysics>

features of a class of items, but rather the very specific markings of an individual thing.

*Gu*: the thing “as it originally was” before the name was applied—the thing it is, not the thing it is “deemed” (*wei*) to be.<sup>157</sup>

A.C. Graham adds to this idea with three verbs or pairs of verbs that can stand freely in nominal positions:

*Ian 'is-so', with an opposite usable in some contexts, fou 'is- not-so'. Nominalised fan ('being-so') covers only verbal concepts; but since these cover everything we express adjectivally, Chinese pai 'is-white' is something 'so' of a horse, while for us 'white' is something the horse is.*

*Shih 'is-this', opposite fei, 'is-not'. Shih unverballed is a resumptive pronoun 'this' (the aforesaid, the one in question). This pair apply in the first place to nominal sentences, which have the final particle yeh without a copulative verb, but are negated by the copulative verb fei 'is-not' with or without yeh. (We continue to italicise and displace the English equivalents of particles.)*

The third is *yu*, often translated as “there is” with its “opposite” *wu* “there is not.” In Western languages this would imply the existence of “Being” and “Non-being,” however, given that what is described has shape, color and other characteristics, it is more correct to use “having” and “not-having” such and such attributes—“It has white” rather than the abstract “It is white.” Thus, the use of *yu* illustrates the Chinese tendency to divide down from a greater whole (“The teacup has white”) and translating it into Western languages as “is” exposes our tendency to start from the thing itself and work up to our Mind/Body split.<sup>158</sup> (c.f. the word order of “The teacup is white”).

**Thus, in *weiqi*, it can be construed that the board with four set-up stones (nowadays there are no stones) was the beginning of a little universe and the full board at the end was the final division of things.**

**In the West, on the other hand, the universe was the aggregate of things that begins with them already divided (c.f. the lined-up pieces of chess) and then works itself up to the two-tiered world as in the symbolism of the king’s death in chess.**

In any case, Moser summed up by saying that the tools to build a two-tiered world were certainly there and he suggested that had the Mohists survived and the language evolved, they might have worked out something like the Aristotelian essences and Platonic Ideas. However, it seems that because of the lack of inflection and the opaqueness of the structure of the language, there was no interest in examining them

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<sup>157</sup> Moser, pp.125-134

<sup>158</sup> Graham; pp. 408-411

to the extent that the Greeks did. Instead, again and again, as he notes, the emergent quasi-Platonic Ideas were left to sophistries such as those of the School of Names who exploited the lack of abstraction and hypostasization as in the famous “A white horse is not a horse.”

## Chinese Ideas in Terms of Psychology and Philosophy

All this does not mean that the classical Chinese had no “ideas” in their heads or that they could not “reason” as we do.

It just means that they did not have to postulate a mental world where these ideas originated. In other words, for the Chinese, everything originates and is *in* the real world. Remembering the differences between psychology and philosophy—between *thinking*, which is a universal phenomena, and *thought*, which is guided by specific languages—means that, for the Chinese, their language only describes things as they are. There was no Chinese Heraclitus who questioned whether he was bathing in the same river because the same water wasn’t there.

Thus, Chad Hansen and Moser argued that classical Chinese thinkers had a different *theory* of psychology, not a different psychology—people don’t think like this but philosophers do.<sup>159</sup> This is in the sense that, as noted, Chinese philosophers tended to work within a whole-part ontology, rather than the Greek preference that stressed individuation as the central principle. (Note, incidentally, that the first Chinese grammar book did not appear until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century).

## Ambiguity and “Scaling Down”

Going further into what sets Classical Chinese apart from Western languages and affects their thought, Zhao Yuanren wrote in *A Basic Grammar of Chinese* that:

*It might seem that the monosyllabism in the word-syllable would tend to interfere with flexibility in expression. But in some ways it actually gives more flexibility. I even suspect that this flexibility in the medium has had its influence on the style of Chinese thinking. The brevity and regularity of meaningful units in the language tend to make structural words and phrases fall into convenient patterns of two, three, four, five and sometimes larger numbers of syllables. I venture to think that if the Chinese language had words of such incommensurable rhythm as “male” and “female”, “heaven” and “earth”, “rational” and “absurd,” there would never be such far-reaching conceptions as yin-yang or qian-kun [Hexagrams 1 and 2—Sun ☰ and Earth ☷].*<sup>160</sup>

Moser comments:

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<sup>159</sup> Hansen; p. 25, Moser; p.205

<sup>160</sup> Zhao Yuanren; *A Basic Grammar of Chinese*; Univ. of California Press; 1961; p. 289

*Zhao's remarks are highly speculative, of course, but he presents a notion that will be important throughout my discussion; namely, that small-scale tendencies and features of the language can "scale up" to higher-level structures and perhaps bolster certain kinds of conceptual formulations.*<sup>161</sup>

**And "scale down" to board games? Doesn't this process of building compounds sound like the formation of groups in *weiqi*? And, added to this process is the ambiguity of verbs and nouns in Classical Chinese. For example, in chess, when a piece moves across the board, there is no ambiguity of meaning—"to move" in the present or "move 21" in the past is a verb, not a noun. But in *weiqi*, adding a "thing"—a stone—to a group is making the group "move" by the addition of another monosyllabic "word" to a series of words that may have a meaning in the player's mind, but are not yet complete. Eventually, by the end of the game, the meaning becomes complete, as in a completed "paragraph." In other words, a "move" in *weiqi* seems to have elements of both a noun and a transitive verb (as in "One adds a stone to a group to make it larger"). Another way of thinking about this, which will be looked at more closely later on, is that following the correlation of all things in the Chinese universe, Time and Space cannot be separated—a move (Time) is defined by the Space where the stone is put down, the "shorthand" interpretation of which is accomplished by books on *joseki*, *fuseki*, etc.**

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<sup>161</sup> Moser; p. 73

### III. The Inner-Complexities of the Two Types of Perceived Reality

All this is not to say that the Chinese and Greeks were not interested in the same epistemological problems such as ethics, mathematical ideas and natural objects in the world—in fact they show a striking parallelism. Moser writes:

*It would perhaps be surprising if there were not considerable overlap in the focus of the . . . [Chinese and Greek] schools; they simply reflect the great commonality of the human conceptual process.*

*The Greeks and Mohists both shared a general interest in classifying types and cataloging relations between them. The interesting thing is that we see in the Mohists a concern with both concrete objects and with entities that from our perspective are clearly third-order abstractions.*

Following British linguist Sir John Lyons, Moser describes three orders of abstraction:

*First Order: the physical objects of the world. "rock," "country."*

*Second Order: events, processes, states-of-affairs, etc. which are located in time, which, in English, are said to occur or take place rather than to exist (p.443). "The accident on the freeway today," "the redness of this sunset."*

*Third Order: These have no spatio-temporal location. The "redness" of no particular sunset. "honesty," "death," "reason," etc.*

*Socrates was a first-order entity, his death a second-order entity, Death in general is a third-order.*<sup>162</sup>

However, Moser cautions:

*. . . I realize this framework raises more questions than it answers, and it perhaps goes without saying that this is an area of semantics which is fraught with contradictions and confusion. There are age-old ontological puzzles concerning the reality of universals, theoretical notions, imaginary constructs, conceptual entities, etc. Are unicorns, Santa Claus, phlogiston, God, triangles and the number five examples of first-, second-, or third-order entities? The domain where these questions reside is the playground of philosophers. . . . [For example:] When measuring milk into gallons,*

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<sup>162</sup> Moser; p. 21/John Lyons; *Semantics*; Cambridge Univ. Press; 1977



*there arises no burning desire to wonder where this thing called "gallon" resides when there is no milk around to measure.*<sup>163</sup>

*. . . note first of all that our habitual modes of expression need not always reflect the underlying abstractions we may make in our minds. A sentence like, "His wife's enjoyment of the sunset's beauty was in his thoughts all the next day," could just as well be expressed without abstract nouns like "enjoyment," "sunset," "beauty," and "thoughts," as "The sun was setting; it was beautiful; his wife enjoyed it; he was thinking of that all the next day." . . . [although, Moser added, no one speaks like this in Chinese.]*

*. . . But I do wish to make a cleaner separation between abstraction as a theoretical notion and abstraction as a conceptual process. To that end, we need to more clearly define what is meant by "thought".*

*. . . there is, in principle, [though only in principle—the boundaries are indefinite and subject to much ongoing debate] a separation between the effects of language on thinking (lower level cognitive processes such as perception, categorization, and memory) and thought (the process of the formulation of philosophical ideas, conceptual frameworks, or philosophical theories of language) . . .*<sup>164</sup>

The team of philosopher David Hall and sinologist Roger Ames summed up their view with approximately the same thoughts. They agree with Moser that:

*The Greeks and Mohists both shared a general interest in classifying types and cataloging relations between them. The interesting thing is that we see in the Mohists a concern with both concrete objects and with entities that, from our perspective, are clearly third-order abstractions. The difference, of course, is that the Mohists do not tend to recognize the hypostatization of concrete entities and neither do they seem to accord any special place for the abstract objects in their theory. Because the structure of their own language was more opaque to them, their concern was nominalist: how to make sure the system of names jibed seamlessly with the objects and their various combinations.*<sup>165</sup>

Looked at from a third angle, Laozi and Zhuangzi, the "founders" of Daoism, vehemently argued against the Confucian concern for the proper "rectification" of names (and titles) as described in Part One. Since what everyone calls a chair today may not be called one tomorrow, what was an emperor today may not be one tomorrow. There are no fixed ideas or truths and, moreover, there is no essence of things—objects and their attributes are simply a confluence of various components occupying one spatio-temporal region.

Thus, the Chinese or at least the Daoists—whose thoughts finally won out over the Confucian insistence on the rectification of names—would not say, "This is a chair,"

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<sup>163</sup> Moser; p. 138

<sup>164</sup> Moser; p. 22-3

<sup>165</sup> David Hall and Roger T. Ames; 'Chinese philosophy,' *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* E. Craig (Ed.); Routledge; 1998 <http://www.rep.routledge.com/article/G001SECT2>

meaning, "I believe this is a chair because it matches my idea of what a chair should be." They would simply say, "I "chair" this object based on my experience and the circumstances surrounding the situation." Instead of saying "It is raining," they would simply say, "Rain."

Graham adds another point to this analysis:

*In Classical Chinese . . . nothing compels the thinker to raise logical questions; unconscious of his own grammar, free to be vague or to clarify with further particles as occasion arises, he seems to look out on the world through language as a perfectly transparent medium. How logically the Chinese think must therefore always be ascribed to extra-linguistic causes—above all . . . the extent of controversy between rival schools*

166

It is interesting, by the way, that, as mentioned at the end of Part One, besides the theories of Stephen Nash and equilibrium theory, the modern context-based theories of General Semantics have recreated the Chinese way of thinking that is opposite to the Western "two-world" limitations on thought. Alfred Korzybski, its founder, derived inspiration from three 20<sup>th</sup> century developments: the development of General Relativity in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century; the miscommunications that helped create the horrors of WW I; and the development of electronic means of communication. As Michael Cole, a professor of communications at the University of California, San Diego, explains, he arrived at a position very close to that of Laozi and Zhuangzi and even aspects of Mohism.

*General Semantics posits a fundamental distinction between the sensory world of experience and the verbal world of symbols and language. In basic terms, it posits a continually changing world—one of process, flux, or becoming—much of which is inaccessible to direct observation or experience. What we do experience is therefore partial and incomplete, and human beings are characterized by an inescapable existential uncertainty about the world they live in. Much of what human beings understand about the world is an "abstraction" from what is there in reality; as an abstraction, much is left out of the representations human beings make about the world, representations/abstractions that operate for them as "common sense" information.*

*. . . General Semantics argues that a reflection on the Nature of Language is incomplete and errant unless it is accompanied by a problematization of the world within which language operates to mediate the relations of human beings with each other and the physical world. The problem of the "meaning" of words is therefore not dissociable from either the context in which words are used or the condition of the subject who speaks them.*

*. . . that meaning is inseparable from difference (as opposed to identity), movement (as opposed to stability), and singularity (as opposed to some thing's classificatory properties).*

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<sup>166</sup> Graham; pp. 403-4

*. . . Abstractions are representations of the world that, in relation to each other or with reality produce differences - a distance, separation, bare similitude, etc - that must be reconciled in order for thought or action to follow.*<sup>167</sup>

There are also differences between East and West in perceptions as shown experimentally by psychologist Richard Nisbett's *The Geography of Thought*. In the Appendix of my Go and Cognition article I quoted from an interview with him on NPR:<sup>168</sup>

*I had a very brilliant Chinese student a number of years back . . . who told me one day that he and I were different. I thought the world was a line and he thought the world was a circle and I did a bit of a double-take on that and he began to tell me what has turned out to be the story of our research essentially. He said that Westerners are analytic. They tend to think about an object. They zero in their perception on a particular object—could be a person—and think about its attributes and try to categorize the object on the basis of its attributes and to think of the rules that apply to the behavior of the object with a view toward controlling it. And among the rules that . . . Westerners use to think about things are the formal rules of logic.*

*In contrast, East Asians have a holistic way of thinking. They pay attention to a much broader field than Westerners do. They pay attention to the situation that a person is in. They pay attention to the context that a physical object is in and they're much more concerned with relationships among objects and relationships among people than Westerners, are and they don't have such explicit rules for the behavior of objects and people. And they don't expect to have such control over them as Westerners do. And among the rules they don't have are the rules of logic. At least they use the rules of logic to think about everyday life events less than Westerners do.*

*. . . [We] show people movies of underwater scenes and there's always a particularly salient object, usually a fish, and we define salience by the fact that one of these fish is larger, brighter and faster-moving than the others. And we show these scenes for 20 seconds and then we ask people what it is they have seen. And Westerners, the first thing they say is, "Well"—and then they zero in on a central object. They say, "I saw what looked like a trout swimming off to the left. It maybe had some pink speckles on its belly." East Asians are much more likely to start out by saying, "I saw what looked like a stream; there were rocks on the bottom and some plants." So they start out with a context.*

*Altogether, our Japanese subjects, in one experiment that we ran, remembered 60 percent more detail about the environment or the background than the American subjects that we tested did. And they actually saw 100 percent more, twice as many,*

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<sup>167</sup> <http://communication.ucsd.edu/berman>. See also <http://www.gestalt.org/semantic.htm>.

<sup>168</sup> [http://www.usgo.org/files/bh\\_library/Cog%20Psych%20Appendix%201.pdf](http://www.usgo.org/files/bh_library/Cog%20Psych%20Appendix%201.pdf)

*relationships involving inanimate objects as the Americans did. It's as if, if it wasn't moving, it wasn't really there for the Americans.*<sup>169</sup>

**Nisbett did not write about *weiqi* or chess but it is easy to see why its complex layouts would be appealing to Easterners and the movement of chess pieces would appeal to Westerners. Moreover, for the Chinese who noticed the context first, the little universe of the picture, as mentioned, would divide down from a greater whole as in the pattern of the sentence, "The teacup has white."**

**In the West, as also mentioned, the universe was the aggregate of things that would begin with them already divided, as in the individual details of a picture that the perceiver would put together to find the whole picture, or the two-tiered world, as in the pattern, "The teacup is white."**

**Moreover, besides the advantage for *weiqi*-playing of having a visual-based written language, it might be possible that syntax-based Chinese is far superior to Western languages in regard to thinking about strategies while one is playing. In the silent inner dialogues that happen after visual elements turn into words, one could more easily "move the pieces around" in the mind, unencumbered as they would be by inflections and other grammatical paraphernalia.**

**Another way of looking at the differences between chess and *weiqi* is assemblage of *weiqi* terms and proverbs that enter into the inner-dialogues with the rich vocabulary of *weiqi* players when they are deciding about a move. Sensei's Library lists over 300 terms and more than 100 proverbs.<sup>170</sup> This is very un-chess-like and has been studied in Japan and is discussed in my Cognition article.<sup>171</sup>**

**Also, as described before, one can consider uninflected and monosyllabic Classical Chinese as a perfect "model" from the angle of phenomenology. That is, *weiqi* is a conversation since I "speak" (play) then you "speak" (play) then I speak, etc. Thus, it is easy to see how the final board position is more or less a record of the "conversation" that took place. This is unlike the "abstract" remains of the slaughter of chess.**

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<sup>169</sup> Richard Nisbett; *The Geography of Thought: How Asian and Westerners Think Differently. . . and Why*; The Free Press; 2003

<http://www.npr.org/search/index.php?searchinput=www.npr.org%2Ftemplates%2Fstory%2Fstory.php%3FstoryId%3D1180660%2C>

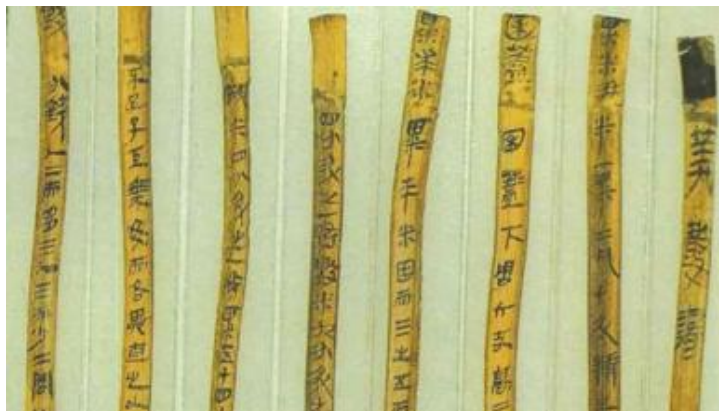
<sup>170</sup> <http://senseis.xmp.net/?JapaneseGoTerms> and <http://senseis.xmp.net/?GoProverbs#toc3>

<sup>171</sup> [http://www.usgo.org/files/bh\\_library/goandpsych.pdf](http://www.usgo.org/files/bh_library/goandpsych.pdf)

## IV. The Chinese Written Language Encourages the Playing of *Weiqi*

Some other points about the differences in written Western and Eastern languages should be considered. For example, phonetically-based alphabets do not have the same concrete existence as one built on images. The former would seem to invite making abstract thoughts (like “God” with a capital “G”) in the mind and constructing a reason (or “philosophy”) for this. And, before the Qin, Han and later modernizations and simplifications, the Chinese written language was even more object—i.e. “real world”—oriented.

Also to be kept in mind is that the Chinese writing system united peoples who pronounced characters differently, but, since it was unspoken, it developed its own presence, characteristics and grammar independently of speech, almost as if it was a game constructed out of a view of reality.



172

*Bamboo Strips*

Moreover, since paper was not invented in China until c. 100 BC and silk could deteriorate, the early books were written on bamboo strips which, in part, accounts for the pithy, condensed, aphoristic style of books such as the *Sunzi* and, as will be seen, in the four-character Thirty-six Strategies in Part Three. This is in contrast to Western-style pontifications written on the larger expanses of papyrus, parchment and clay.

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<sup>172</sup> <http://www.cam.ac.uk>

## V. Something and Nothing

The effects of having or not having abstract nouns within one's mental "horizon" has dramatic effects in how one sees the world. Without a two-world dynamic, without a mind/body or idea/thing split to "ground things to" and define them—if there is no discernible standard, for, say "chairs"—how does one define one?

Laozi and Zhuangzi were pioneers of the idea that we cannot know one thing without learning its opposite—to know what a chair was, they would have to decide what was not a chair. The two are linked in Chinese minds very differently from those of the Greeks.

The mind-body split that we Westerners assume exists carries over to make us think that opposites always "oppose" each other *and are not connected with anything else*. **Think of chess and its two warring armies facing each other across the board.**

Think about "Something" and "Nothing."

When "Nothing" is translated from Chinese to English, we think of absolute, empty space. Taken a step further, we tend to think our "ideas" are composed of "Nothing." When Indian Buddhism with a mind-body split and hypostasized "concrete" ideas about the "Void" attached itself to Daoism after about 200 AD, their Void "existed" and therefore the Dao "existed." This was similar to the ideas that were transmitted to the West by misinformed Jesuit missionaries who believed in one God and expounded on their *literati* Confucian informants' ideas about the "One," under which all is subsumed.

Instead, think about the famous Daoist phrase from the *Daodejing*, "The usefulness of a pot lies in the nothingness inside." Or what the architect Frank Lloyd Wright once said about rooms after spending a great deal of time in Japan—that their use comes from their emptiness. This sounds mystical to us, but to the Chinese, it is not. There is no such thing as "nothing," at least in classical Chinese. When "nothing" was being talked about, it was not an abstract nothing—"Nothing" (*shi*) was an entity; just as "Something" (*you*) was. Except *you* does not mean our abstract "is" as in, for example, "It is raining"—*you* means "to have," which in turn means "to have existence" while *shi* means "to not have" which is "something," not "nothing" in our sense. The inside of an empty pot is there—it won't go away and it can't exist without the pot which is its "opposite." For "something" to exist, "nothing" must exist.

But where *is* the split between "Something" and "Nothing?" Where does "right" start becoming "left?" Where does "truth" start becoming "lies?" Where does "so" start becoming "not-so?" These are not the abstract dichotomies that obsess Western thinkers with such questions as, "What is good and what is evil? What is permanent and what is changing? What is the One and what is the Many? What is a universal, what is a particular?"

The Classical Chinese language shapes thoughts about these subjects in a different way than ours does.

A.C. Graham noted:

*Whichever position one takes on the disputed issue of whether all thinking is ultimately binary, there can be no doubt of the centrality of binary oppositions in Chinese culture. Everywhere from the pairs and the sets of four, five or more in cosmology to the parallelism of prose and the tone patterns of regulated verse we find groups which, even when the number is odd, divide neatly into pairs with one left over. [For example, during the Warring States period, the binary Heaven-Earth dichotomy of the Zhou became Heaven-Man-Earth.]*<sup>173</sup>

And, of course, the ultimate binary opposition is *yin* and *yang* that were formed at the beginning of the "Union of Time and Space" **just as a black and a white stone combine in a phenomenological sense on an empty board to begin a *weiqi* game.**<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Graham; p. 330

<sup>174</sup> Much in this manner, the German philosopher Martin Heidegger, very popular in Japan, likened the Beginning of All Things to the opening of a flower. See my cognition article for more information.



## VI. *Qi* and *Yin-Yang*

The Chinese from early on felt they were surrounded by the fluid “sea” of *qi*—a psychophysical energy that courses around and between the universal qualities of *yin* and *yang*, constantly disposing itself in various concentrations, configurations and perturbations throughout Nature, the landscape, our bodies **and, eventually, along the lines of their *weiqi* boards as constricted and released by the placement of *weiqi* stones.**

In the beginning, although there have been a few alternate views, the Shang dynasty oracle bone character for *qi* is generally said to represent the steam ascending from a pot cooking rice and this concept, as it related to humans, is very old.

[The earliest evidence of a practice now known as *Qigong*] *comes from the discovery of color pottery of the Majiayao culture of the Neolithic period found in 1975 in Northwest China’s, Qinghai Province, Ledu County Liuwan. A painted water vessel pottery pot (height 34 cm), estimated to be at least 5000 years old, was found decorated with a human portrait . . . posed in a posture that is identical to a posture of Qigong practice called standing post.*



This estimated 5000 year-old Neolithic vessel was unearthed during the 1970s in Northwest China.



A Qigong posture technique called standing post

175

The oldest written description of *qi* appears on a Warring States jade piece called the *Xing Qi Ming* or *Circulating Qi Inscription* which was translated by Li Ling:

<sup>175</sup> This material comes from [http://www.vivalachi.com/Qi\\_Chi\\_and\\_Qigong\\_for\\_Health\\_s/127.htm](http://www.vivalachi.com/Qi_Chi_and_Qigong_for_Health_s/127.htm)



Xing Qi Ming, an artifact from the late Warring States Period, is the earliest found written evidence of Qigong theory and practice. Display at the Tianjin Museum

*When one inhales (so that one) swallows (the qi), qi is gathered.  
 As qi has gathered, it expands.  
 As qi has expanded, it goes downward.  
 As qi goes downward, it settles.  
 As qi is settled, it solidifies.  
 As qi is solidified, it sprouts.  
 As qi sprouts, it grows. As qi grows, it is returned.  
 As qi returns, it ascends to heaven.  
 The origin of heaven is in the above, the origin of earth at the below.  
 One follows (such way), one lives. One is against (such way), one dies.*<sup>176</sup>

A.C. Graham gives another view of this concept which was not yet Daoism, since the desired object was not spontaneous action.

*. . . Four of the chapters [in the Guanzi] describe meditative practice, "The Lore of the Heart", in two parts . . . "Exposing the Heart" . . . and "Inward Training" . . . The last of these seems to be the oldest, from the 4th century B.C. . . . [It is mostly in rhymed verse and] is important as possibly the oldest "mystical" text in China. Its practices may be seen as belonging . . . to an early phase before the breach between Confucianism and Taoism opened. There is no defiance of moral conventions as in . . . [Zhuangzi], on the contrary it is assumed that the effect of contemplation is to make one a "gentleman", in spontaneous accord with the benevolent, the right, and the ceremonial. It is interesting also in providing clear evidence that the meditation practiced privately and recommended to rulers as an arcanum of government descends directly from the trance of the professional shaman.*

<sup>176</sup> [http://literati-tradition.com/qi\\_breath.html](http://literati-tradition.com/qi_breath.html)

*In the state and family cults of ancient China one sacrificed to a variety of spirits, of the dead and of the mountains and rivers, of which the higher were called shen and the lower kuei, the words we have so far been translating "gods" and "ghosts". The Sayings of the States, a collection of statesmen's speeches cognate with the Tso Commentary, has a description of the people who in ancient times were responsible for sacrifices to the shen:*

*"Their wisdom could compare what was due to those above and those below, their sagehood could illuminate them in the distance and expose them to full view, their eyesight could see them brightly lit, their hearing could discern their voices distinctly. Consequently the luminous shen descended on them, on men called shamans and women called shamanesses."*

*This has two points in common with the "Inward Training", the brightening of the senses and the descent of the shen. But by this period the gods and ghosts, like Heaven itself, are in the direction of becoming depersonalised though still vaguely numinous forces of nature. One scarcely meets a named spirit in the philosophical literature. The word shen tends to be used as stative verb rather than noun, of mysterious power and intelligence radiating from a person or thing; as English equivalent we choose "daimonic". Man himself can aspire, not indeed to omniscience (since Chinese thinking does not deal in absolutes), but to that supremely lucid awareness which excites a shudder of numinous awe. Thus the sage in . . . [Zhuangzi], is the "daimonic man", the divining [yarrow] stalks of the [Zhouyi] are the "daimonic things".*

*In the "Inward Training" the descent of the daimonic is understood in terms of ch'i, a word we shall leave untranslated. It was soon to be adapted to cosmology as the universal fluid, active as Yang and passive as Yin, out of which all things condense and into which they dissolve. But in its older sense, which remains the primary one, it is like such words in other cultures as Greek pneuma "wind, air, breath". It is the energetic fluid which vitalises the body, in particular as the breath, and which circulates outside us as the air. At its purest and most vital it is ching, the "quintessential", which above is perfectly luminous as the heavenly bodies, circulates in the atmosphere as the kuei shen (which at this depersonalising stage we translate "the ghostly and daimonic"), and descends into man as his shen "daimon", rendering him shen ming "daimonic and clear-seeing", so that he perceives the myriad things with perfect clarity.*

*"In all things the quintessential  
Transforming becomes the living.  
Below it generates the Five Grains,  
Above becomes the constellated stars.  
Flowing between heaven and earth,  
Call it the ghostly and daimonic.  
Who stores it in the breast  
Call the sage."*

*The problem is to use the heart, the organ of thought, to guide the ch'i so that one is filled with the most quintessential, the body flourishes in good health to a ripe old age, and by the inward maturing of Potency one spontaneously accords with the Way. The technique is moderation in diet, adjustment of posture and presumably controlled breathing. The purpose is to fix the heart [which had, in another passage, a second heart inside of it] by checking all disturbances by the passions.*<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Graham; pp. 100-2

## VII. Correlative Thinking: The Formation of the World of *Yin* and *Yang* from *Qi*

The astronomical chapter of the *Huainanzi* from 139 BC begins with the most developed cosmogony in early Chinese literature. Graham translates, noting that every sentence with "Therefore" needs italics to convey the meaning:

*"When Heaven and Earth were not yet shaped, it was amorphous, vague, a blank, a blur; call it therefore the Primal Beginning". The Way began in the tenuous and transparent, the tenuous and transparent generated Space and Time, Space and Time generated the ch'i. There was a shoreline in the ch'i; the clear and soaring dissipated to become Heaven, the heavy and muddy congealed to become Earth. The concentration of the clear and subtle is easy, the concretion of the heavy and muddy is difficult; therefore Heaven was completed first and Earth afterwards.*

*"The superimposed quintessences of Heaven and Earth became the Yang and Yin, the concentrating quintessences of Yin and Yang became the Four Seasons, the scattering quintessences of the Four Seasons became the myriad creatures. The hot ch'i of the accumulating Yang generated fire, the quintessence of the ch'i of fire became the sun; the cold ch'i of the accumulating Yin became water, the quintessence of the ch'i of water became the moon; the overflow of the quintessences of sun and moon became the stars. Heaven received the sun, moon and stars, Earth received the showers of water and the dust and dirt."*

[After a mythological interlude to explain corresponding asymmetries of Heaven and Earth, the account explains that the] ". . . Way of Heaven is to be round, the way of Earth is to be square. It is primary to the square to be dim, primary to the round to shine. To shine is to expel ch'i, for which reason fire and sun cast the image outside. To be dim is to hold ch'i in, for which reason water and moon draw the image inside. What expels ch'i does to, what holds ch'i in is transformed by. Therefore the Yang does to, the Yin is transformed by.

*"Of the ch'i inclining to Heaven, the raging became wind; of the combining ch'i of Heaven and Earth, the harmonious became rain. When Yin and Yang clashed, being roused they became thunder, crossing paths they became lightning, confusing they became mist. When the Yang ch'i prevailed, it scattered to become rain and dew; when the Yin ch'i prevailed, it congealed to become frost and snow.*

*"The furred and feathered are the kinds which fly and run, and therefore belong to the Yang; the shelled and scaly are the kinds which hibernate and hide, and therefore belong to the Yin. The sun is ruler of the Yang, and for this reason in spring and summer the herd animals shed hair, and at the solstice the deer shed their horns; the moon is ancestor of the Yin, which is why when the moon wanes the brains of fishes diminish, and when the moon dies the swollen oyster shrinks.*

*"Fire goes up and trails, water goes down and flows; therefore the birds flying up go high, the fish when stirred go down. Things which are of a kind stir*

*each other, what is at the root and what are at the tips respond to each other. Therefore when the Yang burner [a concave mirror] sees the sun it ignites and makes fire, when the square "chu" [an object laid out at night to catch the dew] sees the moon, it moistens and makes water."*

[In other words] . . . Huai-nan-tzu *orders its cosmos by taking crucial binary oppositions, as they are drawn in Chinese culture, and arranging them in the sequence which shapes the simplest and most comprehensive pattern.*<sup>178</sup>

Before this, Graham had noted:

*The traditional cosmology as it settles into its lasting shape after 250 B.C. is ordered by lining up all binary oppositions along a single chain, with one member Yin and the other Yang. The Ch'eng, one of the additional documents on Mawangtui manuscript B of Lao-tzu, not much later than 250 B.C., provides the earliest comprehensive list of which we know.*

*"Whenever sorting out be sure to use the Yin and Yang to make plain the overall scheme. Heaven is Yang, Earth is Yin . . .*

<i>Yang</i>	<i>Yin</i>
<i>Heaven</i>	<i>Earth</i>
<i>Spring</i>	<i>Autumn</i>
<i>Summer</i>	<i>Winter</i>
<i>Day</i>	<i>Night</i>
<i>Big States</i>	<i>Small States</i>
<i>Important States</i>	<i>Unimportant States</i>
<i>Action</i>	<i>Inaction</i>
<i>Stretching</i>	<i>Contracting</i>
<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Minister</i>
<i>Above</i>	<i>Below</i>

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<sup>178</sup> Graham; pp. 332-3 However, if one asks why the moon, which is connected with 'square,' is round, originally it was with Heaven along with the sun and therefore it is round. It will be shown how complicated correlative system building is as it progresses from the One to the 10,000 Things and, to coin a phrase, the "10,000 Places," along with everything in between.

Another more "folkish" version begins with the universal Chaos within which was laid a Cosmic Egg. When its *yin* inside had balanced out with its *yang*, the horned, hairy giant Pang Gu emerged wearing furs. With a swing of his mighty ax, he separated *yin* from *yang*; the descending *yin* formed the earth and the ascending *yang* became the sky. To keep them separated; Pan Gu stood between them and kept pushing up the sky, an effort that took 18,000 years because each day he grew only ten feet taller.

After his task was completed, Pan Gu died. His eyes became the sun and the moon, his breath the wind, his voice thunder, his body mountains, his blood rivers; his muscles fertile lands; his facial hair stars and the Milky Way, his fur bushes and forests, his bones valuable minerals; the marrow of his bones sacred diamonds; his sweat rain, and the fleas on his fur carried by the wind became the fish and animals of the world. The goddess Nuwa then used the mud of river beds to form humans.

Man  
Father  
Elder Brother  
Noble  
Getting On in the World  
Taking a Wife, Begetting a Child  
Controlling Others  
Guest  
Soldiers  
Speech  
Giving

Woman  
Child  
Younger Brother  
Base  
Being Stuck Where One Is  
Mourning  
Being Controlled by Others  
Host  
Labourers  
Silence  
Receiving<sup>179</sup>

From the earliest text on the subject, *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine*:

*By the transformation of Yang and its union with Yin, the Five Elemental Energies of Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water arise, each within its specific nature according to its share of yin and Yang. These Five Elemental Energies constantly change their sphere of activity, nurturing and counteracting one another so that there is a constancy in the transformation from emptiness to abundance and abundance to emptiness, like a ring without beginning or end. The interaction of these primordial forces brings harmonious change and the cycles of nature run their course . . . The Five Elemental Energies combine and recombine in innumerable ways to produce manifest existence. All things contain all Five Elemental Energies in various proportions.*<sup>180</sup>

Later, more will be said about this intriguing subject.

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<sup>179</sup> Graham; p. 330-1

<sup>180</sup> <http://lieske.com/5e-intro.htm>



## VIII. Some Linguistic and Mental Consequences of Binary Thinking and Correlative Cosmos Building

Graham further discusses some of the aspects of correlative cosmos-building that are based on binary thinking, which he and Moser agree, exists in all languages. The subject of this activity in both the East and the West is most conveniently approached:

*. . . as merely an . . . example of the correlative thinking . . . which underlies the operations of language itself [and is used by all]. To analyse it we shall borrow from structural linguistics the approach and terminology of Roman Jakobson.*

*We start from the truism that thinking is conducted in sentences composed of words drawn from the vocabulary of one's language, and that the words are already grouping in the "language" (Saussure's langue) before entering the sentences of "speech" (Saussure's parole). In speaking we on the one hand select words from pairs or larger sets ("paradigms"), on the other combine them in phrases and sentences ("syntagms").*<sup>181</sup>

This seems to Moser to be a universal mechanism behind the transfer of perceptions into cognition (**and also, perhaps, the invention and creation of competitive board games that seem to "model" this situation**).

Graham then suggests that our binary thinking is submerged in English (and Greek) into an "automatic" thought-train that leads one by metaphor and metonymy down a mental path. The hypostatization of "Black and White," for example, easily leads us to proceed from an AB paradigm to a syntagm of a battle between the stark opposites of the "Kingdom of Light and Goodness" vs. the "Kingdoms of Darkness and Evil." Thus:

<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>1. Day</i>	<i>Night</i>
<i>2. Light</i>	<i>Darkness</i>
<i>3. Knowledge</i>	<i>Ignorance</i>
<i>4. Good</i>	<i>Evil</i> <sup>182</sup>

Within this "grouping" or binary frameworks of word pairs of oppositional and collocational dyads, in the West, one is usually "superior" although this disguised in the language. However, this never happens in Chinese because, although the *Yang* side of the binaries is always considered superior, it is a "complementary superiority" and not a "conflicting" one. As will be discussed shortly, this is the type of correlative polarity that runs through and structures Classical Chinese poetry, rhetoric, aesthetics, war

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<sup>181</sup> Graham; p. 319

<sup>182</sup> Graham; p. 320

strategies and **as with the intermingled patterns of stones on a *weiqi* board**. In early China, Day co-exists with Night, Light with Darkness and Knowledge with Ignorance.<sup>183</sup>

**In contrast, in the “morality” treatises about chess from its “feudal” days to the present, the black pieces sometimes represented the Devil’s tempting of and battling the white pieces, who at times represented God, the Virtues or mortal humans.**<sup>184</sup>



Les joueurs d'échecs (The Chess Players) *and* The Seventh Seal<sup>185</sup>

In *Les joueurs*, they are playing on a casket, the Devil on the left is playing Black and the human is one move from being mated. In Bergman’s movie, Death plays Black and the Crusader plays White. This would not have happened in China where the inlaid symbolism of death in a two-tiered world did not exist. The closest scenario might be the “Rotten Axe” game played by two Immortals in a Daoist folktale from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

*A wood cutter chanced upon two Immortals playing in the woods and he became so entranced that when the game ended 100 years later, his axe had rotted. When he returned over the mystical bridge that separated the Immortal World from ours, no one in his village knew him. The Tang poet Meng Chiao wrote:*

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<sup>183</sup> A.C. Graham pointed out that we can thank Jacques Derrida for his pioneering “deconstruction” of the “logocentric tradition of the West,” which shows how we tend to let our A’s obliterate the B’s. The way out for Derrida was the “Trace.” (Graham; pp. 327-9)

<sup>184</sup> God vs. Satan in chess first appeared in the 12<sup>th</sup> century in *Les Miracles de Nostre Dame* by Gautier de Coince.

<sup>185</sup> By Moritz August Retzsch (1779 - 1857) and Ingmar Bergman. <http://www.chess.com>  
<http://www.asharperfocus.com/7thseal.htm>

*In the immortal world what one day sees  
 For the human world a thousand years lacks  
 Two qi players have not surrounded their positions  
 While 10,000 earthly matters have emptied  
 The woodchopper turns to the path home  
 His axe handle rotten from the wind  
 The only thing left is the Stone Bridge  
 He alone sees across an orange-red rainbow*<sup>186</sup>

To be sure, both Moser and Graham thoroughly dissect this simplification of the differences between English, Greek and Classical Chinese before coming to their conclusions, but the main point is that juxtaposed opposite terms, though inherent in all languages, are not similar in pattern. One example concerns the nominalization that Moser mentioned earlier. Classical Chinese did not have the discrete lexical units that English and Greek use to denote abstract qualities such as size, length and weight. Graham writes:

*Chinese nominalises pairs of opposites, saying ta hsiao "being big or small" and ch'ang tuan "being long or short" where we would say "size" and "length", or yu wu "there being or not being", jan bu jan "being so or no so", shih fei "being or not being this", in the sort of contexts where we would be talking about being or truth.*<sup>187</sup>

Moser adds:

*More often . . . the abstract third term is derived from one of the members of the [A-B] pair, thus we have high-low -> height; wide-narrow -> width; deep-shallow -> depth; long-short -> length; and so on.*

*. . . there is [also] a feature of Greek and English that allows each of the members of the dyad by means of suffixation to have an explicitly marked hypostasized mode as well. For example, in addition to the pair heavy-light being subsumed under the concept "weight", there is the possibility for each member of the pair to undergo hypostasis to a third-order abstraction: heaviness-lightness. (The same being the case in Greek: baryscoyphos "heavy-light" -> baros "weight" -> barytes-koyphrotes "heaviness-lightness".)*

*These morphological markings give the Greek philosopher great flexibility in pinpointing and manipulating these abstractions in the course of expounding an argument. . . .*

*It can [also] be seen that a factor contributing to the extreme ambiguity of Chinese compounds was the fact that they were not separated by conjunctions such as and or or, as compounds are in Greek or English. Added to this lack [is] the fact that*

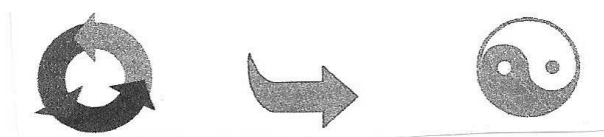
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<sup>186</sup> The translation is mine.

<sup>187</sup> Graham; p. 400

*the Chinese had no conscious distinction of nouns, verbs, or adjectives . . .*<sup>188</sup>

As seen in Part One and will be seen in Part Three, given the “concrete” binary lingual framework that is woven into Chinese, a “correlating” Dark Daoist commander of an army would automatically be aware of the fact that if there is *Yang* in a situation, there must be *Yin*—a weakness, and that therefore, one would be tempted to follow the advice of his mentor, Laozi and use it to turn one into the other to one’s advantage. This is what Sunzi so spectacularly did with his ideas of the “unorthodox” as opposed to the “orthodox” strategies (although they were not described as *Yin* or *Yang*). They are like a ring, he wrote, or, as in the 11th century AD sign of the *Taijitu* demonstrates:



Here the “opposite” of the Black in the *Yin-Yang* symbol is the White, but there is no hard dividing line in Chinese between opposites—they co-mingle, **as do black and white in a *weiqi* game**, and what is most important for the Daoist strategist, as discussed before, they are never still, **again as in a *weiqi* game**. There is constant *change* so there are no absolute, fixed meanings. Even the Confucians gave up trying to deny this.

Looking at it in another way, for example, are the thoughts of Laozi in the beginning of the *Daodejing*:

*The Dao that can be spoken of is not the ineffable Dao;  
The name that can be named is not an ineffable name.  
The nameless is the beginning of Heaven and Earth;  
The named is the mother of the myriad [10,000] things.*<sup>189</sup>

They make more sense if the role of language in influencing thought is thought about. *Contra* the Confucians, Laozi recognized that his language confined him to think of, for example, the “nameless” and the “named” not as two distinct abstract entities but, in a sense, as one in which the two co-exist. Without one, one could not have the other, just as the things of the world could not exist without Heaven and Earth. As Graham demonstrated, the one becomes the two becomes the three . . .

Thus, if everything is changing because of the flow of *qi* and the revolutions of *yin-yang* and the one becoming two becoming three, then the important thing for the Daoist strategists was to be able to change with the changes.

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<sup>188</sup> Moser; pp. 210-2

<sup>189</sup> Ralph D. Sawyer and Mei-chun Lee Sawyer; 1999; <http://www.bopsecrets.org/gateway/passages/tao-te-ching.htm> There are 175 different translations of Chapter One of the *Daodejing* on this site.

## IX. *dao*—"The ways"

**It is the paradoxical use of "softness" and "yielding" that distinguishes Chinese thoughts about the physical martial arts such as karate and mental martial arts such as go that turn opponents own energies against themselves by reversing their direction, or hastening their declines by encouraging its growth.** It is this fluidity of thought combined with the other principle—that there is a palpable "Nothing" as opposed to "Something"—that helps produce the concepts of the *dao*. However, these concepts are utterly unlike the typical Western ideas about the *Dao*—two of which are that it is singular and it should be capitalized.

There have been many factors that have led to these distortions, even for the Chinese. First of all, as outlined in Part One, the history of Daoism was written by Confucian court historians of the Han for rulers who were interested in preserving their rule rather than in having it destroyed by rebellious (Daoist) stratagems which have fueled every Chinese revolt since then, including the recent Falun Gung. It was in their interests to present this "nature religion" of "doing nothing" as mystical, paradoxical, nonsensical and incomprehensible. Taught by these types of court personnel, the first missionaries who landed in China in the early 1600s, most of whom were Catholic, then transmitted that vision to the West.

In their translations, Daoism naturally appeared to be a "religion" and therefore, the *Dao* was singular and capitalized, like our word, "God." And because the *Daodejing* seemed to be the most sophisticated "nature religion" available, it became the most-translated book into English next to the Bible.

However, in classical Chinese there is no distinction between singular and plural (or verbs and nouns) so the texts were ambiguous and could be interpreted in many ways. Even though it was obvious that the Daoists meant that there is no "one way," the court historians encouraged this view which of course made the *Dao* as nonsensical as it appears to be in English.

Take for example, the common idea that the *Dao* is a "center pole" that lies between all "opposites" in the universe and around which they turn. We imagine we can "see" this "pole" in our minds and thus we think we "understand" the concept. However, the Chinese, as has been shown, would say that there is no "center" of anything.

More important, the books in Western languages then went on to conclude that since there seems to be a "balance" between the *Yin* and the *Yang* forces in the universe, the "Way" to personal happiness and success in practical endeavors is to "balance out" one's *Yin* and *Yang* to fit into that "harmony." No wonder the Chinese laugh at these dilutions of their thought, just as for years, they smiled at Western concepts of what their food was all about.

Actually, there are many "ways" or *dao*—each ancient Chinese philosopher had a different conception although they all used the same character. For example, the Chinese word for "know" is *zhidao* which means, "to know the way to . . ." Thus, for example, one of the *dao* of Zhuangzi means something like "advancing skill"—a process

that is never-ending. His best known example is a butcher who, after many years, never had to re-sharpen his knife yet, though he had a *dao*, still envisioned improving it. The “Dao” was not an absolute, whole, abstract “Something” (or “Nothing”) as commonly supposed in the West. What was meant was that the mundane act of butchering or the more advanced acts of playing *weiqi* can become an art form and great rewards equal to a feeling of spirituality can result from doing real things well in the real world. In other words, true Daoism maintains that we all live in nature—there is nothing else—and we should act accordingly. This is the connection between the *dao* of Laozi the philosopher, Sunzi the warrior **and anyone who plays go**. These “ways” concern the art of responding to and manipulating the forces of *yin* and *yang* that one encounters.

In fact, it is estimated that 70% of the early Daoist texts were written for military use and the happiness they induced was the result when you got what you wanted. The Chinese were above all a practical people and so this idea is opposed to the fluffy concoctions that have so often appeared in Western books like *The Dao of Management*, *The Dao Jones Average* or *The Dao of Pooh*. Achieving “inner happiness” for someone running a kingdom or an army could not come from balancing with “Nature” one’s “Maleness and Femaleness,” or one’s “Yinness and Yangness.” No wonder the Chinese laugh at these dilutions of their thought, just as for years they smiled at Western concepts of what their food was all about.

An ancient Daoist saying sums this up:

*One who wants to gain mastery of the world must make use of the world and not rely merely on one’s own strength.*<sup>190</sup>

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190 From Bingfa Baiyan (A Hundred War Maxims) “Procurement” For a complete list of ancient Chinese war manuals, see Wujiang’s Feb. 18, 2005 post at [http://www.chinahistoryforum.com/index.php?topic/691-overview-of-chinese-art-of-war/page\\_\\_st\\_\\_15](http://www.chinahistoryforum.com/index.php?topic/691-overview-of-chinese-art-of-war/page__st__15)

The route to sagehood in Confucian terms was also a matter of perceiving the AB Binary correlations: *The sage, however much or little he may analyze, in the first place distinguishes, classifies, and fixes by naming; he reacts similarly to the similar, connectedly to the connected, and in distinguishing two sides spontaneously prefers one to the other. Cosmos and community divide into superior A and inferior B, Heaven/Earth, ruler/subject, father/son. What each in his position in cosmos and community would spontaneously incline to do in perfect awareness thus follows for Confucius immediately from correctness in naming that is, from naming which correctly assimilates, contrasts, and connects.* (Graham; p. 331)

## X. A Short Review

In China, since there is no verb “to be” and no postulated “world of ideas,” no one speculated about them. Moreover, the classical Chinese with their monosyllabic characters felt no need for distinguishing between singular and plural nouns which was a problem the Greeks were acutely aware of. There was no definite article “the” (as in the English “The Dao”) or clear demarcations between verbs, adjectives and nouns. Also, there seemed to be little need for sentences as complete thoughts with a subject and predicate (although there were certain words that denoted modal nuances at the end of thoughts, which, however, only incidentally marked sentence boundaries). Nor were there “paragraphs” leading in a stately procession through a beginning and a middle to an orderly conclusion at the end of an essay. And there are the effects of a character-based writing system as opposed to a phonetic one.

Without marked nouns and with no “to be,” there are no abstract universal terms and theories that appeared so prominently in early Greece of the same period with its highly inflected language affecting cognitive focus. The effects on, (and effectiveness of) prose in a language with those features is dramatically illustrated in the *Sunzi* and the four-character phrases that accompany the hexagrams of the *Zhouyi*, mentioned in Part One, and the Thirty-six Strategies of Part Three.

Thus, to a classical Chinese, it was natural to think that everything “naturally” exists and that there is nothing that is “immaterial.” The Chinese world is “immanent”—it is in-dwelling in things themselves. Everything “is” and everything can be given a “name”—there is no outside force directing things and processes—even the buried ancestors were incapable of that (and, besides, Confucius and Sunzi condemned beliefs in the spirit world and divination).



# XI. A Correlative Cosmology of the Universe

## The Context: Time-Space and Directionality

*In The Analects, Confucius said by a river: "It is what passes like that, indeed, not ceasing day or night." (The Analects, SZ, 2491) Here, the term shi 逝 denotes "what passes" or "passes by", what we call time is absent. . . . There is no Classical Chinese word equivalent in meaning to the English word time. The original meaning of shi is "timeliness" or "seasonality," in which both time and space are affected. In other words, the Chinese idea of time is understood within the specific space. According to Yuelin or the Monthly Order, written no later than third century B.C., spring affects the cardinal point east, and is dominated by the agent of wood; summer affects south, and is dominated by a fire agent; autumn affects west, and is dominated by a metal agent; winter affects north, and is dominated by a water agent. The earth agent affects the central location of the intersections of the four cardinal directions, and dominates the four seasons. (Yuelin, SZ, 1352-87) By extension, shi, seasonality or timeliness refers to doing something at the appropriate time (which is determined by harmonious associations with the theory of the Five Agents), and at which time an action can succeed.*

*In the early Chinese texts, there is no story that describes the creation of the world out of nothingness and marks the beginning of time. In Chinese chronologies, time is not counted from a single date, such as the birth of Christ, but from repeated historical beginnings, or the foundation of a dynasty, or a royal family. On the personal level, individual lives, certainly bounded by birth and death, but each person's life is regarded as a link within the continuum of the ancestral lineage, which includes both of the living and the dead. However, the ancestral spirits related directly to the living through rituals, such as food offerings etc. These spirits were not gods like those of ancient Greece, nor were they souls who stood before an almighty God to be judged.*

*The approach of describing the Chinese idea of time as cyclical, or sometimes . . . [as a] spiral by sinologists derives from a play on the Western geometrical metaphor for time, . . . [as] the alternative of a straight line. It is helpful as a means of differentiating the Chinese concept from the Western metaphor of a straight line, but [it is] not a Chinese metaphor of time.<sup>191</sup>*

**Doesn't this sound like chess vs. *weiqi*? As previously mentioned, Chess has individual pieces that have directionality built into their meanings (how they can move) and destinies i.e. an ending time when they will die, whereas in *weiqi*, pieces are put down that contribute to a whole until the game ends in stasis—a fate much more conducive to the Chinese who like to say that they might be Confucian or Buddhist when young, but when they approach**

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<sup>191</sup> <http://literati-tradition.com/time.html>

old age, they become Daoists, though in the sense of “peaceful Daoism”—a reunification with Nature—and not the Warring States type.

## Five Phase (Element) Theory

A brief discussion of the full correlative “Five Phase” or “Five Element” theory and its relation to *Yin-Yang* and the flow of *qi* is warranted, although during the Warring States only the “destructive” cycle had developed. It was in the Han period that everything correlatively came together in the elaborate and mystical theories of the Huang-Lao cult though the seeds had been sown long before.

In the early theories of Zuo Yan (the major figure of the *Yin-Yang* School), the forces of *qi* are “guided” by what is usually translated as “Five Elements,” however this is only part of the theory—actually, they are “phases” or even “movements” which apparently originally represented four seasons through which *Yin* and *Yang* waxed and waned—summer being the height of *Yang* and winter the height of *Yin*. Before this, *Yang* was the sunny side of a mountain and *Yin* the shady side. Later, they became the cause of all change—the movement of *qi*—and the number of elements was increased to five as Earth was added.

The destructive cycle could come into play if any of the phases become overly long or dominate. Thus, Water could weaken or control Fire (by limiting it), Fire could weaken Metal (by melting it), Metal could weaken Wood (by cutting it), Wood could weaken Earth (by the roots of a growing tree), Earth could weaken or control Water (by absorbing it into mud).

Thus, as the correlation process proceeded:

**Fire** was associated with draught, heat, flaring, ascendance, movement, etc.

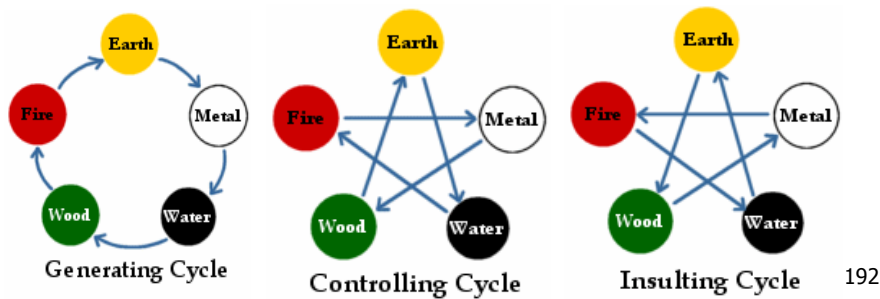
**Wood** with germination, extension, softness, harmony, flexibility, etc.

**Metal** with strength, firmness, killing, cutting, cleaning up, etc.

**Earth** with growing, changing, nourishing, producing, etc.

**Water** with moisture, cold, descending, flowing, etc.

The Han developed two other cycles:



In the Generating or Nourishing Cycle, Water generates Wood in the form of trees; Wood generates Fire by rubbing two sticks together; Fire generates Earth in the form of ash residue; the inside of Earth generates Metal; and Metal generates Water in the formation of morning dew. If they are balanced, all is well. When they are out of balance and overacting, counteracting, or failing to support one another, we experience dis-ease of one sort or another.

The Over-Acting or Rebellious Cycle occurs when a controlling phase over-reacts or rebels from its proper function. Thus, too much Water kills the Fire, etc.

Looking at one version of the final symbolic associations:

Phase	New Yang	Full Yang	Yang-Yin	New Yin	Full Yin
	<b>Wood</b>	<b>Fire</b>	<b>Earth</b>	<b>Metal</b>	<b>Water</b>
Orientation	East	South	Middle	West	North
Season	Spring	Summer	Late Summer	Autumn	Winter
Climate	Wind	Summer Heat	Dampness	Dryness	Cold
Cultivation	Germinate	Grow	Transform	Reap	Store
Yin Organ	Liver	Heart	Spleen	Lung	Kidney
Yang Organ	Gall Bladder	Small Intestine	Stomach	Large Intestine	Bladder
Orifice	Eye	Tongue	Mouth	Nose	Ear
Tissues	Tendons	Vessels	Muscles	Skin & Hair	Bones
Emotions	Anger	Joy	Pensiveness	Grief	Fear
Colour	Blue/ Green	Red	Yellow	White	Black
Taste	Sour	Bitter	Sweet	Pungent	Salty
Voice	Shout	Laugh	Sing	Cry	Groan

*Shape*  
*Energy*  
*Planets*

*Curve*  
*Contracting*  
*Jupiter*

*Rectangle*  
*Conserving*  
*Mars*

*Triangle*  
*Generative*  
*Saturn*

*Square*  
*Expansive*  
*Venus*

*Round*  
*Stabilizing*  
*Mercury*<sup>193</sup>

<sup>192</sup> <http://www.tcmstudent.com/theory/Five%20Element%20Theory.html>

<sup>193</sup> <http://www.shen-nong.com/eng/principles/whatfiveelements.html>

A.C. Graham summarizes:

[Thus, the] . . . *Chinese cosmology which assumed its lasting shape by the beginning of the Han is a vast system starting from chains of pairs correlated with the Yin and Yang, branching out into fours and fives (Four Seasons, Four Directions, Five Colours, Five Sounds, Five Tastes, Five Smells . . . ) correlated with the Five Processes, and down through successive divisions correlated with the Eight Trigrams and Sixty-four Hexagrams of the Yi [Jing]. This scheme, in which to explain and infer is to locate within the pattern, provides the organising concepts of proto-sciences such as astronomy, medicine, music, divination and, in later centuries, alchemy and geomancy. The system-building of China, to which Marcel Granet's La Pensee Chinoise . . . remains unsurpassed as an Introduction, is not wholly strange to a Westerner who remembers the Four Elements, Four Humours and Pythagorean numerology in the past of his own tradition, but during the last few centuries this style of thinking has become remote from most of us that access is now difficult except for people temperamentally in sympathy with the one Western study in which it still flourishes, occultism. It is not just that the explanations of Chinese as of Western Mediaeval and Renaissance proto-science may impress us as obscure or fallacious like the arguments of the philosophers; the trouble is that for post-Galilean science they are not explanations at all.*<sup>194</sup>

Robin Wang adds:

*Not only does this yinyang-flavored explanation claim to illuminate natural phenomena, it also implies that there is an intrinsic relationship between natural events and political systems [and, by extension, war and its strategies, strategists and especially the Warring States commanders]. Human beings, especially political leaders, must align their virtuous actions with the morally-oriented universe. If they follow and harmonize with (shun) the order and patterns of the universe, they will be rewarded with prosperity and flourishing, but if they go against and conflict with (hi) it, they will be punished with disasters and destruction. . . . The Guoyu (Discourses of the States) describes how earthquakes took place at the confluence of the Jing, Wei, and Lou rivers during the second year of Duke You of the western Zhou dynasty. [Because of this, a] certain Boyang Fu claims that the Zhou empire [was] . . . doomed to collapse . . .*<sup>195</sup>

And the warrior-philosopher Sunbin concluded,

*The patterns of Heaven and Earth, [Yin and Yang], reach an extreme and then reverse, become full and are then overturned. In turn flourishing, in turn declining, these are the four seasons. The five phases have those they conquer and those they do not conquer. The myriad things live and die. The myriad living things are capable and*

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<sup>194</sup> Graham; pp. 319-20

<sup>195</sup> <http://www.iep.utm.edu/yinyang>

*are incapable. . . .*

*In warfare, things with form conquer each other. There are not any forms that cannot be conquered, but no one knows the form by which one conquers. The changes in the forms of conquest are co-terminal with Heaven and Earth and are inexhaustible.*

<sup>196</sup>

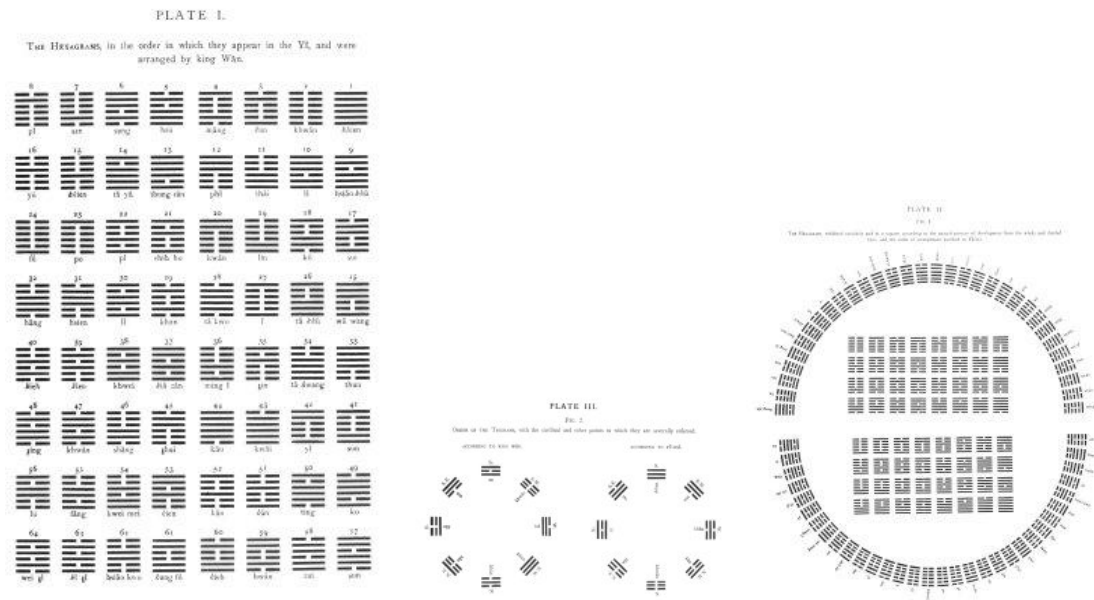
**As opposed to the progressive destructive of chess, this sounds very much like the progress of a *weiqi* game.**

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<sup>196</sup> Sawyer; pp. 84-5

## XII. Extreme Correlation: A Note on the *Zhouyi* and *Yijing* (The Books of Changes)

As previously discussed, the *Yijing*, as we know it was developed by Wang bi from the *Zhouyi*, originally nothing but a divination manual, after the war strategies had morphed into *weiqi* strategies in the Han. However, along with the *Daodejing*, it highlighted and was a repository for the concept of Change in Chinese culture and many other themes that run through this essay. Thus, a few words should be said about it.



*The hexagrams and trigrams*<sup>197</sup>

Richard Rutt commented about the translations of the *Yijing* into Western languages:

*The Book of Changes is often understood by Westerners in terms of what is commonly called "traditional" Chinese culture but is really the culture of the last thousand years or less. Many of its features, including those that most attract attention, came into being some centuries after the [Zhouyi—the original] Book of Changes was compiled. It is important to clear the mind of this sort of chinoiserie when approaching a Bronze Age text.*<sup>198</sup>

<sup>197</sup> <http://www.sacred-texts.com>

<sup>198</sup> Rutt; p. 5

He added in the Preface of his book:

*. . . the Book of Changes is to be explained in the light of its content and of the era to which it belongs . . . When Richard Wilhelm wrote these words in 1923, he believed they described what he had done in his great German translation [that was translated into English by Cary Baynes]. Yet within ten years archaeology and philology had shed new light on ancient China, revealing that what Wilhelm had produced was a Book of Changes smothered by philosophical theories that were unknown in the era to which it belongs. Three-quarters of a century later, Chinese sinologists have shown that the [original Zhouyi was] . . . a royal book of oracles mainly related to warfare, especially warfare as a means of obtaining captives to be killed in sacrifices.*<sup>199</sup>

Compared with the *Yijing*, the *Zhouyi* was quite short and its fragments that were found at Muwangdui in 1973 date from 168 BC. Along with some commentary, it contained all 60 of the six-lined hexagrams, which are thought to be linked to lunar cycles of divination in the ancient calendar. Rutt's translation of the *Zhouyi* Hexagram 45 was given in Part One.

Another *Zhouyi* found at Fuyang and dated to c. 300 BC was different—by combining the hexagrams with commentary on their use, it was written in the style of a “day book.”<sup>200</sup>

An example from it is Line Three in *Tongren* “Fellowship,” now Hexagram 13, as translated by Richard Smith.

[Nine in the Third:] *Here one hides armed troops in a thicket, and ascends his high hill. In divining about one who is guilty, it will be ominous; about doing battle, the enemy will be strong but will not get its way; in divining about one who is ill, if he does not die then he will be exhausted.*<sup>201</sup>

Smith commented that in this way, it dealt with everyday problems—weather punishment, warfare, illness, marriage, residence, pregnancy, birth, bureaucratic service, administrative affairs, traveling hunting, fishing, etc. All three of the extant *Zhouyi* used many “scenes” that came from the natural and human worlds. These four character phrases were not for cause and effect, but were often just coincidental, for example, the equating of the flight of geese in the fall with soldiers marching off after the harvest for war.

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<sup>199</sup> Rutt; p. ix

<sup>200</sup> Rutt; pp. ix-x

<sup>201</sup> Richard J. Smith; *Fathoming the Cosmos and Ordering the World: The Yijing (I Ching or Classic of Changes) and its Evolution in China*; Univ. of Virginia Press; 2008; p. 49



Another example, as translated by Edward Shaughnessy:

*Nine in the Second: The withered poplar grows a sprout . . . The old man gets a maiden wife . . . nothing not beneficial . . . Divining about someone who is ill, he will not die; battling, the enemy is strong but will not win; about having guilt, one will be able to transfer and move.*<sup>202</sup>

Also accompanying the Muwangdui manuscript were parts of what is now known as the "Grand Treatise" which had begun the process of associating the cosmology that was considerably expanded later on in the "Ten Wings."

Rutt writes:

*The fundamental principle employed by the Treatise is analogy, seen not as a mere device in logic or exposition, but as a metaphysical principle. Again and again the relationship between heaven, earth, man and the hexagrams is described as a continuum of macrocosmic-microcosmic parallels, intimately and essentially interrelated so that knowing a model in one place enables a sage to know the corresponding model in the other planes.*

*Underlying this principle is another: that of eternal flux. Becoming is the sole explanation of being. Yi means change both as the title of the book and as the principle of all being. Change, constant, ineluctable and omnipresent is broadly sketched; no interest is evinced in problems of essence and existence. . . .*<sup>203</sup>

**Think of how easily we could rename go as "Changes in a Positive Way" and chess as "Changes in a Negative Way."**

Rutt added that:

*. . . As the hexagrams came to exert more fascination than the oracles, their tags or "names" were assumed to be meaningful titles, and were interpreted in increasingly abstract fashion. . . . [Number] 8 "joining" became "coherence", 44 "locking horns" became "reaction" or even "fusion" [etc.]*<sup>204</sup>

Everything and anything was soon interpreted by the rewriters. For example, echoing Sunzi's thoughts about the duties of commanders:

*The responsibility of human beings . . . was to aid in creating and maintaining harmony through their attunement with natural patterns and processes. In order to*

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<sup>202</sup> Edward L. Shaughnessy; *Recent Manuscript Discoveries Related to the Yijing*;

<http://rhart.org/conferences/chinesescience/papers/shaughnessy.pdf>

<sup>203</sup> Rutt: p. 406

<sup>204</sup> Rutt: pp. 46-7

*achieve this attunement, they needed to perceive and correctly interpret signs from Heaven and to determine the proper place and time for effective human action.*<sup>205</sup>

For example, weather was tied to government departments (thus rites and agriculture belonged, as mentioned, to the Spring whose element was Wood; punishments and war belonged to the Fall whose element was Metal, etc.) and these were tied to the *Yijing* because the 12 lunar months had hexagram attachments with various qualities.

Joseph Needham called it “a stupendous universal filing-system” for “pigeonholing novelty.” It was something into which anything and everything—the structure of crystals to the solar system—could be fitted.<sup>206</sup>

But that was not the original intention and Rutt gives some examples of the changes that were made to the *Zhouyi*:

*Where the Bronze Age diviner wrote:  
No misfortune. No captives. Very auspicious.  
In long term augury, troubles disappear.*

*Later scholars read:  
A man may be without balance, but not because he is sincere.  
If he perseveres in fundamental constancy, his regrets will disappear.*<sup>207</sup>

. . . [the] tags [titles] form a curious medley of words whose meanings cannot (at least nowadays) be understood as titles or descriptive names for the hexagrams or their texts. This conclusion is amply supported by the difficulty translators have met in trying to translate some of the tags. Hexagram 58, for example, has been translated as “Lake” (Wilhelm/Baynes), “Joy, (Blofeld), “Stand straight” (Whincup), and “Opens up” (Titus Yu). Hexagram 16 as “Enthusiasm” (Wilhelm/Baynes), “Repose,” (Blofeld), “Contentment” (Whincup), Joy” (Cleary), (Hwang), and “Elephant dance” (Titus Yu)—and the 10<sup>th</sup> Wing glosses it as “Idleness.” In fact Wilhelm/Baynes gave more than one translation for twenty tags, while Legge significantly did not translate them at all. Nor does Richard Kunst [who was the first to translate a *Yijing* text into English].<sup>208</sup>

Rutt also provides a skeleton etymology of key words whose meanings changed over time. The most serious of them are listed below. The first capitalized word is the original meaning as generally deduced by modern scholars, the next are the changes and the last is the word used since Han times.

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<sup>205</sup> Smith; p. 36

<sup>206</sup> Joseph Needham; *Science and Civilization in China* Vol. II; p. 336

<sup>207</sup> Rutt; p. 206

<sup>208</sup> Rutt; p. 118

*FU: CAPTIVE/booty > submissive > reliable > SINCERE*  
*JIU: HARM > illness > fault > BLAME*  
*ZHEN: determine by AUGURY > resolution > PERSISTENCE*  
*HENG: sacrifice > OFFERING > make offering > get offering > received > penetration > SUCCESS*<sup>209</sup>

Not only that, but the causal and other relationships between phrases were assumed but the common assumption that the six lines of every hexagram tell a story—an idea that was passed onto the West in Latin by missionaries and into English by Legge and Wilhelm-Baynes—is false. For example, the original wording of the “Image” (the “Base”) or initial meaning of the aforementioned Hexagram 45 can be compared with the Wilhelm translation.

The original:

[The trigram “Joyous Lake” sits over the trigram “Receptive” or “Earth.”]  
*Over the earth, the lake:*  
*The image of GATHERING TOGETHER.*  
*Thus the superior man renews his weapons*  
*In order to meet the unforeseen.*<sup>210</sup>

Wilhelm:

*If the water in the lake gathers until it rises above the earth, there is danger of a break-through. Precautions must be taken to prevent this. Similarly where men gather together in great numbers, strife is likely to arise; where possessions are collected, robbery is likely to occur. Thus in the time of GATHERING TOGETHER we must arm promptly to ward off the unexpected. Human woes usually come as a result of unexpected events against which we are not forearmed. If we are prepared, they can be prevented.*<sup>211</sup>

This Hexagram has been related to the 6<sup>th</sup> of the Thirty-six Strategies—“Make a Noise in the East, Attack in the West” and the theme seems to be “Distraction.” A Google translation of a French commentary on that strategy is slightly amended:

*The enemy commander is disoriented and loses his restraint. The symbol of the lake is over the land, meaning that the river water is ready to flood the bank. . . . A host of forces that come together to defend a city must have a unified command so that it can support the head of the enemy. If they become divided in their opinion or ambivalent about their arguments, the situation will become uncontrollable.*<sup>212</sup>

<sup>209</sup> Rutt; pp. 206-7

<sup>210</sup> Rutt; p. 268

<sup>211</sup> Richard Wilhelm and Cary Baynes; *The I Ching or Book of Changes* with a foreword by Carl Jung; Bollingen Series XIX, Princeton Univ. Press; 1950

<sup>212</sup> <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?lang=en&l=36ji&no=6>

The writer relates this idea to *Sunzi bingfa* VI 19 where the general comments:

*Military tactics are like unto water; for water in its natural course runs away from high places and hastens downwards.*

*So in war, the way is to avoid what is strong and to strike at what is weak.*

*Water shapes its course according to the nature of the ground over which it flows; the soldier works out his victory in relation to the foe whom he is facing.*

*Therefore, just as water retains no constant shape, so in warfare there are no constant conditions.*

*He who can modify his tactics in relation to his opponent and thereby succeed in winning, may be called a heaven-born captain.*

*The five elements (water, fire, wood, metal, earth) are not always equally predominant; the four make way for each other in turn. There are short days and long; the moon has its periods of waning and waxing.*<sup>213</sup>

In other words, *xiang*—the “images” serve as “models” for what hexagrams are all about—they point to their deeper meaning in the scheme of things. As for these models:

[From the *Great Appendix*.] *"In ancient times when Fu-hsi reigned over the world, looking up he observed the models in Heaven, looking down he observed the standards on Earth. He observed the markings on birds and animals, and how things fit together on Earth, and took comparisons near at hand in himself and far away in other things. Then he invented the Eight Trigrams, in order to fathom the potency of the daimonic and clear-seeing, in order to arrange the essentials of the myriad things according to their kinds."*

As Graham writes:

*The hsiang "model" is the only ancient Chinese concept which reminds one of the ideas and universals of our own Platonist tradition, but is in several respects profoundly different. Ancient Chinese theories of naming (in the Canons and Hsun-tzu), being "nominalist" in that particulars are assumed to be named by similarity to one of them taken as standard, have no place for universals. The sophism "The L-square is not square, the compasses cannot make circles" suggests recognition that any drawn geometrical figure is imperfect, but there is no suggestion in the literature that perfect squares and circles are to be found somewhere outside the material world. Things of the same kind seem to be conceived in the Appendices not as reproducing one model but as resembling many; models have the multivalence of poetic images. Moreover,*

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<sup>213</sup> Lionel Giles (trans.); *Sun Tzu, On the Art of War: The Oldest Military Treatise of the World*; London; 1910  
<http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?lang=en&l=Sunzi&s=6>

*although less substantial than fully shaped things, they are not essentially different.*<sup>214</sup>

But there is another, often overlooked aspect of not only the *Zhouyi* but even more so, of the *Yijing*, that also introduces the theme of the concluding passages of this Part. Richard Smith commented:

*[In its three versions,] Rhymes, rhythmic phrases, puns, contrastive formulations, and other linguistic devices abundant in the Zhouyi enhance the power of words . . . especially in a society where plays on words were so powerful and where the written language exerted inordinate social influence by virtue of its seemingly intrinsic magic qualities.*<sup>215</sup>

Joseph Needham and Christoph Harbsmeier extended this observation to include links to the characters themselves.

*All the ancient Chinese linguists have perceived a profound link between the hexagrams of the Book of Changes and the Chinese characters. Many characters show an ambition to provide emblems which make the true nature of the things designated as transparent as possible so that ideally one can approach the mysteries of the universe through the study of characters. Here lies a profound difference between the Chinese and the Near Eastern invention of writing which is spelt out in the West.*

*This explains the extraordinary Chinese fascination with calligraphy, a phenomenon which is hard to understand for the outsider, except on a purely aesthetic level. But Chinese calligraphy has a deeper metaphysical dimension. It touches the nerve of morphemes and aspires to reach the profound cosmic essence of things. At the same time it expresses a person's cultural personality and identity. The Chinese calligraphic tradition has a cultural depth quite unparalleled in the West.*

*And this is where the pictographic and thought-provoking internal structure of Chinese characters does come into our account. For the literate person such structures are associated psychologically with the morpheme as a kind of graphic etymology of the morpheme as well as to the essence of things. Of course, like all kinds of etymology and metaphysical resonance, this may be present to a greater or lesser extent in different individuals or at different times. But the result is that it becomes not entirely unnatural to say that the characters stand in a more or less direct relation to their meaning, to what the culture perceives as the essence of things. That is why the ideographic conception of Chinese characters has its poetic force and attractiveness.*<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Graham; 362-3

<sup>215</sup> Smith; p. 23

<sup>216</sup> Joseph Needham and Christoph Harbsmeier; *Science and Civilization in China*; Vol. 7 Pt. 1; Cambridge Univ. Press 1998; pp. 39-40

## XIII. Two Opposing Cosmologies

This section will examine some of the areas of the Chinese cultural complex whose principles and language that **pre-disposed them to embrace *weiqi*** in the era of relative peace that followed the Han conquests.

### The East: Divisions of the Universe

As has been described, except for the “goodness” of Mencius, after the fall of the Qin dynasty and the rise of the Han, correlative cosmos-building began replacing the ideas of human nature about the separation of Man from Heaven. Thus, in the areas outside of philosophical discourse where only diviners, music masters, physicians and astronomers had dared to venture, *Yin-Yang* and Five-Element Theories joined to produce correlative thinking about the universe.

A.C. Graham wrote:

*. . . the Chinese tendency, which [Chad] Hansen explains by the grammatical resemblance of the nouns to Indo-European mass rather than count nouns, [is] to treat things as divisions of the universe rather than the universe as the aggregate of things. Distinctions are seen in binary terms, as in the first place between pairs of opposites (with even figure and colour reduced to square/round and white/black) [like **weiqi** equipment]; having drawn them, and recognised some recurring or persisting pattern (for example, large, round, hard, heavy, and white) we detach a stone from other things as we cut out a piece of cloth or chop off a piece of meat. Things are not conceived as isolated each with its own essential and accidental properties; on the contrary, distinguishing characteristics are seen as mostly relative (of the six selected in this passage, all but figure and colour).<sup>217</sup>*

[Graham then quoted Hanfeizi:]

*"The Way is that through which the myriad things are so, that in which the myriad patterns run together. A pattern is the texture of a thing as a whole, the Way is the means by which the myriad things become wholes. Hence it is said, "The Way is what patterns them". Things having patterns cannot encroach on each other; consequently, the patterning of them is the cutting up of things. Each of the myriad things has a different pattern, and with each having its own pattern there is no more of the Way. It runs together the patterns of the myriad things, therefore it necessarily transforms, and therefore has no constant commitment to one or another. This is why the ch'i of living and dying are received from it, why the myriad intelligences*

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<sup>217</sup> Graham; p. 286



*draw from it, why the myriad affairs rise and decline by it.*"<sup>218</sup>

**Sounds like *weiqi*.**

## **The West: The Souls of Ambrose and Augustine**

All of the above was in total contrast with the cosmology of the West. Consider for a moment the situation in the early days of Christianity. Peter Brown, perhaps the leading scholar for period, reviewed several books about St. Ambrose and St. Augustine and wrote in *The New York Review of Books*:

*In Milan in 387 AD, there was a baptistery that stood out as a high octagon a short distance from the Christian cathedral. It was presided over by Ambrose and it was not open to all.*

*. . . In it new things began. Their bodies greasy with perfumed oil, the Christian initiates (men in one shift and women in another) stood around stark naked. They did so with the insouciant glee of Roman citizens enjoying the public baths. For these were the bodies of proud new citizens of heaven. They did so in an atmosphere charged with the presence of sinister powers. The ceremony began with a solemn exorcism. The culmination of the ritual involved the breaking of the boundaries between heaven and earth. Like Elijah and his fiery chariot, each believer was swept, for a moment, into a world beyond the stars. It was a rite that "broke open the incandescence of eternal life."*

*. . . For Ambrose, baptism remained a baroque affair—a moment of rapture and unearthly light set against the darkness of the still pagan world. Augustine, as a bishop in North Africa, manning a tiny baptistery (compared with that of Milan), came to a very different view of the same ritual. For him, baptism no longer stood out in high relief. The baptized Christian could not expect to be buoyed up by the sense of having been transformed by a single dramatic rite. Human nature did not change so fast. Each believer remained like a leaky ship on the high seas, kept afloat by the constant creak of the bilge pump. The salt water of small insidious sins dripped through its timbers. If not pumped out by constant acts of penance, prayer, and alms giving, the small trickles of sin could sink the ship. In this Augustine preached a doctrine for the long haul suited to a gray world where almost everyone was a Christian and very few of them were good Christians. It was the doctrine that would steer Latin Christendom throughout the long centuries of the Middle Ages. . .*

*Augustine finds that he has to live both in a body and with a soul. Yet he can be at home in neither. Each is as unstable as the other. Every day the body is eroded by the thousand little deaths associated with the aging process. It is part of the earthly food chain. . . . But he realized that the soul was no better. It was not a fixed point. It was constantly changing. It could lose itself in the depths of its own*

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<sup>218</sup> Graham; pp. 286-7



*memory, through amnesia. It scattered itself between past and present. It swayed between good and evil like a heaving sea. . . . To make matters worse, body and soul have come to be trapped in a cat-and-dog marriage. After the Fall, the "sweet marriage bond of body and soul" had turned sour. But for Augustine, the old escape route, open to the ancient sages, was blocked. "The soul simply cannot leave the premises." It could no longer float up to a heaven in the stars, as it did in pagan times, leaving the gross body behind to sink into the earth.*

*Instead of disembodied souls, Augustine had to think about souls intimately linked (for good or ill) to bodies. As a result, when he thought of the perfect human person, his horizon was bounded, at both ends of time, by the image of mighty figures in whom body and soul were joined, but without the instability of time. For Adam and Eve before the Fall, time had stood still. The resurrection of the body at the end of time restored the saints to the same state. Both examples of humanity stood outside time and, hence, outside nature. . . . The poignancy of the present is that we are betwixt and between: "Though their bodies are (temporarily) "in" nature, humans are not "of" nature."*

Thus, Brown concludes:

*The cult of saints, celebrated in shimmering basilicas filled with blazing light, was shot through with desire to participate a little, in the here and now, in the future joy and stability that "would be granted to "transhumans" at the end of time. By this means, the Christian communities created what any thrusting institution needs—the sense of a future on earth touched by the shadow of eternity.* <sup>219</sup>

**Sounds like the "hidden meanings" of chess pieces and their duties on the board.**

## **Humans and the Earth in China**

Both West and East regarded man as the superior creature on the earth that surrounds them, but there the resemblance ended.

Some examples:

1) Yu-Lan Feng wrote about the Han Confucian scholar *Tung Chung-shu* (179–104 BC):

*"Of the creatures born from the refined essence of Earth and Heaven, none is more noble than Man. Man receives his mandate (ming) also translated as 'fate' or 'destiny' from Heaven and is therefore superior to all creatures. Other creatures suffer*

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<sup>219</sup> Peter Brown; "A Tale of Two Bishops and a Brilliant Saint"; *The New York Review of Books*; March 8, 2012; pp. 29-32

*troubles and defects and cannot practice humanity and righteousness; man alone can practice them. Other creatures suffer troubles and defects and cannot match Heaven and Earth; man alone can match them. Man has 360 joints, which match the number of Heaven .... He has ears and eyes above, with their keen sense of hearing and seeing, which resemble the sun and the moon. His body has its orifices, which resemble rivers and valleys. His heart has feelings of sorrow, joy, pleasure, and anger, which are analogous to the spiritual feelings [of Heaven]. As we look at man's body, how superior it is to that of other creatures and how similar to Heaven! [ ... ] Man is distinct from other creatures and forms a triadic relationship with Heaven and Earth."*

*These Chinese encyclopedic works are hierarchical, with the human being self-consciously at the centre. Further, this "human being" is no abstraction but is the specific imperial Chinese person, the emperor, who commissioned the work for the benefit of those examination candidates destined to assist him in governing his empire. Again in each category, individual entries begin from the most noble and conclude with the most base: animals begin from "lion" and "elephant" and finish with "rat" and "fox"; trees begin with "pine tree" and "cypress" and end with "thistles" and "brambles". The world is not described objectively through an articulation of exclusive categories and subcategories, but is divided up prescriptively into natural and cultural elements which have an increasing influence on the experience of the Chinese court as they stand in proximity to the centre. In "naming" (ming) his world, the ruler is "commanding" (ming) it to be a certain way.<sup>220</sup>*

2) As for the tools man uses, in exactly the same way that all things are connected in the rest of the Chinese idea of the world and universe—but in a way unfamiliar to those of us in the West—as Roger Ames pointed out, all the components of, for example, building a house are interrelated and therefore conceptually connected. We might think of hammers, chisels screwdrivers and saws as individual, unrelated "tools" because we look directly at their functions in isolation. However, the correlatively-thinking Chinese would think of a category that includes hammer, nail, board, pound, blister, bandage and whitewash because all function in the *process* of building a house. Instead of concentrating on what "is," (for example, "These are tools"), the Chinese would focus on what it takes to successfully complete a job.<sup>221</sup>

**Conceptually, as chess was thought about in its "feudal" period, think of the individual pawns, castles, knights, bishops, queens and kings and how they unite in their work to kill the opposing king vs. the "united" "living" "chains" of *weiqi* stones.**

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<sup>220</sup> Yu-Lan Feng; *A History of Chinese Philosophy Vol. II*; Dirk Bodde (trans.); Princeton Univ. Press; 1983

<sup>221</sup> Ames; p. 53

3) As noted above, a powerful and conniving prime minister of Qin, Lu Buwei, with the help of many scholars, attempted to organize all knowledge with the aim of teaching a universal ruler a proper *dao* to stay in harmony with his universe. The result was “. . . a total cosmological scheme, intertwining the world of man with the course of Heaven and the sequence of the seasons on Earth.”<sup>222</sup>

Unfortunately for Lu, his king, who became Qin Shihuangdi, conqueror of all of China, did come to rule “the world” but he had already forced Lu to commit suicide for politically misbehaving.

4) Zhuangzi has a characteristically provocative way of illuminating the unity of Man and Earth, In the course of a discussion on the anecdotes that have come down about him, A.C. Graham remarks that we cannot expect to learn much from them since:

*. . . what we most want to know [is] about the life of a thinker, the course of his development. There is however one story which differs from the rest in showing Chuang-tzu in doubt and changing his mind. He is poaching in the game reserve at Tiaoling; he is taking aim at a huge magpie which does not see him because it is intent on a mantis which itself has eyes only for a cicada resting in the shade.*

*“Hmm!” said Chuang-tzu uneasily. “It is inherent in things that they are tied to each other, that one kind calls up another.”*

*He throws down his crossbow and as he runs away notices that he in his turn has been seen by the gamekeeper. Afterwards he is troubled for three days. This episode, which is full of Yangist-sounding phrases (“ties to each other,” “forgetting his genuineness,” “preserving the body”), may be read as his awakening from the Yangist illusion that one can win security by avoiding ties with other things, his first step to reconciliation with the dissolution of personal identity in universal process.”<sup>223</sup>*

In other words, the Western “World” starts from some underlying, unifying abstract principal while the classical Chinese “World” of all of its philosophies begins with one’s own specific place so one can trace out and make meaningful one’s progress from it. That is, whether within the Confucian “Social Network” or within the “Daoist State of Nature,” there are understandable patterns that can be discerned and mapped in varying degrees from different cultural perspectives. These “conceptual perspectives” or “guides” or goals for the mind and body to become better are *dao*.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> John Knoblock and Jeffery Riegel (trans.); *The Annals of Lu Buwei*; Stanford Univ. Press; 2000; pp 13-14

<sup>223</sup> Graham; p. 176

<sup>224</sup> cf: David L. Hall, Roger T. Ames; *Thinking through Confucius*; State University of New York Press; 1987; p. 50

## The Grid in China

Continuing on the theme of the innerconnectivity of everything in the Classical Chinese universe, Mark Lewis wrote in *The Construction of Space in Early China* about how the cultural complex was held together literally and figuratively by grids. **The place of the *weiqi* board within this matrix is obvious, however, strangely, it was not mentioned by Lewis.**

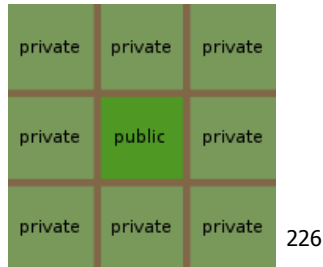
*Although the four quadrants [of the earth] remained conventional, early writers also developed new models of the world. An important example was the grid which played several roles. First it provided an image of creating multiplicity from unity. One line divides a plane into two parts, another creates four and each additional line increases the number of bounded spaces. Thus, the grid depicted the standard cosmology . . . of a structured multiplicity created out of an undifferentiated whole by repeated divisions. Second, the grid divided space into bounded units for the regulation of human activities. This was sketched in account[s] of the grid structure of major streets in the city and stalls in the market. Third, in the divinatory charts unearthed in early Han tombs and in later magic squares, the grid provided an image of the manner in which mathematical structures underlay a special order. In this way the grid became one of the most powerful tools for applying to space the numerological mode of thought that became so important by the end of the Warring States. In the "nine fields" theory it also constituted the most important mechanism for correlating early events to astral phenomena. Finally the grid provided an image of cyclical movement through a controlled space, thus forming a frame for linking cosmological models and ritual actions. . . .*

*Thus grids were a feature of life, both in the cities and the countryside. Since the square of the four directions had long been basic to world structure, the application of grid-squares to world models was an easy step. . . .*<sup>225</sup>

For example, the "Nine Fields" or "Well-Field System" was a way of dividing up agricultural land before the elimination of the feudal systems of the Spring and Autumn period. The outer squares were for families of serf-like peasants who worked the center square for the benefit of the local rulers.

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<sup>225</sup> Mark Edward Lewis; *The Construction of Space in Early China*; State University of New York; 2006; pp. 247-9



226

*The brown border between the farms resembles the character for well (井)*

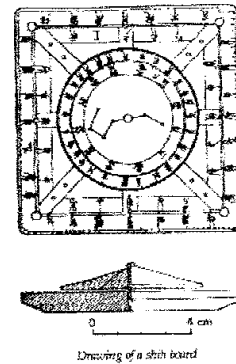
It should be mentioned that the grid “complex” that included *weiqi* was not connected to the religious “complex” of “sacred” *liubo* boards, TLV mirrors that were derived from (or preceded?) them, divining boards, and various cosmic charts, all of which included the elements of circles and squares and not grids.



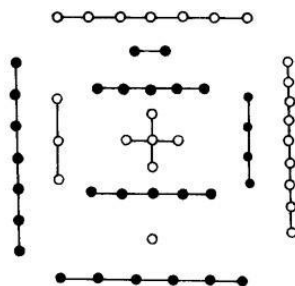
*liubo players*



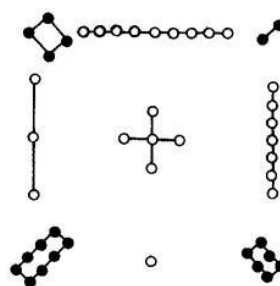
*TLV mirror*



*Shi divining board*



*Hetu The Yellow River Chart*



*Luoshu The Inscription of the River Luo*<sup>227</sup>

<sup>226</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Well-field\\_system](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Well-field_system)

<sup>227</sup> [http://www.usgo.org/files/bh\\_library/originsofgo.pdf](http://www.usgo.org/files/bh_library/originsofgo.pdf)

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/quadralectics/5860320334/> / [http://www.usgo.org/files/bh\\_library/originsofgo.pdf](http://www.usgo.org/files/bh_library/originsofgo.pdf)

<http://www.chinaknowledge.de/Literature/Daoists/hetuluoshu.html>

The two cosmological diagrams at the bottom were used in geomancy and by both Daoists and Confucians to explain the correlation of the hexagrams of the *Yijing* with the universe and human life. They are cosmological diagrams and have nothing to do with go stones.

Both complexes were deeply rooted in early Chinese culture but their form and function differed greatly and *weiqi*, as demonstrated in Appendix III, was never used for divination. This may be why no *weiqi* boards have been found that date older than 179 BC, unlike the ubiquitous and much older sacred *liubo* sets. As discussed in Appendix V, with no sacred elements attached to a simple game, who would want to be buried with their *weiqi* set? It wasn't until much later that sacred elements would be attached to *weiqi* and the first buried set in a tomb comes from the late Han when *weiqi* was beginning to take on "sacred" elements that were to be enshrined in poetry beginning about 600.

On the other hand, as discussed in Appendix II, if playing something on a *weiqi* board had its origins in the Shang or pre-Shang period, perhaps the square board would have reminded players of a temple separated from the rest of the world where the powers of *yin* and *yang* carried by *qi* might roam up and down the lines as they placed their stones down and formed their groups.

Or, as discussed in the main article, perhaps the board resembled a square rice paddy with the *qi* as water being blocked and released. This would have squared with the world/ancestor-based view of the Shang and their mythology rather than the astral/cosmological view and star-oriented *weiqi* stones and boards symbolism of those who followed.

In any case, by utilizing the grid system, the early Chinese ordered their world of agricultural fields, cities, the nine provinces and even their ideas about the "continents" in the oceans they thought surrounded them. According to Zou Yan, the *Ying-Yang* Master, China was the "Red Continent" in the southeast section of 81 continents all of which were surrounded by water so that no people, birds or beasts could cross.<sup>228</sup> In other words, this was a 9 x 9 grid surrounded by great round ocean that extended to where Heaven met Earth over the horizon.

**(Incidentally, as discussed in Appendix V, *weiqi* had already been mentioned by the Confucians living in an area close to where Zou Yan lived, so this was not the origin of the idea of playing a game on a grid. On the other hand, early *weiqi* boards, which may have been small, perhaps were an inspiration for Zou Yan's speculations).**

Within this worldly realm, a skilled observer could deduce the characteristics and place of everything. The *Models of Physical Forms* established the "forms" and "numbers" for houses, cities, animals, vessels, people, and ultimately, the entire world. Thus, to become a sage-king and rule with virtuous powers as those of old who created Chinese civilization, one had to first gain as much as much a vision as was possible about how the world was tied together as a whole and arrange the pieces by cultivating one's thoughts, then one's mind, then one's body/self, then one's household and so on up to one's state and capital.<sup>229</sup> Mastery of the totality, in other words, meant a search

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<sup>228</sup> Lewis; (2006) p. 250

<sup>229</sup> David Hall, Roger Aimes; "Chinese philosophy;" *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* E. Craig (Ed.)  
<http://www.rep.routledge.com/article/G001SECT3>

for excellence by competing methods and philosophies that would lead to a benevolent world ruler.<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> Lewis; p. 246



# **XIII. “*Weiqi*-Think” as Embedded in the Spontaneity of the *Zhuangzi*, the *dao* of Mastery, Strategic Thought in Rhetoric, the Patterns of Poetry, and the Language of Aesthetics**

## ***Zhuangzi*, Spontaneity and the *dao* of Mastery**

Chad Hansen, in his monumental *A Daoist Theory of Chinese Thought*, describes the *dao* of mastery in chess and *weiqi* playing in terms of theories in the *Zhuangzi* about spontaneous thoughts and action and likens them to the inner workings of computers.

*The achievement of skill mastery becomes the mature Daoist notion of spontaneity. Intuitive, immediate, nonself conscious, intimately aware sensitivity to context in performance marks this mastery.*

To introduce his theories, Hansen said:

*We can characterize Zhuangzi’s position using the Chinese epistemological concept of know-(how)-to. We know to do things in contexts set by our reality feedback (qing/feelings). The outcome of knowledge is an action that cheng/completes the act according to a presupposed system of shi-fei [it-not it, right-wrong, this-not this, this:right-not this:wrong]. Our knowledge consists in making real our chosen dao (course of action). Mencius taught that a full knowledge of this sort was in our innate potential. Zhuangzi thought that it comes with instilling, learning a shi-fei pattern that guides action.*

*Zhuangzi says “Shi-fei is what I call qing.” The feedback responses are reality sensitive directing attitudes. . . .*

Thus:

*Zhuangzi’s conception of action at a high level of skill stresses the spontaneity of the response to a total situation. That response is nearly immediate because the feedback process becomes second nature. In initial training we learned distinctions consciously, deliberately, and with frequent correction. When we have picked it up, we shift the distinction making out of consciousness. It is as if our consciousness were the central processing unit and the distinction is made by an unconscious parallel processor. The parallel processor sends the shi-fei result to our consciousness. We come upon things as such-and-such. Our response to it is as if we had responded unmediated to the world in which the distinction was a given.*

*Realized in us, then, the dao of whatever we are learning is a skill structure. The structure in us that guides action in response to the situation is de|virtuosity. We can speak of this guidance as intuitive, but not as innate. We learn it as our dao advances our skill. . . .*

He elaborates:

*. . . In cybernetic terms, our actions involve constant feedback mechanisms which operate at such speed and accuracy, that they resemble massive parallel processing. It is not that I should turn my mind off. The point is that a parallel processor now handles my walking, which once took my full concentration. It frees the central processing unit for other activities: concentration on reading the map or carrying on the philosophical argument. Central processing consciousness also kicks in whenever we are learning or coming to a hard place. Sometimes I have to pay attention to my walking and cannot continue the philosophical conversation. In normal skilled action, the mind is processing a vast number of clues at once. It guides our action without routing the information through our conscious central processing unit. Our mind is both shut off (the central processing unit) and yet fully turned on (the parallel-processing feedback guidance of action).*

*This computer analogy of the Daoist view of intuition or spontaneous action gives us a way to illuminate the contrast in the theory of mind in the two traditions. The Western concept of mind and of the computer is of the information processor. The CPU takes in information. The processor exists relative to a cognitive stuff, information. The unit stores information in memory cells, operates on the information, and reports the result, information output. This reflects the Western focus on conscious thought, deliberation, and choice as cognitive.*

*The Chinese view of heart-mind focuses on guiding behavior. The mind receives reality-feedback inputs (qing) and processes them all at once (paralleling processing). The output is not a computational result stored in some memory cell or reported out as information. The output is an action. When we have learned to do anything like second nature, we constantly adjust our performance to myriad clues in the environment. We do not mediate the fine adjustment of motor skills by conscious choice. We act, it seems, directly in response to the external environment without CPU involvement.*

*The Western concept of the cognitive mind is the information processor with its emphasis on content and storage. The Chinese concept of the heart-mind is closer to robotics—the task-oriented computerized system. For both, we can think of the CPU as the language processor. Its typical manifestation is in talking to ourselves. Thus we think of it as me. The inner voice is our self-consciousness. The paradox of skill is that we function best when we lose the I in this sense. When the skill functions most effectively it bypasses the CPU, it leaves me out. That is why the experience is like surrendering to the world or to some external dao-force.*

Hansen next discussed generated and basic actions, likening them to moving a finger vs. moving the individual muscles. We can obey a command to move a finger but not the nerves of muscles so we, in effect, know-(how)-to move the finger. Thus:

*. . . We can redefine the slogan, wu-wei erh wu pu wu erh ("no action and yet nothing is undone") in this light. We operate at the level of skill intensity at which our most skilled behavior is basic action. . . .*

*None of this, I argue, justifies the antirationalist interpretation of Zhuangzi. That interpretation gives aid and comfort to the right-brain-left-brain school of comparative East-West thought. The parallel-processing part of our mental functioning and the CPU probably never operate in isolation. Certainly in mathematical, philosophical, scientific theorizing, there is parallel processing going on as we are reasoning consciously. And in our skills, even if we do not consciously monitor our basic acts, we monitor higher and higher level aspects of our performance.*

***Consider . . . the example [of] . . . playing chess.***<sup>231</sup> *This is certainly an intellectually absorbing human activity. Notoriously, linear processing computers with all their computing power cannot beat a human master at chess. [This was written in 1992 before Gary Kasparov had been defeated by Big Blue.] The human responds with a finely honed intuition about chess positions. She processes (and drops) many lines of play unconsciously while calculating about a few central ones. The so far unmet challenge to programmers is programming that sophisticated pattern matching into the computer. (The analogy would be even stronger for Go. There computers are even less successful. All teachers stress that an intuition for the beauty of the game is needed for mastery.) [Since then Monte Carlo methods have been added to the previous pattern-matching weiqi programs and they now play on a nearly professional level.*<sup>232]</sup>

*Zhuangzi says that knowledge (know-how) is infinite and life is finite. There is no point at which we cannot further use our conscious processing to increase skill. When we reach a hard place, our mind clicks into solving mode. It draws on all our stored skills but is still conscious, direct, and aware.*

*It would, admittedly, be easier if we could just vibrate with the Dao and solve all problems effortlessly. But evidence is lacking that Zhuangzi thought it was so simple.*<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> The bold emphases are mine.

<sup>232</sup> See my article on "A Timeline of Computer Go"

[http://www.usgo.org/files/bh\\_library/Supercomputer%20Go.pdf](http://www.usgo.org/files/bh_library/Supercomputer%20Go.pdf)

[http://www.usgo.org/files/bh\\_library/Supercomputer%20Go%20Appendix%20One.pdf](http://www.usgo.org/files/bh_library/Supercomputer%20Go%20Appendix%20One.pdf)

[http://www.usgo.org/files/bh\\_library/Supercomputer%20Go%20Appendix%20Two.pdf](http://www.usgo.org/files/bh_library/Supercomputer%20Go%20Appendix%20Two.pdf)

<sup>233</sup> Hansen; pp. 300-3

# Rhetoric and Strategic Thinking

Professor of Comparative Literature Lisa Raphals wrote:

*In the pre-Qin period, there was only a minimal distinction between persuasion and strategy. The reason for this identification of the rhetoric and the strategies was that the ultimate aims of both techniques were political. Warfare was regarded as a matter of last resort; political domination was the goal whether the means were rhetorical or military.*<sup>234</sup>

The *Zhanguo* (*Strategies of the Warring States*), written during the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 1st centuries BC, was a Warring States “history” that presented arguments about strategies in favor of doing or not doing something. In other words, it seems to have been a training book for the rhetoricians-in-training of the School of Debaters, or Logicians, as they were later called. **It will become obvious that the style of thinking and then doing reflects the pondering of alternative moves involving the balancing of influence and profit in “*weiqi*-think” as opposed to those of the murderous “chess think.”**

The translator of the *Zhanguo*, J.I. Crump, listed three types of what he called “double persuasions.”

1) You should do this (1) If it succeeds, (2) you gain *A*; (3) if it fails, you will gain *B*. There are nearly forty of these (10% of the total number of items).

2) If you do *A* it will be good (1). If you do not do *A* it will be bad (2). (Or the reverse). Perhaps there are a hundred of these.

3) A pair of double alternatives equally bad is solved by finding an alternative that can succeed by using #1.

Crump commented:

*While these simple types are the armatures upon which are molded hundreds of persuasions in the Chan-kuo Ts'e, the most artistically successful of them are combinations of one or more types and are often very skillfully fleshed out with convincing appeals to human greed, love, and self-esteem. . . . To return to the meaning of ch'ang-tuan persuasions: It is my belief that somehow the term refers to this strong and clear tendency on the part of the persuader (as he is seen in the Chan-kuo Ts'e) to frame his persuasions in “doubles”; thesis and antithesis, arguments for a certain action and against its opposite and other classes of doubles such as paradoxes and dilemmas. However we may analyze them for their logic, one fact is apparent: The*

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<sup>234</sup> Lisa Raphals; *Knowing Words: Wisdom and Cunning in the Classical Traditions of China and Greece*; Cornell Univ. Press; 1992; p. 102

writers were very intent on achieving rhetorical symmetry which exploited both the genius of their language and human delight in balance and complementation. It is highly likely then that the Chinese student of rhetoric was drilled in the composition of "doubled persuasions" and very likely had to present them as school exercises.

It is certainly not clear how the literal meaning of the term ("strong points and shortcomings") applies to all of these doubled cases, but it is not impossible that it did.

235

#207 is an interesting and convoluted example of the use of 1, 2 and 3.

### *The Two Towns*

*Han Kung-shu had Ch'i and Wei on his side and the heir had Ch'in and Ch'u in on his in their struggle for the state. The king of Ch'u was furious and was about to have him punished but Cheng Shen said, "I took it upon myself (1) to give [Hsin-ch'eng and Yang-jen] . . . for the good of our state. I decided that if the heir were given [them] . . . for his struggle with [Han] Kung-shu and he won the state (2), then Ch'i and Wei would attack Han. Han would then, in great haste, put her fate in Ch'u's hands—in which case would they dare request Hsin-ch'eng and Yang-jen? If the heir did not win, (3) if he fled and did not perish, he would then arrive here with his hat in his hand. Would he dare speak of the towns then?" "Good," said the king of Ch'u, and did not have him punished.* <sup>236</sup>

Another example is #24 from another source:

### *Wei and Zhao*

*Marquis Wen of Wei sought passage through Zhao to attack Zhongshan. The Marquis of Zhao was about to refuse. Zhao Li said: "That is a mistake! If Wei attacks Zhongshan but cannot obtain it, Wei will withdraw. If they withdraw, Zhao will become more important. But if Wei takes Zhongshan, they will not be able to cross Zhao and keep Zhongshan [i.e. the presence of Zhao between Wei and Zhongshan will prevent the conquerors from effective governance of their new territory]. Thus Wei will use troops while Zhao will gain . . . [Zhongshan]. It is better to allow passage with great encouragement. They will then know that your majesty will profit by it; they will have to desist. It would be best for your majesty to grant them passage, as though you had no other choice."* <sup>237</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> J. I. Crump; *Chan-kuo Ts'e*; Univ. of Michigan Press; 1973

<sup>236</sup> Crump; pp. 42-3

<sup>237</sup> Paul Rakito Goldin and Miching Mellecho; "The Zhanguo and Classical Rhetoric"; *Sino-Platonic Papers*; No. 41 (October, 1993); pp. 7-8 [http://sino-platonic.org/complete/spp041\\_zhanguo\\_intrigues.pdf](http://sino-platonic.org/complete/spp041_zhanguo_intrigues.pdf)

These types of arguments often seem strange to Westerners but the Chinese penchant for thinking in parallelisms and comparing “opposed merits” are characteristic features of their literature, whereas in the West, the latter mode is generally confined to the smaller field of *suasoriae* rhetoric, as practiced by Quintilian, the Roman orator and written about by Seneca. In *suasoriae* a student presented advice to a historical or mythical character faced with making a decision on taking a course of action often involving ethics. For example, “Should the Scythians return to their former way of life in the wilderness or remain a city people?”

## A Note on the Characters in Early Greek and Chinese Literature and More on Early Chess Pieces

It is interesting to compare the portrayals of characters in old Chinese books such as the *Zhanguo* with the characters of Homer, specifically Ulysses. As an example, David Knightley reflected on the “inwardly settled” mind of the wandering Duke of Jin (whose full story appears in Part Three of this essay) with the not-so-settled mind of the Greek rover. The two lived in entirely different worlds. The Chinese accounts of characters in early literature focus on what the characters *did*, so that they were a “process” rather than an “identity.” They were an exemplar of what “should be done” rather than a full-scale focused portrait of one like Ulysses who “was doing it in person” and intimately describing his “massive build,” his “curls like thick hyacinth clusters” and the “fire in his eyes.” **One could be describing an ornate king in chess:**



238

*Some of the Medieval Lewis chess pieces found in Scotland*

<sup>238</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewis\\_chessmen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewis_chessmen)



**One can also think of the berserker Viking on the right, perhaps intoxicated with psychedelic mushrooms and so eager to go into battle that he is chewing on his shield. More like a stone in a vast game of *weiqi* was the Duke.**

Kneightley concludes:

*Each account expressed the story that their cultures—or more precisely, certain audiences within those cultures—wanted to hear; each dramatized the epistemological interests their audiences valued.” . . .*<sup>239</sup>

**It could be added that the games they played also reflected the same differences.**

## Poetry

David McCraw outlined another area—the use of chiasmus—that helps make **Chinese prose and poetry appear to be so “mystical” and “*weiqi*-like.”** Chiasmi are verbal patterns in which the second half of an expression is balanced against the first but with the parts reversed.<sup>240</sup>

*[Our] consternation stems partly from a failure to notice how traditional Chinese writers ubiquitously, exuberantly wielded a set of reverting, symmetrical abba patterns that fall under the rubric chiasmus. Contemporary scholars, often ignorant of or insensitive to traditional rhetorical analysis, have overlooked these crisscross patterns and their significance. What have we missed; why did chiasmus elude our perception; and what can chiasmus teach Sinology? Don’t writers from all over the world employ chiasmus? Yes, but counterchange takes on a unique significance in pre-modern Chinese literature.*

*You can best grasp that significance by beginning with four fundamental and presumably uncontroversial propositions about ancient Chinese:*<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> David Kneightley; “Disguise and Deception in Early China and Early Greece”; *Early China/Ancient Greece: Thinking Through Comparisons*; Steven Shankman and Stephen W. Durrant (eds.); pp. 145-6

<sup>240</sup> <http://grammar.about.com/od/ab/g/antimetabole.htm>

<sup>241</sup> David McCraw; “Criss-Cross: Introducing Chiasmus in Old Chinese Literature”; *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)*, Vol. 28 (Dec., 2006); pp. 67-124 <http://www.jstor.org/pss/25478377>

The chiasmi are from pages 117-120 and the capitals and bold for emphasis are my additions. It has also been rearranged for clarity.



**Think of chess-think vs. *weiqi*-think in these descriptions. For example, think of *miai*, *aji*, *seki*, influence vs. territory, etc. These are exactly those qualities that distinguish *weiqi* stratagems from those used in chess that were listed at the beginning of this Part.**

*1) They saw the world as dynamic series of a) interactions between complementary pairs, like yin-yang, long-short, high-low, etc; and b) multivalent interactions among interrelated series of agents/phases, etc;*

*2) Their society functioned through a series of interrelations between mutually dependent, hierarchically complementary pairs: father-son, husband-wife, lord vassal, etc;*

*3) Unlike traditional mainline Western thinkers, traditional Chinese did not depend on a transcendental God or First Principle and so did not usually construct fixed conceptual positions or build teleological narratives; rather, in Chinese thought, precisely the movements and interplay among terms, the ebbs and flows among partners in balanced, dynamic thought-processes, assumed primary importance. This means readers must watch carefully how rhetoric inweaves each "figure in the carpet" in order to unravel the weft of their thinking.*

*4) Old Chinese is an "isolating language" (ignoring for now the active affixes characterizing very early Chinese), lacks morphology and inflection, so its grammar depends almost entirely on word order. Thus, syntactic patterns like parallelism [the most common] and chiasmus [the second most common] assume overwhelming importance in effectively presenting argument and rhetoric. [This will be dramatically illustrated in the wording of the four-character Thirty-six Strategies.]*

McCraw lists thirteen categories of chiasmi. A few of the simpler examples are:

***Counterbalance*** . . . *chiasmus highlighting oppositions, in which the mutual relations between a-b-b-a seem, in the Chinese phrase, mutually opposite and mutually complementary:*

**Think of the following as the back-and-forth of black and white moves in a *weiqi* game as opposed to the brutality of a chess game.**

*When governing gets lax the people get arrogant  
Arrogance gets corrected with ferocity  
With ferocity the people get injured  
Injury gets eased with laxity  
The lax tempers the ferocious  
Ferocity tempers laxity  
Governing thereby becomes harmonious*

***Topsy-turvy chiasmus, hypallage or "inversion"*** . . . chiasmi of the form:

*High bluff turned to gully  
Deep gully turned into ridge (Shijing #193.3 Shiyue zhijiao)*

***Modus Tollens (negating the consequent)*** . . . chiasmus expressing the logical pattern  $a \rightarrow b$ ,  $\neg b \rightarrow \neg a$ , as in:

*As for this way, you may not leave it for a moment  
What you may leave simply isn't the way (Zhongyong, Section 1)*

***Valence Chiasmus*** . . . counterchange in which either the "a" frame or "b" pivot gets negated:

*To speak to a gentle who does not bear speaking to uses speech as bait  
Not to speak to a gentle who does bear speaking to uses silence as bait (Mencius 7B31)*

***Interversion*** . . . a term borrowed from musical analysis to describe constructions of the form  $a-b-c$ ,  $b-a-c$  and similar permutations (of three or more terms)  
. . .

*Fixed karmic deeds have no doing  
And these deeds lack a doer  
A fixed doer has no doing  
So the doer in turn lacks a karmic deed (Zhonglun T30.12b (8.2)) The form of this couplet,  $a-b-a-c-c-b-c-a$ , approaches that of a musical rondo. . . .*

McCraw adds at the end of his essay:

*This article has attempted to show how chiasmus contributes to an "aesthetic order" that far outweighed any "logical order" in traditional Chinese literature. . . . chiasmus that counterchanges similar or opposed complementary pairs has the power to transform terms and concepts, or transform our view of them. A view of living and dying that absorbs Zhuangzi's "Living/birth's the follower of dying, dying's the inception of birth/living" has outgrown a naive terror of death. The Zhuangzi who awakens from his butterfly dream [he didn't know if he dreaming he was a butterfly when he was asleep or the butterfly was dreaming him when he woke up] has subtly changed, has undergone a transformation "into something rich and strange." The mind that can comprehend "nirvana=samsara, samsara=nirvana" or "looks=emptiness, emptiness=looks" has shed leadfooted opinions about experience. And the Baoyu who has learned "When false becomes authentic, authentic in turn becomes false; where absent becomes present, presence returns to absence" has truly understood what's*

*authentic in life. We have found through experience that tracing and appreciating chiasmus can afford Sinologists a deeper, more authentic understanding of traditional literature.*

*We began with a metaphor; let's close with one. In the interplay between Chinese words and worlds "reversion marks dao "way/discourse's motion," and "heaven's dao loves to return." Dao don't progress monotonously—they revert; since criss-cross "closes the circuit" a-b-b-a, it fulfills the energy potentials inherent in Chinese discursive dao and dao of discourse.*

## Aesthetics

A.C. Graham frames the subject of this section rather well:

*. . . one would expect that a training in Classical Chinese style would be an education primarily in sensitivity to similarities and differences, and so in correlative rather than analytic thinking. The parallelism so noticeable in Chinese style is not mere decoration but an indispensable aid to syntax. Given a language in which sentences are structured by word-order, and not only can verbs stand in nominal positions but nouns have causative and putative uses in which they stand in verbal positions, a sentence or clause of any length will be structurally ambiguous unless clarified either by particles or by parallelism with another similar in structure. Hsun-tzu and Han Fei, for example, exploit the resources of both syntax and parallelism to build long and complex sentences. On the other hand a poet or a Yin-Yang thinker, being primarily interested in correlation, tends to dispense with particles and rely on parallelism alone. The choice between these alternatives with the rise or the waning of intellectual controversy returns in later periods. Thus Han Yu (A.D. 768-824), the initiator of the Confucian revival which took the offensive against Buddhism and Taoism and led to the Neo-Confucianism of the Sung, was also the rebel against the "Parallel Prose" dominant for some centuries and founder of the "Ancient Prose" movement which took its stylistic models from such early Confucians as Mencius.<sup>242</sup>*

Aesthetic suggestiveness is one of the major reasons for Western attitudes about the "Mysticism of the East" that was attached to the old ideas about "Orientalism."

*. . . [This is] a major theoretical category in Chinese art—verbal, visual, and auditory. As Fung Yu-lan [1895-1990], the renowned historian of Chinese philosophy, puts it, "Suggestiveness, not articulateness, is the ideal of all Chinese art, whether it be poetry, painting, or anything else." Fung also points out: "Such is the ideal of Chinese art, and this ideal is reflected in the way in which Chinese philosophers have expressed themselves." If aesthetic suggestiveness has influenced formal presentations of philosophy, the impact in the reverse direction is even more profound. Aesthetic suggestiveness is certainly a category to be found in discussions of the arts, but in*

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<sup>242</sup> Graham; p. 404

*many ways one may almost say that it grew out of philosophical discourses and treatises and had its philosophical foundation firmly established in Chinese thought.*

*. . . In traditional Chinese literary thought, there are quite a few expressions that voice similar ideas in the making of poetic art: yanwai zhi yi, (meanings beyond the expressed words), xianwai zhi yin (sound off the string), xiangwai zhi xiang, (images beyond the image), weiwai zhi zhi (flavors beyond the flavor), and hanxu (subtle reserve). All these expressions advocate unlimited suggestiveness, . . .*<sup>243</sup>

**Anyone who has read commentaries on *weiqi* games will recognize their “suggestiveness” as opposed to the unambiguous matter-of-factness of chess commentaries.**

In regard to the last term, *hanxu*, Yang Zai (1271-1323) wrote:

*What is valued in language is subtle reserve (hanxu). That words may end but implications are endless is a supreme adage under heaven. On the zither of the Purity Temple, one string is plucked and three others will echo in sighs, thereby producing lingering notes.*<sup>244</sup>

**Here, one almost sees the subtle beginnings of a *weiqi* game—the aesthetic qualities of the balancing of influence and profit or how the play in one corner would affect the play in another—unlike the aesthetically unappealing opening of a chess game.**

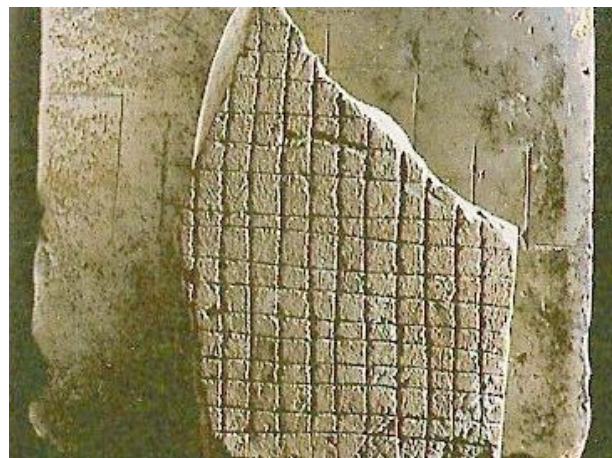
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<sup>243</sup> Ming Dong Gu; “Aesthetic Suggestiveness in Chinese Thought: A Symphony of Metaphysics and Aesthetics”; *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (Oct. 2003); pp. 490-1

<sup>244</sup> Gu; p. 496 Yang Zai; “Shifaj iashu” tit~ (Transmitted poetic methods); *Lidais hihua*, vol. 2; p. 737

## XIV. As China Begins to Play “Real” *Weiqi*, Negative and Positive Reactions of the *Literati* Appear

It can perhaps be assumed, as mentioned above and demonstrated in Appendix V, that *weiqi*, as dated by the early Confucian writings, was initially a very simple game, probably 9x9, as indicated by the fact that the early Daoist warrior/philosophers saw no analogies to their military thoughts and was only called a “small art” by around 260 BC in the *Mencius*.



245

*The oldest weiqi board*

However, as perhaps indicated by the fact that the oldest *weiqi* board (c. 179 BC) had a 9x9 on one side and a 17x17 or 19x19 on the other, after the chaos of the Warring States, Qin and post-Qin periods had calmed down during the relative peace of the Han dynasty, the game developed into an activity to be praised by some and objected to by others before being integrated into the systems of Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism c. 1000 and accepted by all as a worthy use of time.

The negative writings will come first, followed by the positive.

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<sup>245</sup> <http://www.babelstone.co.uk>

*The National Geographic Magazine*; Oct. 2001; p. 59

## Some Negative Reactions of the *Literati*

As indicated in the examples of Paolo Zanon's article, "The Opposition of the *Literati* to the Game of *Weiqi* in Ancient China," **even the *literati* opposed to *weiqi* exposed the roots of "*weiqi*-think" in Warring States literature, both military and otherwise, and further beyond, in the Daoist system of *yin* and *yang*.**<sup>246</sup> For example, a 5 AD criticism of *weiqi* by Yang Xiong's *Fayan* (*Exemplary Sayings*) contests the uncritical acceptance of spontaneity:

*"Some believe that criminal law corresponds to Dao because it too is spontaneous. But I say that criminal law, like weiqi, like fencing [which is based on Sunzi-like yin-yang movements] and magic practices which confuse the eye, although they are all spontaneous (ziran), still have a true Dao only generally speaking, but in their particulars they have a perverse Dao".*<sup>247</sup>

Zanon concludes from this passage that *weiqi* playing was being associated with Legalism ("criminal law") and Daoism ("magic practices") and was therefore unacceptable behavior for the true gentleman.

Later on, after the fall of the Han dynasty, Wei Yao (fl. 252 AD) had an intransigent point of view that was expressed in his *Boyi Lun* (*Speech on Weiqi*). He was obviously not a *weiqi* player and was an outsider since he didn't realize the Sunzi-like strategies in the game.

Wei began by claiming that the *literati* of his day were not like those of old:

*. . . Instead, the members of the present generation do not pay attention to the Five Classics and the art of government, but amuse themselves playing weiqi. They are negligent of their tasks, desert their professions, forget to eat and drink, spend the whole day until daylight fails playing, and then go on by the light of oil-lamps. Fighting on game-boards, when it is still unclear who is stronger and who will be defeated, players concentrate all their attention and are completely enraptured by the game. Their spirits are exhausted and their bodies are fatigued, social relations are neglected, the duties of hospitality are omitted, so that the host no longer welcomes his guests. Even when there is the meat of the sacrificial ox, and even Shao and Xia music, it seems that nobody has time to care about them.*

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<sup>246</sup> Paolo Zanon; "The Opposition of the *Literati* to the Game of *Weiqi* in Ancient China"; *Asian and African Studies*; No. 5; 1996; pp. 70-82 <http://www.aepress.sk/aas/full/aas196f.pdf>

<sup>247</sup> <http://www.aepress.sk/aas/full/aas196f.pdf>

*Limits are so exceeded that some even bet their clothes and personal objects. Following the evolution of the game, hand after hand, tempers change, honesty and correctness are abandoned and expressions became not only choleric but even violent. In such circumstances, the object of players desires never transcends the game-board and their attention never goes beyond its squares. But if the adversary is beaten there is no official place assigned to the winner, territories are conquered., but in reality no plot of land is gained, ability in this game is not included among the Six Arts, [rituals, music, mathematics, writing, archery and chariot driving] and playing it is not comparable to administering state affairs. Even those who exercise their bodies to reach longevity never dare to consider their activity among the Arts!*

*Furthermore, the imperial examiners chosen to select candidates for places in the state administration do not accept weiqi as a discriminating choice.*

*If we search for the principles of weiqi in armies drawn up in fighting order, we do not find them in the rules of Sunzi or Wu Qi. Looking for those principles in the Arts or in Dao is not in the tradition of Confucius's school. Adopting inconstancy and fraud as methods of play is a demonstration of the use of incorrect and disloyal principles, employing technical terms like "invasion", jie, and "killing", sha, means being devoid of Humanity, ren. Lastly, spending the day deserting one's occupations brings no advantages, and so we may wonder if there is any difference between placing pieces on a game-board and simply throwing stones.*

*. . . The glorious Wu dynasty (220-265 AD) has now received from Heaven the mandate to rule; but, because inside the Four Seas peace is still not achieved, the dynasty is constantly engaged in the duty of selecting military officers brave enough to impose order and ready to bear responsibilities like bears and tigers, and choosing literati like dragons and phoenixes to undertake official duties. Thus, the one hundred behaviours will all be fixed, those with public duties will obtain a universal goal, in order to be rewarded with gold and even higher positions. This will improve society for one thousand years and one hundred generations will gain virtue.*

*. . . Let us now consider the weiqi board: where can we find on it any relation with a prefecture? And the three hundred pieces with an army of ten thousand soldiers? Imperial robes, bells and musical stones are much more important than pieces and game-boards: who would exchange one for the other? In the event of scholars willingly turning the diligence they now squander in weiqi towards poetical texts, they will obtain a strength like that of Yan and Min and, by employing it in wisdom they will have the capacity of Liang and Ping, by bestowing it in goods they will be rich like Yi Dun, using it in archery and driving war-chariots, they will be generals.*<sup>248</sup>

600 years later, another author wrote an anti-*weiqi* essay which is included here since it echoes the earlier criticisms. Two versions of *Yuanyu* by Pi Rixiu (834?-883?) exist. One is favorable, which was a forgery, and one was unfavorable. In contrast to Wei, Pi seems to have been a player since he curiously uses Sunzi's maxims in a different way by objecting to their yinnish "deceitfulness."

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<sup>248</sup> Zanon; pp. 74-5



*But I maintain that even if weiqi is an art, its practice is the following: if I take the initiative my adversary is the loser, but if my rational capacity is impaired and my adversary exploits this, then I am at a disadvantage. If I want an inner gain, first I have to invade the outer; if what I want to obtain is far away, first I have to occupy what is near, and this means being false. The unmodified method of placing pieces that leads to victory is an elastic defence, the way that leads to defeat is not to fight when necessary and to run away.*

*Conflict occurs every time the winner does not accept a [local] defeat and the loser does not want it either. Defending one territory and abandoning another one, occupying one territory and leaving another one: this is like He Zong and Su Qin's methods and . . . Chen Zhen's speeches and is deceitful. In such a situation, if you do not pay attention to what is important, if you are not deceitful, if you do not fight you lose. In weiqi, if you do not cheat, you fall into chaos. Even if you are a good player like Yi Qiu [from the Mencius passage] you must use such methods. . . .*

Pi then refers to the legend that Yao taught his son, Dan Zhu, to play *weiqi* and asks, "How could this be?"

*. . . how could Yao ever have employed a deceitful attitude which damages others, or false and warlike wisdom as fighting methods, and even teach them to his son with the aim of conquering other states?! Hence, the origin of weiqi must go back to the Warring States period, because its harmful, false, warlike and cheating Dao is typical of those who promoted "Horizontal and Vertical" theories. How can it be ascribed to Yao?! Who dares say that?!*

Zanon explains:

*Pi Rixiu bases his approach to weiqi on the assumption that, according to the legend, the game was developed by Dan Zhu after receiving instruction in combat from his father, the mythological emperor Yao. The story is actually slightly different. In the Warring States period, this legend is reported in Shi Ben (The Origin of History) and simply states that Yao invented weiqi and taught it to his son. One explanation of this legend is that weiqi was originally connected with divination, traditionally given to man by Yao. Later, Zhang Hua (fl. 280 AD) wrote in his Bo Wu Zhi (Records of Investigation of Things) (270-290 AD) that the real object of inventing this game was to improve the mentally retarded Dan Zhu. Here, Pi Rixiu seems to follow a different tradition, which ascribes the real origin of the game to Dan Zhu, following Yao's principles.*

*In any case, Pi Rixiu denies this possibility, refuting any connection between Yao, sanctified by Confucians in the light of their values, and the very practice of weiqi. He suggests instead Su Qing and He Zong, political theoreticians of the Warring States period, who proposed two different and antithetic systems of alliance but who were considered in Han times as members of the "Horizontal and Vertical" school, as inspirers of the values on which weiqi is based.*

*Hence, the opposition of the literati changed weapons to attack weiqi, emphasizing its close coincidence with the political theories of the Warring States which had been completely rejected by Chinese intellectuals since those times. The players themselves have claimed a certain connection between weiqi and Sunzi's war wiles, as seen in Wei Yao's essay. But Sunzi's positions overlap those upheld by Legalists and Su Qing and He Zong, to the point at which all of them accept war as a useful solution to controversies among states—a solution which may become excellent if used in an unscrupulous and Machiavellian way, with no concern for morality or rituals.*<sup>249</sup>

## **Some Positive Reactions of the *Literati***

In this section, two *weiqi* players, one from the first century AD in the Han dynasty and one about a thousand years later in the Song, demonstrate to their fellow *literati* that there could be a “*dao* of skill” in playing *weiqi* that was the same as the *dao* necessary for commanding an army like Sunzi or any other activity. This was despite the general repugnance for the fighting that had so devastated their country—an attitude that was officially fostered by the Han emperors and those who followed who wished for a docile populace.

On the other hand, one reason why at least some the *literati* might have been attracted to the game as “armchair warriors” is a tendency that Frank Kiernan observed in Chinese historical accounts of battles. This should be remembered when reading Part Three where the two battles and the maneuvering of its opposing generals are discussed in detail.

*In one signal regard, the battles of Ch'eng-p'u and Ching-hsing are comparable: each was won through a crucial stratagem based upon a shrewd assessment of the antagonist. Duke Wen counted upon the impetuosity of the Ch'u troops and perhaps upon the fervor with which Tzu-yu wished to destroy him.*

*Han Hsin counted upon Ch'en Yu's rigid habits of mind and short-sightedness. Imagine leaving those heights behind the fortifications unattended! This exaltation of the extraordinary stratagem may be a reflection of the Chinese scholar's (and historian's) repugnance for brute force. However sanguinary, warfare may have been more acceptable to the Chinese literatus if it could somehow be represented as a kind of intellectual hand-wrestling, with the harsh facts of discipline, organization, armament, endurance, and bloodshed somehow minimized by that stress upon trickiness. It is only a short step from this to the idea that unusually successful generals are wizards, possessed of a magical power to control nature and circumstance. This removes warfare still more from the everyday, accepted realm of experience, leaving that sphere to the rationalistic Confucian literati. This also, of course, relegates military history to the fabulous and romantic and frees the historian from the onerous and unpalatable task of recording the fleeting, disturbing, and technical facts of warfare. And relegating the military*

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<sup>249</sup> Zanon; pp. 76-8

*enterprise to the sphere of fantasy encourages the sort of dreamlike armchair strategy which has marked Chinese military thinking so deeply down the centuries, into our own day.*<sup>250</sup>

## **The *Qijing Shisanpian*: Some Uses of Dark Daoism in *Weiqi***

For thematic reasons, an essay written between 1049 and 1054 is presented first. It was translated and commented on by Paolo Zanon in his article on the *Qijing Shisanpian* known to the Western world as "The Classic of *Weiqi* in Thirteen Chapters" which traditionally is attributed to Zhang Ni, although there is evidence that it may have been written by someone else.<sup>251</sup>

Zanon notes in his introduction that:

*Its precise style and fullness of information place it far above all the other texts devoted to weiqi in Chinese literature.*

In Chapter Two, "On Calculations:"

*If [a player] is able to work out who will win while the game is still being played, he has calculated well. If he is not able to work this out, he has calculated badly. If he does not know who is [is going to be] the winner and who is the loser at the end of the game, he has made no calculations at all!*

Zanon comments in a footnote:

[In] "On Calculations" [Sunzi] states: "Those who, even before the battle, have worked out who will win have calculated well. Those who, in the same condition, have calculated who will lose, have calculated badly... But what about those who have not bothered to make any calculations at all!?"

In Chapter Four, "On Engaging Conflict:"

*Before attacking to the left, observe the right; before invading the space behind your opponent's lines, observe what is in front of them.*

Zanon's footnote:

*This technique is described in the treatise by Sunzi in the following terms: "A distant army must pretend to be close; a nearby army must appear to be distant."*

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<sup>250</sup> Kierman; p. 65

<sup>251</sup> Paolo Zanon; "Qijing Shisanpian (The Classic of Weiqi in Thirteen Chapters) Its History and Translation"; *Annali di Ca'Foscari*; Venezia; Universit Ca'Foscari; Vol. XXXV; N. 3; 1996; pp. 375-398  
<http://www.go.hvalur.org/knihovna/Go%20%28Weiqi%29%20Philosophy%20And%20Playing%20Strategies.pdf>

*When there are many enemy pieces but few of your own in a given territory, first of all carefully consider your own chances of survival. If the opposite situation arises, when your own pieces are numerous and your enemy is in difficulties, exploit that situation to extend your configurations.*

*As the best victory is that gained without fighting, so the best position is one which does not provoke conflict. In any case, if you fight well you will not lose, and if your ranks are not in disorder, you will lose well.*

*Although at the beginning of the game, you must arrange the pieces according to the rules, at the end you must use your imagination in order to win.*

*Carefully observe the most minute details of all territories: if they are solidly constructed, they cannot be overwhelmed, but, if you surprise your adversary with an idea which has not occurred to him, you will be able to overwhelm him where he is unprepared.*

*If your adversary defends himself without doing anything, it is a sign that in reality he intends to attack. If he neglects small territories and does not play in them, he is in fact plotting to make great conquests there.*

Zanon's footnote refers to the inter-changeable use of Sunzi's "orthodox" and "unorthodox" strategies described in Part One.

*In chapter "Shipian" of his work, Sunzi advises: "In any battle, engage conflict with the enemy in the ordinary manner, but in order to win, use your imagination."*

In Chapter Five, "On Emptiness and Fullness":

*In weiqi, if you follow too many main strategies, your configurations will become fragmented. Once they are disrupted, it is difficult not to succumb.*

*Do not play your pieces too close to those of your opponent, for if you do, you will make him "full" but you will "empty" yourself. When you are empty it is easy to be invaded; when you are full, it is difficult to overwhelm you.*

*Do not follow a single plan, but change it according to the moment. Zuo zhuan advised: "If you see that an advance is possible, then advance! If you encounter difficulties, retreat". It also observed: "If you seize something but do not change your method, at the end only a single thing will have been seized".<sup>252</sup>*

In Chapter Six, "On Knowing Oneself":

*The wise man is able to foresee even things which are not yet visible. The foolish man is blind even when the evidence is placed in front of his eyes.*

*Thus, if you know your own weak points, you can anticipate what may benefit your adversary, and thereby win. You will also win if you know when to fight and when*

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<sup>252</sup> See Strategy 12 of the Thirty-six Strategies in Part Three: "If You Chance Upon a Sheep, Be Sure to Steal It."

*to avoid conflict; if you can correctly measure the intensity of your efforts; if, exploiting your preparation, you can prevent your adversary from being prepared too; if, by resting, you can exhaust your adversary; and if, by not fighting, you can subdue him.*

*In Laozi it is written: "He who knows himself is enlightened!"*

Zanon comments:

*The author clarifies the following concept at the end of the chapter: for a player to manifest the fact that he is disturbed during play is not only impolite but also disadvantageous, because it allows his opponent to understand and exploit his plans. To keep calm (also mentioned in Chapter 13, together with the recommendation to breathe regularly) allows an adult person to regain that "original state" which he had when he was a child. The value of this regression to a childlike state was upheld by Taoism. See also chapter 55 in Laozi, which reads: "He whose heart is impregnated with the most profound Virtue is like an infant".*

In Chapter Ten, "On Observing Details:"

*If you wish to strengthen the outside, first take care of the inside. If you wish to consolidate to the east, attack to the west.*

Zanon comments:

*Similar concepts may be found in chapter "Xushipian" of Sunzi's work, entitled, like . . . [Chapter Five], "On Emptiness and Fullness". Sunzi writes: "The formation of the army is like water: like water, it moves from high places and flows downwards, In the same way, military formations should avoid whatever is already full and occupy the void". . . . The theory which, as in this case, presents the passage of one principle to its opposite in an infinite cycle, is proper to Taoism.*

*In Zuozhuan, this excerpt, from the twelfth year "Xuangong", closes by stating that this "is a good rule for conducting armies".*

The *Qijing Shisanpian* also lists 30 (of the 32) names for moves, many of which echo the thoughts of Sunzi and Sunbin. For example:

*Wo: When the adversary is aligning his pieces one after the other (see: xing) in close contact with a friendly formation, a wo move consists of laying down a line of pieces beyond the enemy formation, in order to create another structure or aid an already existing one.*

*Chuo: A diagonal advance in enemy territory which, although it allows greater speed of penetration than an advance along straight lines, is very dangerous, due to the possibility of being cut off by nearby enemy pieces.*

Yue: *A defensive blocking move: placing a piece next to an advancing enemy piece in one's own territory in order to hinder his movements.*

Zha: *The process of encircling a group with the aim of depriving it of all external freedoms.*

Fei: *Placing a piece strategically far from one or more semiencircled enemy pieces, in order to avoid granting them any pathway to escape.*  
*Cutting a line of enemy pieces arranged diagonally.*

Men: *Playing one or more pieces inside an enemy configuration so that, by killing them, the enemy is obliged to deprive himself of his freedoms and dies by his own hand.*

Ju: *Playing a piece at an intersection where only one freedom remains. As in his next move the adversary may kill it immediately, this strategy has an ulterior motive.*

Pu: *This corresponds to the move of the "catapulted" piece, pao, described in chapter "Qizhipian" of Qijing. It consists of placing a piece inside a practically complete enemy configuration, without being able to weaken it but with the aim of making the adversary play his next move there.*

Chi: *This occurs when two opposing groups encircle each other, without any eyes or possibility of having contacts: only the death of one will be the life of the other.*  
*Mors tua, vita mea.*<sup>253</sup>

## **A Translation of the *Yi Zhi***

In defense of *weiqi* from a different approach, Ban Gu (32-92), a noted historian and author of the *Hanshu*, wrote *Yi Zhi* (*The Essence of Wei Qi*), a *fu* poem interspersed with prose that was the main poetic genre of his time. It is the oldest surviving text devoted solely to the game and, since it followed the 5 AD tirade of Yang Xiong noted above, was perhaps the first attempt to convince Confucian *literati* that the game had a valid *dao*. Despite referring to the military in a very different way than the other quoted writers, Ban was a conservative Confucian who criticized the court historian Sima Tan who organized the philosophical schools as being "too Daoist."

As translated by John Fairbairn in his *GoGod* CD, the *Yi Zhi* is presented in its entirety, however, for the sake of brevity, only his footnotes to his translation are included.<sup>254</sup> He used the oldest version of the *Yi Zhi*, the *Yiwen Leiju* by Ouyang Xun of the Tang dynasty.

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<sup>253</sup> Zanon; "Opposition"; p. 26

<sup>254</sup> [www.gogod.co.uk](http://www.gogod.co.uk)

Ban begins by discussing “*bo*” which refers to the riotous dicing game of *liubo* that was mentioned in the Confucian *Analects* along with *weiqi*. “*Yi*” was an old name for *weiqi* used in the north-east state of Lu that was “east of the pass” in the Shandong Peninsula.



*The Shandong Peninsula*

It was the home of two schools who continued on with the writings of Confucius and his disciple Mencius after they had died. They used *weiqi* in three passages to illustrate their evolving theories about filial piety—see Appendix V for details.

### **The *Yi Zhi***

Translation © 2013 by John Fairbairn. Used by permission.

*A Scholar [i.e. Ban Gu himself] once finished expounding on “bo”, whereupon someone came forward and asked him: “Confucius said there was ‘yi’ and ‘bo’. Now ‘bo’ is popular among people, yet ‘yi’ has simply ceased to exist. The meaning of ‘bo’ is widely known. The meaning of ‘yi’ has not been handed down. I have asked about this to people who discourse on these things but my teachers have not been able to explain it. Can you tell me what it is about?”*

*The Scholar said: “My learning is not extensive and I lack the means to reply to you, my guest. But the people of the North call ‘qi’ [weiqi] ‘yi’.*

*“I shall expand on this explanation and enumerate its general points, for its significance is profound.*

*“The board must be square, for it represents Earth’s laws. The lines must be straight for they embody the spirit of pure virtue. The pieces are white and black, and so are divided into the Yin and the Yang. Paired and set out in order, they represent the patterns of the Heavens.”<sup>256</sup> Once these four symbols<sup>257</sup> have been deployed, it is up to Man to use them to make the moves. In short, this is kingship. Success or failure, good*

<sup>255</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Shandong\\_Peninsula&action=edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Shandong_Peninsula&action=edit)

<sup>256</sup> Fairbairn’s footnotes follow:

It was far from original to use game equipment to symbolize philosophical concepts at this time.

<sup>257</sup> The four representations mentioned above: the board, the lines, the colours of the stones and their arrangement on the board. These are perhaps also to be related to the Four (Secondary) Figures of the Eight Diagrams, deduced from the Two Primary Symbols in the Book of Changes: (1) the sun, the first, greatest, (2) the moon, that which unites, (3) the stars, daylight, white, (4) the planets, night, etc



*or evil, like benevolence, depends on ability within oneself. This is sitting straight in the face of danger.*

*"Now 'bo' depends on the throws of the dice, not only on the moves. The superior player can have bad luck, the inferior can have good luck. They confront each other and with their spirits fight mightily. But, although there is a winner and a loser, still this is not sufficient to make it a fair contest of skill.*

*"But with 'yi' it is not so. The strong and the weak [that] repulse each other have distinct differences between them, and the players have grades. It is like in Confucius' school where Hui and Ci deferred to each other.<sup>258</sup> They follow names and require substance.<sup>259</sup> They plan by devising strategies; it is like the courts of the Tang and the Yu,<sup>260</sup> where demotions and promotions were on the basis of examining merits. The equipment used may be constant, but actions and plans are always changing. Make secure places in response to the enemy, but respond to the situation and be flexible. Continue without repetition and by changes daily renovate yourself.<sup>261</sup> Sometimes you will set up in empty areas or establish positions in advance, in order to defend yourself.*

*"In short this symbolises Paoxi's system of fishing nets. If you raise dikes all around you can guard against overflowing rivers bursting through them. This is like the power Xiahou used to control the waters. If there is the defect of a single hole, ruin will be inexorable. This is like the loss when Huzi's floods overflowed.<sup>262</sup> One go piece can similarly burst through an obstruction.*

*"Lost territory being again recovered is like the might of Cao Zi.<sup>263</sup> When you lay an ambush and devise a feint, and break through an encirclement and run riot, this is*

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<sup>258</sup> . . . Meng Wu asks . . . Confucius about some of his pupils: "The Master said to Zigong [Ci], "Which is superior, you or Hui?" Zigong replied: "How dare I compare myself with Hui! If Hui is told one thing he understands ten. If I am told one thing I understand only two". Confucius said: "You are not as good as he is. Neither you nor I are as good."

<sup>259</sup> Requiring that names and substance conform with each other, that is titles had to be matched by actual responsibilities, words had to match deeds.

<sup>260</sup> According to legend, leaders of the Taotang tribe and Youyu tribe both gave up the empire to wise men rather than set up a dynasty, and for Confucianists this was a golden age. The Taotang were headed by Yao. At first they lived in Tao and then moved to Tang (Pinyang): within the borders of Linfen, Shanxi), hence the name. The Youyu were headed by Shun and first lived in Yu (Dupuban: within modern Yongji County, Shanxi), hence the name. After their abdication, Yu the Great succeeded. Yao and Shu, of course, have their place in go legend as having invented the game to instruct foolish sons (which created some difficulties for Confucian thinkers!). [More on this subject is in the main article.]

<sup>261</sup> [The Confucian Classic] *Great Learning*, Chap. 2.1

<sup>262</sup> Huzi is . . . the name of a dike on the river Han, in Baimai, Shanjun (modern Hua County, Jiangnan). Because a small hole destroyed the Huzi dike the floods overflowed and caused a disaster. This alludes in go to "the mistake of one move can cause the loss of a whole game", but more specifically "dikes" are to be understood as walls in go and their power is "influence". Xiahou was Yu the Great, famous for his flood control and irrigation projects.

<sup>263</sup> Cao Zi's might: Cao Zi refers to Cao Mo, that is the Cao Gui of the "Cao Gui discusses battles" of the pre-Confucian history "Zuo Zhuan". He was from Lu in the Spring and Autumns period. When Duke Huan of Qi invaded Lu, Duke Zhuang of Lu sought peace and both met at Ke (east of modern Yanggu, Shandong). Cao Mo attacked Duke Huan of Qi with a dagger held him hostage and so recovered the part of Lu that had been lost.

*like Tian Dan's surprise move.*<sup>264</sup> *When you exert pressure on the opponent and plunder from each other and so divide territories and take compensation from each other, this is like the behaviour of Su and Zhang.*<sup>265</sup>

*"If you solidify your bases and expand yourself, the enemy will be in dread. If out of three parts you have two, but let them go and do not punish them, this is like Wen of Zhou's virtues, and is the concern of a wise man."*<sup>266</sup> *If having already suffered defeat you can still estimate the weak and strong, you can hold back and act like a kindly teacher. If you defend the corners and rely on the sides but on the other hand continuously defend your weak group, then though you may lose once you will not perish. This is like the wisdom of Mu,*<sup>267</sup> *and is the method of the Golden Mean.*<sup>268</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> Tian Dan was a general of Qi in the Warring Kingdoms period and came from Linzi (now part of Zibo City, Shandong). When Yan invaded Qi, they took over 70 cities in succession. Only the two cities of Xiaju and Jimo remained. Tian Dan was stoutly defending Jimo. By using the "formation of oxen with fire" he routed the Yan army and recovered all 70-odd cities. This was in 279 BC and refers to a famous story in which he collected more than 1,000 oxen, tied sharp daggers to their horns and oil-dipped reeds to their tails, and dressed them in colourful cloths. At dead of night he and 5,000 soldiers dressed as monsters set the tails alight and drove the oxen towards the enemy camp. The panicking enemy soldiers were wiped out. This has become a classic reference for doing something by surprise. [The full story is recounted in Strategy 29. "Silk Flowers Blossom in the Tree," in Part Three.]

<sup>265</sup> Su and Zhang: refer to Su Qin and Zhang Yi. Both were Political Strategists in the Warring States period (475-221 BC). Su Qin, styled Lizi, was from Luoyang, Eastern Zhou. At first he applied to King Hui of Qin but was not employed. Finally he went to Yan and Zhao, and joined the alliance of six states against Qin. Su was head of the 'hezong' (vertical confederation of states against Qin). Zhang Yi was from Wei. He served as Minister of Qin under King Hui for over ten years, and by means of the horizontal 'lianheng' strategy (in which Qin tried to ally with each of the other six states), he approached the six states to get them to oppose the others and support Qin. There are many anecdotes about this pair.

<sup>266</sup> King Wen, an ideal ruler according to Confucius, was leader of the Zhou tribe at the end of the Shang dynasty (11th c. BC). As one of the dukes and princes of the Yin Shang he founded his capital in Fengyi (southwest of modern Xi'an in Shaanxi Province). He was head of the western aristocracy and was so called Earl of the West (Xi Bo). At that time Zhou of the Yin ruled as a tyrant whereas King Wen governed benevolently. More than two thirds of the dukes and princes returned to King Wen. Here Ban Gu is borrowing Wen's deeds and emphasising "solidify his bases and expanding" in order to illustrate in go standing high and seeing far (taking a broad and long-term view), the high-class strategy of winning without fighting.

<sup>267</sup> Mu refers to Duke Mu of Qin (or Ying Renhao) who reigned 659-621 BC. He was one of the Five Hegemons of the Springs and Autumns era. At the time of King Xiang of Zhou he was called Hegemon of the Western tribes, and was appointed Earl of the dukes and princes of the West. The reference is to the Qin army in Yao (a strong pass in Honan, the eastern edge of Qin, which is in modern Honan, southeast of the Sanmen Pass). It was attacked and defeated by the Jin army, and Duke Mu held himself responsible. But later he rested to build up his strength and plan battle. He ended in defeating the state of Jin. Ban Gu believes that when playing go it is important to have this kind of tolerance and courage and insight of Duke Mu.

<sup>268</sup> Of the Confucian school - see Doctrine of the Mean. [One of the four books of Confucian philosophy It was attributed to Zisi (Kong Ji), the only grandson of Confucius and expounds on the phrase "Doctrine of the Mean" (*zhōng yōng*), which first occurs in the *Analects of Confucius*: "The Master said, 'The virtue embodied in the doctrine of the Mean is of the highest order. But it has long been rare among people.'" (Wikipedia)]

*"First were the symbols of heaven and earth. Next was the rule of emperors and kings. In the middle was the power of the five hegemonies. Lastly were the affairs of the warring states. I have looked at their profit and loss, and have furnished more or less cases from past and present.*

*"As regards being at ease in playing go, if you exert yourself fully so that you forget to eat, and are so happy that you forget your sorrows, then we can recommend it and praise it highly, for this is like Confucius' concept of himself.<sup>269</sup> If you are happy without wantonness, sad without malice, calling as witness the "Book of Odes", it is a kind of "Guan Ju"<sup>270</sup> If you handle the hard you understand the soft.<sup>271</sup> Yin and yang arrive in succession.*

*"Following this and nurturing your own nature is like Peng Zu's 'qi'.<sup>272</sup> If on the surface it seems like no action, and silently understanding what it is like to be tranquilly without desires, defending yourself to know the meaning of the Way by using the meaning of the lines on the go board - this is like Lao Zi.<sup>273</sup> Giving free rein to your words while living like a recluse, putting blame at a distance while repenting actions, symbolises Yu Zhong.<sup>274</sup> I believe you can enjoy this game.*

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<sup>269</sup> Analects Book 7, Shu er, Chap. 18: The Duke of She asked Zilu [a pupil of Confucius] about Confucius. Zilu did not answer. Confucius said, "Why did you not say: he is the sort of man who is so eager to study that he forgets to eat, who is so full of joy that he forgets his worries, and who does not notice the onset of old age?"

<sup>270</sup> Analects Book III Ba Yi, Chap. 20 where Confucius said: "The Guan Ju expresses joy without wantonness, sorrow without malice." "Guan Ju" (the cawing ospreys) is the first ode of the Shi Jing (Book of Odes):

Guan-guan go the ospreys  
On the islet in the river  
The modest retiring, virtuous, young lady;  
For our prince a good mate she

There are a couple more verses but the significance is the poem is said to refer to King Wen of Zhou and his bride Tai Si and the old commentators believed it was about "rectitude of character and feelings, and harmony of voice and spirit." Here Ban Gu is making a connection between the "rectitude" and "harmony" of the "Guan Ju" and go, which is pure and proper, and a worthy educational activity.

<sup>271</sup> The Chinese expression contrasts a spindle and thread. The one is hard, the other is soft; soft and hard go together. This alludes to things being opposite but complementary.

<sup>272</sup> Peng Zu, or Old Man Peng, according to legend was already 767 years old at the end of the Yin dynasty (11th c. BC). He was great-great grandson of Zhuan Xu, a legendary ruler (2513-2435 BC). He was described as being good at preparing pheasant soup and he thereby served Emperor Yao. According to the Shi Ben he served the Shang as a librarian and the Zhou as an archivist, but elsewhere it is said he declined official posts. He was said to be of a quiet nature, uninterested in world affairs and devoted to physical self-cultivation by means of breathing exercises he devised. This is the reference to 'qi', in this case the 'qi' (or ch'i or ki) of martial artists).

<sup>273</sup> On the basis of punctuation and structure, there appears to be something missing here. There should be something to balance the reference to Confucius' concept. The clues around about - "no action (wuwei)", "without desires", "defending oneself", "meaning of the Way" - point to Daoism and so it appears a reference to Lao Zi is intended, which is accordingly inserted here.

<sup>274</sup> Yu Jong, also called Zhong Young, was the second son of King Tai of the Zhou. King Tai had three sons. The eldest was Tai Bo, the second Zhong Yong and the youngest Ji Li. King Tai wanted to set up his youngest son, Ji Li, on the throne, and so Tai Bo and Zhong Yong avoided Ji Li by running away to the area of Jingman (Jiangnan)

*"I feel that what I have said is not complete, but I have used what was asked to illustrate what it is all about."*

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where barbarian tribes lived. (Fratricide was a common way of stalling potential opposition.) Tai Bo later became lord of that area and was known as Wu Tai Bo. When Tai Bo died, Zhong Yong succeeded him as ruler and became the ancestor of the later state of Wu. There is a reference here to Analects Book 18 Wei Zi, Chap. VIII. Of Yu Zhong and Yi Yi he [Confucius] said, "While living as recluses they gave free rein to their words. But they were unsullied in character and showed sound judgement in accepting their dismissal." The ideas seem to be "running away to live another day". [As Strategy 36 recommends in the next Part.]

# PART THREE

## The Thirty-six Strategies in War, Peace and *Weiqi*

### I. Western and Eastern Attitudes Toward the Ideas and Uses of Cunning

#### The West

Since the days of the Greeks, we have generally been taught that cunning and trickery are, if not the opposite of “wisdom,” certainly not a high art and, even more certainly, not something to base an entire philosophy of action on, as the Chinese have done.

Think about how despised the so-called “slick” skills of advertising, business or law professions are regarded in our culture and think about the “moral fallout” from the last Wall Street fiasco. As for playing board games, with few exceptions (Gary Kasparov, for example), even great proficiency at chess has been looked at more as the result of obsession, eccentricity or addiction than as a sign of any superior mental capacity. Think of Akiba Rubinstein, Paul Morphy, Wilhelm Steinitz, José Capablanca, Bobby Fisher and Aleksandr Ivanovich Luzhin in Nabakov’s *The Luzhine Defense*—all of whom went mad. Then there are the British laments that “When I am done with it, it is not done with me” and, “If you want to destroy a politician, teach him chess.”

Although Ulysses used “masculine” cunning, deception and disguises (*metis*) and Penelope used “feminine” wiles among many other examples of the uses of practical reasoning, Plato and Aristotle failed to include it in the realm of “Knowledge” and since then not many Western writers have given it any kind of moral dignity or mentioned it with any praise.<sup>275</sup>

Lisa Raphals gave some reasons—it is because in our culture, “. . . metic knowledge tends to be obscured by our Western tendencies to objectify knowledge into ethical, moral and scientific” modes and the legacy of Locke, Descartes and Kant is to value theoretical over practical knowledge. All this is coupled with Socrates and Plato’s ideas that “Virtue” is a branch of knowledge that is not “learned” and is simply given by

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<sup>275</sup> Marcel Detienne, Jean-Pierre Vernant; Janet Lloyd(trans.); *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*, Harvester Press, 1978

Lisa Raphals; *Knowing Words: Wisdom and Cunning in the Classical Traditions of China and Greece*; Cornell Univ. Press, 1992. She notes that Detienne and Vernant missed the division of “masculine” and “feminine” uses of *metis*.

the gods in the two-tiered world described in Part Two. This was *contra* the largely ignored views of Protagoras that are strangely similar to the attitudes of the ancient Chinese i.e. he felt that “Man is the measure of all things” and that virtue is gained by conduct and practice.<sup>276</sup> Thus Raphals writes that, “. . . the abilities we recognize as wisdom may be the same qualities we disparage as cunning and cleverness,” and hence they do not get praised.<sup>277</sup> She also writes that, “Metic intelligence is looked at as arational and amoral if not irrational and immoral.”<sup>278</sup> In short, it is “extraphilosophical thought” in which language can impede rather than facilitate the acquisition of knowledge of the “. . . realm of shifting particulars that can be apprehended and described only indirectly and with skill and cunning.”<sup>279</sup>

## China

The different attitudes about the ethicality of cunning in the East and West can be seen in a roundabout way because disguise plays a notable role in Homer and an insignificant one in China. David Knightley writes:

*. . . the interest in disguise, manifested in early Greek literature, may be correlated with the uncertainties about the nature of reality, and about man's ability to know reality with confidence present in early Greek philosophy and that the lack of interest in disguise in early Chinese narratives may be correlated equally well with the metaphysical and epistemological optimism that underlies much early Chinese philosophy. . . . Early Chinese authors and thinkers were certainly aware of the difference between appearance and reality but, unlike a significant number of their early Greek counterparts—and with the possible exception of Zhuangzi [“Am I a man dreaming I am a butterfly or am I a butterfly dreaming I am a man?”] . . . they did not regard that difference as a significant concern of either narrative or philosophy.*<sup>280</sup>

With this type of world-view, in China, as has been demonstrated, cunning is considered not only a necessary but a natural tool for success. It is just part of normal thinking so it calls upon the mode of intelligence that embraces a set of skills and mental attitudes that range from wisdom, forethought, keen attention and resourcefulness to subtle indirection, craft and deception. Historically, for example, in

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<sup>276</sup> In Plato's *Protagoras* [319a], he claims to teach “The proper management of one's own affairs, how best to run one's household, and the management of public affairs, how to make the most effective contribution to the affairs of the city by word and action.” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protagoras>

<sup>277</sup> Raphals; p. 3

<sup>278</sup> Raphals; p. 4

<sup>279</sup> Raphals; p. 227

<sup>280</sup> David Knightley; “Epistemology in Cultural Context: Disguise and Deception in Early China and Early Greece; *Early China/Ancient Greece: Thinking Through Comparisons*; Steven Shankman, Stephen W. Durrant (Eds.); State Univ. of New York Press; 2002; p. 119

war or peace, you were advised to learn to play *weiqi* if you wanted to be a successful politician, businessman, or leader of an army in Asia. Since the game's principles and those of the Warring State's philosopher/warriors are embodied and intertwined in the Thirty-six Strategies, it is worthwhile taking a look at them, along with some examples of their appearance in history and on the *weiqi* board.



## II. An Introduction to the Thirty-six Strategies

As will be demonstrated in the discussion of Strategy 15, the natural prominence of cunning in Chinese thought can be traced back to ancient times when the royalty hunted wild beasts in the mountains and jungles. It was at this time that the ideas behind the Thirty-six Strategies and the fundamental concepts of “surrounding” as in war and *weiqi* “the surrounding game” rather than the application of direct force which so naturally developed and evolved from *Yin-Yang* Theory and the structure of the language as described earlier.

*The name of the collection [of the Thirty-six Strategies] comes from the Book of Qi, in its seventh biographical volume, Biography of Wáng Jǐngzé. . . . Wáng was a general who had served Southern Qi since the first Emperor Gao [427-482] of the dynasty. When Emperor Ming came to power [in 494] and executed many members of the court and royal family for fear that they would threaten his reign, Wáng believed that he would be targeted next and rebelled. As Wáng received news that Xiao Baojuan, son and crown prince of Emperor Ming, had escaped in haste after learning of the rebellion, he commented that “of the thirty-six stratagems of Lord Tán, retreat was his best, your father and son should run for sure.” Lord Tán here refers to general Tan Daoji [d. 436] of the Liu Song Dynasty [420-79], who was forced to retreat after his failed attack on Northern Wei, and Wáng mentioned his name in contempt as an example of cowardice.*<sup>281</sup>

The Thirty-six Strategies encapsulated the strategic thinking of Sunzi, Sunbin and the other military writers of the *Bingjia*, elements and titles of which, as described earlier, were continually used in the practical matters of war, business, politics, love and *weiqi*. This was because they were imbued by everyone as they grew up and came into contact with novels, myths, legends, poetry, art, theater and lately, TV and the movies. However, their actual existence was only a rumor until 1941, when a tattered reprint of a handwritten pamphlet written around 1700 was found in a street vendor’s stall in north-central China. The contents were considered so volatile that the army kept it to themselves until 1979, when the Cultural Revolution had finally died down. Since then, in Asia and the rest of the world, an uncountable number of books using and explaining the Strategies in many fields have been published.

Since six is the *Yijing* number of *yin*, the femininely sly, soft, yielding and plotting components of Daoism, 6 x 6 results in 36 extremely yinnish aphorisms consisting of four pithy, often ambiguous and enigmatic characters divided into six categories of six.

Although translations vary, the general idea is that the first group was for use when you felt you were “Ahead.” The next six were for when you felt a “Confrontation” was approaching. The third set was for when you wanted to “Attack.” The fourth covered tactics to be used when times became “Chaotic and Unpredictable.” The fifth

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<sup>281</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirty-Six\\_Stratagems](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirty-Six_Stratagems)

gave advice for when you felt you had fallen "Behind," and the last was for use when you were "Desperate" and all seemed lost.

Given the points already considered about the language they were written in, the ideas behind *yin-yang* thought, and *qi*, the "glue" that held things together, understanding the use of the Strategies requires some thought. For example, one cannot understand them if they are taken at face value since they do not necessarily say, "Do this" or "Do that." Thus, the idea of "many" strategies that the number 36 entails (as does the "10,000 things" of the world) is that they are flexible weapons because their emphasis is on looking at a problem or a situation and breaking it apart to see what the often changing balance of its *yin-yang* components are before taking action. Thus, as will be illustrated in the discussion of the Strategies, when one looks closely, there are often double and sometimes triple meanings to them.

In fact, their ambiguity and "non-directional" or rather "pan-directional" orientation allowed sinologist Harro von Senger to place the Strategies into a different logical order in his book, *The 36 Stratagems for Business*.

1. **Concealment stratagems:** *Their purpose is to hide an existing reality, for example, stratagem 10, "Hiding the dagger behind a smile."*[Also] 1, 3, 6, 8, 10, 24, 25

2. **Simulation stratagems:** *Their purpose is to lead someone to believe in something that does not exist, for example, stratagem 29, "Decorating a [barren] tree with [artificial] flowers."* 7, 27, 29, 32, 34

3. **Disclosure stratagems:** *Their purpose is to uncover something that cannot easily be ascertained, for example, stratagem 13, "Beating the grass to startle the snakes."* 13, 26

4. **Exploitation stratagems:** *Their purpose is to make use of a situation that one has instigated oneself, or that just happens to have occurred, for example, stratagem 20, "Clouding the water to catch the fish (robbed of their clear sight)."* 2, 4, 5, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 28, 30 31, 33

5. **Stratagem-linking:** *Two or more stratagems used cumulatively, or one after the other, lead to the goal.* 35

6. **Escape stratagems:** *Their purpose is self-protection by avoiding a precarious situation, for example, stratagem 36, "[When the situation is growing hopeless,] running away [in good time] is the best stratagem."* 9, 11, 21, 36<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> Harro von Senger; Myron B. Gubitz; *The 36 Stratagems for Business; Achieve Your Objectives Through Hidden and Unconventional Strategies and Tactics*; Marshal Cavendish; 2004; p. 34

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/36405412/The-36-Stratagems-for-Business> For an interview that gives some other reasons for his unique approach: [http://www.bjreview.com.cn/exclusive/txt/2006-12/21/content\\_51557\\_3.htm](http://www.bjreview.com.cn/exclusive/txt/2006-12/21/content_51557_3.htm)

Besides classical sinology, von Senger has a degree in law which may account for his rather extensive knowledge of business practices and consequent re-arrangement of the Strategies. This re-ordering allows him to pursue his agenda of dispelling the lack of understanding and respect that the West has for Asian cunning.

*In the case of the technically hybrid stratagems that do not only belong to one of the six categories, I do not give them their own individual category. It should be noted that only the stratagems belonging to categories 1 and 2 are based on deception. I call them "deception stratagems." However, the stratagems in categories 3 to 5 are not intrinsically based on deception. They are "presence stratagems," which rely on the skillful manipulation of ambiguous multileveled and multifaceted reality, full of opportunities. Anyone who equates cunning with lies/deception/cheating/untruth/dishonesty encourages partial blindness to cunning, because they are unable to recognize the rich wealth of stratagems that are devoid of deception.*<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> Senger; pp. 34-5

### III. Two Detailed Examples

#### The 15<sup>th</sup> Strategy: “Lure the Tiger Down From the Mountain”

調 *Move (troops)*  
虎 *Tiger*  
離 *Leave; Depart; From*  
山 *Mountain* <sup>284</sup>

*Never directly attack a well-entrenched opponent. Instead lure him away from his stronghold and separate him from his source of strength. But that is only part of the meaning . . .*

Historically, ancient Chinese hunters recognized that it was unwise to try to kill a tiger with direct force using a spear. Not only might the tiger kill you, but a wounded tiger was even more dangerous than a healthy one. The height of wisdom was to *surround* the tiger, and the best way to do that was not with people but with dogs. Then, by throwing a large net over the wild animal, killing it directly with a spear suddenly became much easier. This is the essence of *shi* strategy described in Part One and a surrounding strategy as opposed to brute force that is, of course, the principle of *weiqi*.

But in order to accomplish this, the tiger had to be out in the open, and tigers usually lived in caves with their families in the dense underbrush of the mountainous jungles. Thus, the tiger had to be lured away from its homeland and down from the mountain to be netted and speared. This is where, in a Daoist folk poem,

*Stranded on the sandy beach,  
The whale is teased by shrimps;  
Descended on the plain,  
The tiger is bullied by dogs.*

At first glance, because “Lure the Tiger Down from the Mountain” implies a deceptive hunting technique, the 15<sup>th</sup> Strategy seems to suggest a rather simple-minded way for the “weak” to catch the “strong.” Its meaning goes far beyond this, however, because in order to play the “Tiger Game” successfully, the strategist must consider many things before taking action.

The strategist must ask, for example, what is the objective in bringing the tiger down from its mountain? Is it always necessary—or even desirable—to kill it? A tame tiger may, after all, be useful in more ways than a dead one. Also, trying to kill a tiger is

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<sup>284</sup> <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?l=36ji&no=15&lang=en>

often counter-productive because it requires so much effort and presents a risk of exhaustion and failure.

What if the real objective is to neither trap nor kill the tiger but to occupy the tiger's mountain home in its absence? In other words, "Lure the Tiger down to the Plain" can change into "Lure the Hunter up onto the Mountain!"

Nor does the 15<sup>th</sup> Strategy even assume it is always better to be the hunter and not the tiger. Deception is the key element of this strategy, but in games of deception, one can often be lured into thinking he or she is the deceiver. The tiger might know a few tricks, too.

It is also extremely important to remember that "All is change under the Heavens." What might have been good for the hunter yesterday—with lures, nets and dogs—may not be so good tomorrow when brute force is needed. Think of the intermingling of Sunzi's "orthodox" and "unorthodox" strategies that would lead to the moment when *shi* has been built up and one is ready to strike as described at the end of Part One. It is not possible to stay in one role forever, so it's always necessary to consider how the roles might reverse, or might be reversed to one's advantage.

## **Mao Zedong and Chiang Kai-shek Play the Tiger Game**

With these principles in mind, the Chinese civil war of 1927 to 1949/50 can be looked through the lens of this Strategy. On one side was Mao Zedong, master of the Thirty-six Strategies who learned its principles from *chengyu*, Daoist folk sayings (and not by playing *weiqi* as is often assumed).<sup>285</sup> Opposing him was a trained student of Western Strategies, Chiang Kai-shek, who was also very well aware of the methods of the Strategies, but chose (or the decision was chosen for him by the circumstances and/or his ally, the United States) to ignore them. Their armies battled before, during and after the Japanese occupation of eastern China in World War II, each trying to turn the other into a stranded tiger and occupy its respective "mountain cave."

At first, it was the Communists who seemed to be the tigers in the fray. Following the dictates of Stalin and Lenin, their leaders had ignored the agricultural masses of China and focused on organizing the factory working proletariat in the cities, particularly in Shanghai. Western and Chinese business interests controlled the center of the city, but on the outskirts the Comrades felt they were safe in their home "caves"—the warrens of narrow streets, alleys, and apartment buildings that were also the sites of the factories they controlled.

However, working with foreigners and Chinese businessmen, Chiang and his secret police plotted and schemed. Finally, with promises of cooperation during what was supposed to be a great "unified" "anti-foreign" political demonstration, they were able to lure the "tiger" Communists out of those safe areas and onto the "plains" of the wider downtown streets. Once the Communists were out onto this more open area, Chiang's hidden troops emerged, encircled the demonstrators and methodically mowed

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<sup>285</sup> I learned this in 1985 when I visited the China *Weiqi* Association in Beijing as the earliest representative from the American Go Association. Players who had fought with Mao said that was a "pleasant myth." He mentions *weiqi* only a few times in his writings.

them down with machine guns. Here it was not the “mountain caves”—the factories—that Chiang was interested in, but the tigers themselves.

However, Mao was crafty. Unlike some of the other Communist leaders, he had already foreseen the possibility of a massacre as well as the possibility that it was the poor farmers in the countryside who might provide a more durable backbone for his movement. He and many of his supporters managed to escape from Shanghai. What this meant, however, was that they were now fleeing onto the real plains of China, where they became “stranded tigers” as Chiang’s dive bombers strafed them and the superior numbers of Nationalist troops encircled and almost annihilated them.

The only viable strategy for Mao was to use the simplest form of the 36<sup>th</sup> Strategy (“Run Away”), and try to reverse, if not the roles, at least the situation, so he would be at an advantage. After the famous “Long March” of 10,000 miles that zigzagged across all of China, Mao finally found his real “caves,” literally and figuratively, in the Northwest area where he was at last out of reach of the Nationalists planes and the Japanese and Nationalist mobile divisions.

From there, Mao began to build his numbers by playing more “Tiger and Hunter” games to attract troops to his cause. In contrast to the impressed and mercenary Nationalist soldiers, he lured the peasants by persuading them they would be better off as Communists. Once this was accomplished, it was easy to induce them into becoming fanatically dedicated soldiers. When Mao was strong enough, he began to counterattack onto the plains and retreat into his mountains as he wished. As a result, the less organized and less mobile Nationalists, dependent as they were on their bases in the cities, in effect became stranded tigers bullied by the encircling dogs.

Finally, as World War II was ending, the Japanese had to abandon the contested area, and in the next few years, with a series of brilliant strategic campaigns, Mao was able to separate and “net” the by-now demoralized and disorganized Nationalist armies. It was Mao who was again the tiger because he could threaten the total annihilation of the Nationalist forces by simple brute force. The Nationalist “nets” could no longer hold him and Chiang had to retreat first from Beijing, then Shanghai, and finally to Taiwan with a million of his men.

There, separated by American interests and the 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet, these two tigers and their descendants have ever since been impotently growling at each other across the Taiwan Straits.

## **Mao Zedong, Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger Play the Tiger Game**

Twenty years later, as recent discoveries of tapes, transcripts, and other records demonstrate, Mao was still thinking in terms of the Thirty-six Strategies when Richard Nixon and his advisor Henry Kissinger came to “open up” China in 1972. According to Kissinger’s *On China*, without mentioning it by name, Mao deliberately used the 23<sup>rd</sup> Strategy, “To attack your neighbors, be friendly to distant states.” That is, he invited representatives from a far-off country to counter their bordering enemies, the Russians.

However, he must also have been thinking of the 15<sup>th</sup> Strategy (which Kissinger seemed to be unaware of, both then and now) in deliberately luring the Americans into his “cave” and making them think that they needed him more than he needed them.

When the two arrived they expected cheering crowds—after all, Haile Selassie, the king of tiny Ethiopia, had recently been seen by crowds of up to 250,000 people loudly banging drums and cymbals while waving Ethiopian flags and their *Little Red Books*. However, this time there was no one on the darkened streets except bicycles and buses as they were driven through the city. Later that night, when they turned on the news, their visit was the last item mentioned. The Chinese had manufactured a non-event with their supposed indifference and the Americans did not know what to make of it.

After deliberately managed delays, when the group finally met Mao, he provided all of the translators and dictated the timing of the meetings. This left the two Americans at the mercy of the nuances of the Chinese language and susceptible to flatteries that only inflated their ideas of their own self-importance and command of the situation. Desperate for a result—any result—because of the gathering storm of Watergate and the enormous publicity campaign their trip to China had generated in the West, the Americans ended by giving up much more than they needed to in terms of satellite surveillance photos of their enemies, Russia and India. Although his recent book fails to mention it, Kissinger later admitted in an interview that it would have helped had he understood more about Chinese strategies.

## **Chinese Business Negotiators Play the Tiger Game with Westerners in Beijing in the 1980s**

Since the opening of China, the same ignorance of how naturally and often unconsciously the Chinese use the Thirty-six Strategies has cost Western businessmen dearly. For example, as demonstrated by Tony Fang’s *Chinese Business Negotiating Style* (which doesn’t mention the Strategies), there were many stories in the mid-1980s of how the Chinese played the Tiger (and also other Thirty-six Strategy-derived games) by demanding, first of all, that all negotiations with Westerners take place in China.<sup>286</sup>

Forced to live in hotels for months, often without their families, and lured on by the idea of one billion customers and the necessity of bringing results home to their bosses or shareholders, these desperate businessmen were entangled in “nets” of alternating delays and deadlines for contracts by the Chinese negotiating teams, who usually outnumbered the beleaguered foreigners. They could also slow down or speed up the negotiating process by sending the visitors off on sight-seeing tours when difficulties arose or pressure them into making hasty decisions.

In addition, knowing the Westerners’ desired departure dates through their connections with the local staffs of the airlines, they could set dates for the banquet celebrations of the signing of the contracts and then make late changes to which challenges were difficult if not impossible. Even after the contracts were signed, there

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<sup>286</sup> Tony Fang; *Chinese Business Negotiating Style*; Thousand Oaks; Sage Publications; 1999



was often trouble—sometimes the Chinese would simply tear up the papers and start all over again.

In 1985, I saw all this happening first-hand as I talked in the lobby of the Beijing Hotel with bitterly complaining businessmen who were not aware that the Chinese had become *both* the hunters and the hunted. Safe in their lair, they could act like hunters with the Westerners who were ill at ease in this unfamiliar territory and unable to speak the language. The “mountain” had become a fortress for the Chinese and a trap for the foreigners.

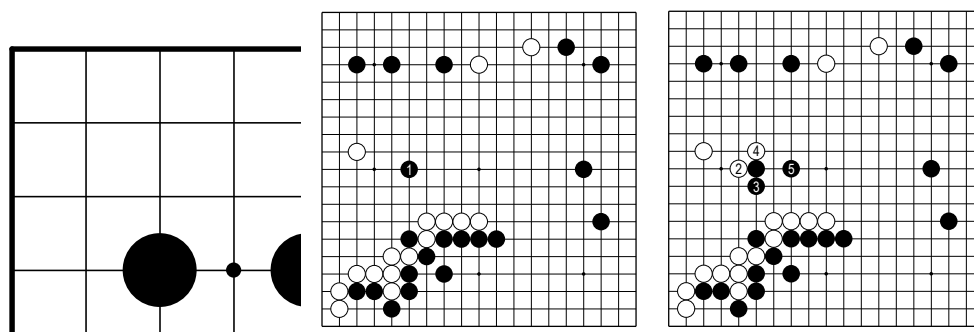
It is interesting that Fang’s book mentions that many of the Chinese were not consciously using the elements of the Thirty-six Strategies—these were just their natural responses to bargaining situations. Business is war, and they used the lessons of Dark Daoism—what their culture had provided them in the folk tales, childhood stories, theaters, movies and other media for dealing with people that “they didn’t trust,” just as Mao had done.

### Advice for *Weiqi* Beginners

Never directly attack an opponent whose advantage is derived from its position. Instead lure him away from his position to equalize the situation.

### For Advanced Players

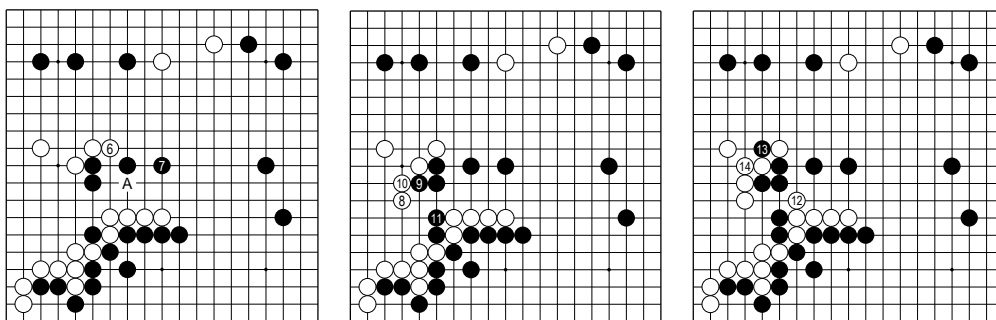
In 1988, when Ma Xiaochun was about to develop into the world’s strongest player, he was inspired by a People’s Liberation Army Press manual on the 36 Strategies to apply them to *weiqi*. *The Thirty-six Straggles Applied to Go* is a unique book and this is the example of the use of the 15<sup>th</sup> Strategy.<sup>287</sup>



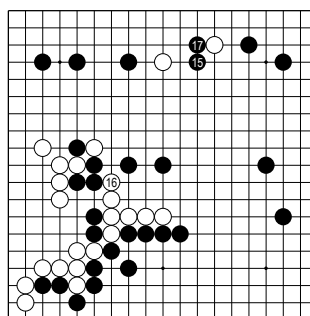
The immediate focus of this game is in the lower left where the massive White wall is the “Tiger” and the *moyo* with the White stones on the upper left forms its “Cave.” (A *moyo* is a framework of unconnected stones that threatens to make territory).

Black 1 is the “Hunter” venturing up the mountain from the more friendly regions on the right and upper sides, being very mindful of the danger of playing any closer. The object is to move the battle to a more friendly area.

<sup>287</sup> Ma Xiaochun; *The Thirty-six Straggles Applied to Go*; Roy Schmidt (trans.); Yutopian; 1996; pp. 70-4



An ordinary player might be thinking of playing Black 7 at A to form an unbreakable bamboo joint capable of running away, but Black's plan is to lure the Tiger out of its cave and onto the "Plains" in the upper-right. Black 11 is a key move. White must respond with 12 and 14 . . .



. . . and 16. With 15 and 17, the situation has been reversed: Black is now the Tiger in its Cave in the upper-right, so White must somehow become the Hunter.

## The 23rd Strategy: "Befriend a Distant Enemy to Attack One Nearby"

遠 *Far, Distant; Remote*  
 交 *Deliver; Make Friends; Pay Money*  
 近 *Near; Close To*  
 攻 *Attack; Accuse*<sup>288</sup>

*It is known that nations that border each other become enemies while nations separated by distance and obstacles make better allies. In other terms, when you are the strongest in one field, your greatest threat is from the second strongest in your field, not the strongest from another field.*

<sup>288</sup> <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?l=36ji&no=23&lang=en>

"Attack your neighbor while being friendly with faraway states"—this is the advice the king of Qin was given by minister Fan Sui, circa 269 BC, to literally and figuratively end the Warring States period in 207 B.C. But this advice did not mean he should simply fight in nearby areas because fighting in far-off places would stretch his supply lines, although that is often an important factor in war (and in *weiqi*).

Instead, what his ministers meant was "*In order* to attack your neighbors in the future, befriend distant states now." This policy had the effect of sowing jealousies and distrust among all of Qin's neighbors and, soon enough, they were arguing and fighting with each other. As they grew weaker, Qin grew stronger. As described in the beginning of this essay, this truly Dark Daoist strategm ended when Qin had no neighbors left, and the peace of the first Chinese empire was established.

### **Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD)**

*In 110 AD the province of Honan had suffered through droughts and floods, the harvests were poor and the people starving. The corrupt government only made matters worse and soon the whole province was in chaos. The numerous bands of bandits and robbers that roamed the countryside pillaging and terrorizing the population thwarted any hope of bringing in outside relief. A provincial official by the name of Yu-Hu was appointed full powers to try to restore some order to the province.*

*When he arrived at the district capital he issued a notice that he was going to organize a military force and that he was looking for recruits. First he promised a pardon for past crimes and immunity for anyone who joined up. Then he announced that he was looking for men for three classes of troops. The first class of troops were to consist of men who had committed robbery and murder. They would be the commanders and receive the highest salaries. The second class would consist of men who had committed mere thievery. They would receive the next highest salaries. The third class would consist of men who had joined the robber bands simply because they were lazy and wished to avoid real labor. They would be paid the lowest salaries.*

*Within a couple of weeks Yu-Hu had over three hundred new recruits. When they had been issued uniforms and weapons he had them paraded before him and addressed them as follows: "Your past deeds are now forgiven and you are free from prosecution. But you must still atone for the crimes you have committed against society. To do this you must now go out and hunt down all your past colleagues who have not answered my call." This they did and within a year the fraternity of bandits was extinct and the countryside made safe.*<sup>289</sup>

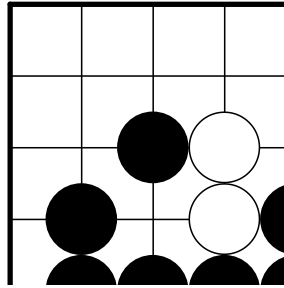
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<sup>289</sup> Stefan H. Verstappen; *The Thirty-six Strategies of Ancient China*; China Books and Periodicals, Inc.; 1999; <http://www.scribd.com/doc/24476807/The-36-Strategies-of-Ancient-China>; pp.13-4 (Page numbers are from the Internet version).

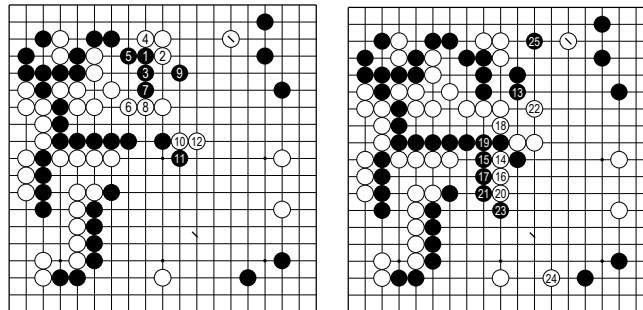
## Advice for Beginners

What this advice can mean on the *weiqi* board is that the player whose stones or groups are not coordinated but have contradictory aims will always lose to the calm player who looks further ahead and has only one aim in mind.

## For Advanced Players



The White stones with the squares are the neighbors with only one eye; the X-marked stone is the one Black will be friendly to . . . for awhile.



By using the 23<sup>rd</sup> Strategy, "Befriend a Distant Enemy to Attack One Nearby," Black ends up controlling most of the board and is far ahead.<sup>290</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> Xiaochun; pp. 114-8

## IV. The Thirty-six Strategies

### Strategies for When You Have Superior Resources

#### 1. Cross the Sea without Heaven's (or the Emperor's) Knowledge

*Here yin and yang are not opposed—instead yin is inside of yang, both literally and figuratively.*

Moving about on the desert or sea is not like moving about in the mountains or the cities. There are no hiding places so one must use commonplace activities to disguise one's intent.

The word for "Heaven" and "Emperor" are the same in this context.

#### Tang Dynasty (618-907)



#### *Koguryo*<sup>291</sup>

*This stratagem references an episode in 643, when Emperor Taizong of Tang, balked from crossing the sea to a campaign against Koguryo.*

*His general Xue Rengui thought of a stratagem to get the emperor across and allay his fear of seasickness: on a clear [and calm] day, the emperor was invited to meet a wise man. They entered through a dark tunnel into a hall where they feasted [and probably had a great deal to drink]. After feasting [and drinking for] several days, the Emperor heard the sound of waves and realized that he had been lured onto a ship! General Xue drew aside the curtains to reveal the ocean and confessed that they had*

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<sup>291</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Koguryo>

*already crossed the sea: Upon discovering this, the emperor decided to carry on and later completed the successful campaign.*<sup>292</sup>

### **Advice for Beginners**

Quietly go about getting to your goal on the *weiqi* board by using familiar tactics: your opponent may be lulled into carelessness.

## **2. Besiege Wei to Rescue Zhao**

*The idea is to besiege the besiegers and to use yang with an unstated yin intent.*

Avoiding a head-on battle with a strong enemy force and striking at a weakness elsewhere will force it to retreat in order to support that point. Now, battling against a tired enemy with low-morale will be much easier.

In other words, this is like Yu managed the flooding Yangzi River in mythological times by cutting a number of smaller channels to siphon off enough so the rest can be then safely dammed up.<sup>293</sup>

### **Warring States Period (481, 475 or 403-221 BC)**

*This strategy derives its name from an oft-told and famous incident that occurred in 354 BC. At this time one of China's most renowned strategists, Sun Bin was an advisor to the king of Qi. Sun had earlier been at the court of Wei but another minister, Pang Juan, became jealous of Sun's cleverness. Through court intrigues he had Sun framed as a spy, sentenced to mutilation [probably the removal of his knee caps hence, the name "Bin"] and imprisoned. Sunbin escaped and fled to Qi.*

*Several years later the king of Wei appointed the same Pang Juan as commander of the army and sent him to attack the capital of Zhao. The king of Zhao immediately appealed to Qi for help. The king of Qi consulted his advisors who all spoke in favor of rushing to aid their ally, and only Sun Bin recommended against attacking. Sun advised, "To intervene between two warring armies is like trying to divert a tidal wave by standing in its path. It would be better to wait until both armies have worn themselves out." The king agreed to wait.*

*The siege of Zhao had lasted more than a year when Sun Bin decided the time was ripe to come to Zhao's aid. The king of Qi appointed prince Tian Ji as general and Sun as military advisor. Tian Ji wanted to attack the Wei forces directly to lift the siege of Zhao, but again Sun advised against direct intervention saying, "Since most of Wei's troops are out of the country engaged in the siege, their own defense must be weak.*

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<sup>292</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirty-](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirty-Six_Stratagems#Chapter_1:_Winning_Stratagems_.28.E5.8B.9D.E6.88.B0.E8.A8.88.29)

[Six\\_Stratagems#Chapter\\_1:\\_Winning\\_Stratagems\\_.28.E5.8B.9D.E6.88.B0.E8.A8.88.29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirty-Six_Stratagems#Chapter_1:_Winning_Stratagems_.28.E5.8B.9D.E6.88.B0.E8.A8.88.29)

<sup>293</sup> See the main article for the deeper implications of the tale.

*By attacking the capital of Wei, we will force the Wei army to return to defend their own capital thereby lifting the siege of Zhao while destroying the Wei forces in turn." Tian Ji agreed to the plan and divided his army into two parts, one to attack the capital of Wei, and the other to prepare an ambush along the route to the capital.*

*When the Wei general Pang Juan heard that the capital was being attacked, he rushed his army back to defend the capital. Weakened and exhausted from the year-long siege and the forced march, the Wei troops were completely caught by surprise in the ambush and suffered heavy losses. Chao was thus rescued while Pang Juan barely escaped back to Wei to recoup his losses. Sun Bin would later defeat his nemesis Pang Juan using another classic strategy.*<sup>294</sup>

### **Advice for Beginners**

Encircle from behind the group that is attacking your group (thereby gaining outward influence).

## **3. Murder with a Borrowed Sword**

*For the first time in the late Spring and Autumn period, the chief ministers in many places began to plot to take over their rulers' fiefdoms, city-states and kingdoms.*

Too weak to attack directly, they typically stirred up courtiers, women and military leaders with enticements, double-dealings and rumors so they would come to distrust each other. While the ministers stayed in the shadows, their "phantom armies" (to coin a phrase) did all the work, disuniting the court which afterwards the ministers could organize differently.

### **Warring States Period**

*Chang Tuo defected from Western Zhou and went to Eastern Zhou where he revealed all of Western Zhou's state secrets. Eastern Zhou rejoiced while Western Zhou was furious. Minister Feng Chu said to the king of Western Zhou: "I can assassinate that man if your highness will give me thirty catties of gold." The king consented and the next day Feng Chu sent an agent to the Eastern Zhou court bearing the gold and a letter addressed to Chang Tuo. The letter read: "This is to remind Chang Tuo that you must complete your mission as soon as possible for the longer the delay the more likely you will be found out." Before the first agent departed, Feng Chu then sent another agent to the Eastern Zhou border guards informing them that a spy would be crossing the border that night. When the second agent arrived at the border he was stopped and searched. The border guards found the gold and the letter to Chang Tuo and turned*

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<sup>294</sup> Adapted from <http://www.1155815.com/english/cultures/200804/1046.html>



*them over to the Zhou court officials. Shortly afterwards [the messenger and] Chang Tuo [were] executed.*<sup>295</sup>

### **Advice for Beginners**

Don't always directly contest your opponent's strategies: if they insist, then let them play their game and let mistakes in their direction of play compound themselves so that, in the end, they will defeat themselves.

## **4. Take One's Ease While the Enemy Becomes Exhausted**

*The attacker has the advantage to choose the time and place for battle while the enemy does not. This yang advantage can turn into disaster, however, when faced with yin and shi tactics.*

It is a universal law of nature that a hyper-active element will lose its energy and grow weaker while a passive element can preserve and develop its strength. This is a major principle of guerilla warfare so encourage your enemy to spend energy in futile quests while you conserve your strength. When it is exhausted and confused, you can attack with energy and purpose.

### **Spring and Autumn Period (771-481, 475 or 403 BC)**

*In 684 BC the Qi army invaded Lu. Duke Zhuang wanted to lead his army to defend his land, but Shi Bo, a minister, persuaded him to utilize a wise villager named Cao Gui. A fellow villager asked Cao Gui, "Warfare is the business of the meat eaters. Why should you meddle with it?" He replied, "The meat eaters are constipated and incapable of making farsighted plans. I have to help them." The minister said, "Well, if the vegetable eater comes up with a good plan, he will soon be eating meat," and so it was agreed that Cao Gui would act as advisor to the Duke. However, when the Duke asked what the plan was, Cao Gui told him, "In warfare, one has to know the actual situation before he can make decisions with certainty." The Duke then let Cao Gui ride in his chariot out to war.*

*The Qi despised the men of Lu and held them in contempt because of past victories, so when the two armies faced each other, they started beating their drums and advancing. Cao Gui calmly watched the approaching enemy soldiers and said nothing. The frenzied Duke roared out an order, "Let the drums be beaten! We will advance to meet them!" but Cao Gui stopped him with an authoritative voice, telling him in no uncertain terms, "Tell the troops not to move—keep their position and make no noise! Cut down anyone who disobeys!" His voice had such authority that the Duke*

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<sup>295</sup> Verstappen; p. 3

*followed the advice immediately. Cao Gui said, "Their troops outnumber us and are in high spirits. It is best to stay still."*

*The Qi troops charged but when the Lu forces held on to their tight defensive formation and could not be penetrated the Qi withdrew.*

*After awhile, the Qi general ordered the drums to be beaten a second time to be followed by a charge, but again the Lu retained their position and Qi fell back, believing that the Lu troops were cowards.*

*Now the Qi general was convinced that a third attempt was sure to succeed. Beating the drums, the Qi charged, but this time Cao Gui shouted, "Beat the drums! Advance now!" and the troops rushed on the enemy with great courage. The Qi were caught off guard at this sudden retaliation and turned to flee. The Duke wanted to pursue them, but Cao Gui halted him and told the troops to wait. He climbed up on the bar of the chariot and carefully watched the retreating Qi forces for awhile.*

*"Now we can pursue them!" he declared and the Lu troops chased the Qi for over two dozen li, killing many of them and capturing numerous weapons, chariots and provisions.*

*When the army returned to the capital, the Duke asked Cao Gui, "They beat the drums three times and lost, but we beat them once and won. How was that?" Cao Gui answered, "The outcome of battles is not decided only by strength but by courage and the one who has lost it will lose. The beating of the drums is not merely a signal to attack, it gives a boost to morale. The soldiers came to the battlefield prepared to fight and when the drums were beaten for the first time, they went out to fight with all their strength. When they failed in the first assault and had to listen for a second beating, they felt frustrated and their morale was impaired. When the drums were beaten a third time, they could not but lose their spirit. We won because their morale was at its lowest and ours was at its highest!"*

*The Duke then asked why Cao Gui stopped the pursuit and climbed up on the chariot bar. "The men of Qi are deceitful and I was afraid of being lured into an ambush. But their chariot tracks criss-crossed each other and their banners drooped, so I knew they were in headlong flight!"*

*Cao Gui was awarded a ministry and Bo Shi was rewarded handsomely.*<sup>296</sup>

### **Advice for Beginners**

One strategy is to take an early territorial lead, forcing the opponent to try too hurriedly to catch up.

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<sup>296</sup> Adapted from Sun Haichen; *Wiles of War; 36 Military Strategies From Ancient China*; [Beijing] Foreign Languages Press; 1991; pp. 172-177

## 5. Loot a Burning House

*This strategy brings to mind several other strategies connected with taking advantage of opportunities in various situations.*

In a major attack one can set fire to a house before the attack as in Strategy 19, "Remove the Fire Under the Cauldron." Or if a small tactical move is required, then one is reminded of Strategy 12, "If You Chance Upon a Sheep, Be Sure to Steal It."

### Warring States Period

*Qi and Han were allies when Chang Yi attacked Han with the combined forces of Qin and Wei. Han asked Qi for assistance. The king of Qi said: "Han is our ally and since Qin has attacked her we must go to her rescue." But his minister Tian-chen Su disagreed saying: "Your majesty's planning is faulty. You should merely agree to assist Han but take no action there. However, in the kingdom of Yan, their king has recently resigned the throne to his despised prime minister. This has enraged both the noble houses and the common people causing turmoil at court. Now if Qin attacks Han, Chu and Chao will surely come to her aid and this will be as good as Heaven bestowing Yan upon us."*

*The king approved and promised the Han envoy assistance before sending him back to Han believing he had Qi's backing. When Qin attacked Han, Chu and Chao intervened as expected. While all the major kingdoms were thus engaged in the battle for Han, Qi quickly and quietly attacked Yan. Within thirty days Yan was captured.*<sup>297</sup>

### Advice for Beginners

Force your opponent to lose a move to save a group, then make a big move elsewhere. What White likes to do in handicap *weiqi*.

## 6. Make Noise in the East, Attack in the West

"Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee!"

*Cassius Clay (Mohammad Ali)*

Sunzi gave food for further thought about the use of this Strategy:

*The spot where we intend to fight must not be made known; for then the enemy will have to prepare against a possible attack at several different points and his forces*

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<sup>297</sup> <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?l=36ji&no=5>

*being thus distributed in many directions, the numbers we shall have to face at any given point will be proportionately few.*

*For should the enemy strengthen his van, he will weaken his rear; should he strengthen his rear, he will weaken his van; should he strengthen his left, he will weaken his right; should he strengthen his right, he will weaken his left. If he sends reinforcements everywhere, he will everywhere be weak.*<sup>298</sup>

### **Eastern Han Period (25-220)** **One Part of the Great Battle of Guandu**

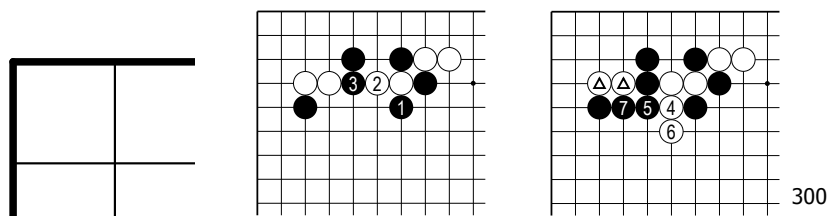
*In AD 200, Yuan Shao and Cao Cao fought a decisive battle. Yuan Shao, with the advantage of terrain and troop strength, wanted to block the enemy's route of retreat. He ordered General Yan Liang to lead 10,000 soldiers to occupy the enemy's strategic city of Baima.*

*Cao Cao was told of the enemy's plan and summoned his aides to help think of a solution. One of his aides, Xun You said, "Let's show as if we're crossing the river to attack Ye city. Yuan Shao will send some troops westwards. In the meantime, we can surround Baima and attack the remaining Yuan Shao troops."*

*Falling for the ruse, Yuan Shao led some troops to reinforce Ye city. Yan Liang surrounded Baima and believing that Cao Cao's army was attacking Yanjin and Ye, thought that Cao Cao would surrender in a few days time. Meanwhile, Cao Cao made his troops travel day and night to Baima.*

*Yuan Shao reached Yanjin and found nobody there. Cao Cao managed to kill Yan Liang and thus the siege was lifted.*<sup>299</sup>

### **Advice for Beginners**



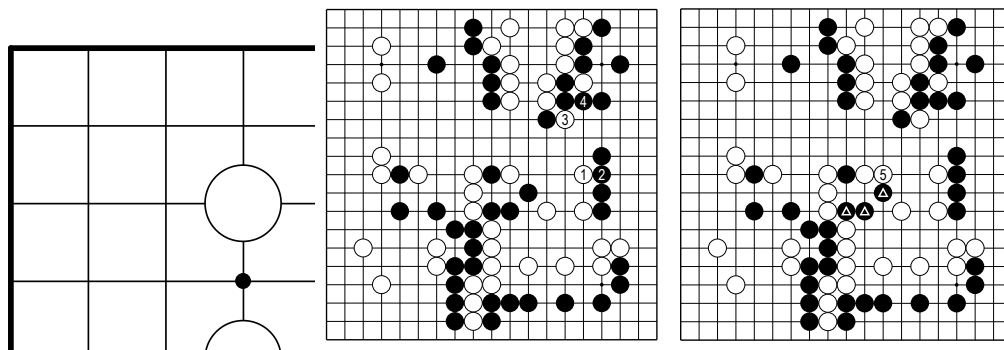
The "Driving *Tesuji*" makes the two marked stones vulnerable. A *tesuji* is a clever play.

<sup>298</sup> Sunzi VI.8 <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?l=Sunzi&s=6>)

<sup>299</sup> [http://www.foreignercn.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=506:thirty-six-strategies-5-8&catid=1:history-and-culture&Itemid=114](http://www.foreignercn.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=506:thirty-six-strategies-5-8&catid=1:history-and-culture&Itemid=114)

<sup>300</sup> Richard Bozulich and Peter Shotwell; *Winning Go*; Tuttle Publishing; 2010; p. 55

## For Advanced Players



White makes noise in the East and attacks the three marked Black stones in the West.<sup>301</sup>

<sup>301</sup> Peter Shotwell; *Go! More Than a Game*; Tuttle Publishing; 2003; p. 172

## **Strategies for When the Two Forces Are Equal**

### **7. Make Something Out of Nothing**

*True strength grows when extreme yin—the false appearance—grows into yang.*

As one turns into the other, this is like the interplay of the ordinary and extraordinary courses of action of Sunzi.<sup>302</sup> In other words, first create an illusion of something's existence while it does not exist and then create an illusion that it does not exist, when it does. This can then be repeated any number of times to the consternation of the enemy.

#### **Tang Dynasty**

*During the An Lushan rebellion in 756 AD the Tang general Chang Shun was under siege by the forces of general Linghu Chao. Outnumbered twenty to one, the defending Tang forces soon ran out of arrows. To remedy this general Chang ordered his men to make straw dummies and to dress them in black uniforms. That night the dummies were lowered over the city walls by ropes, accompanied to the beat of war drums and gongs. General Linghu thought the enemy was launching a surprise night offensive and ordered his archers to shower the figures descending the walls with arrows. Once the dummies were riddled with arrows the Tang soldiers pulled them back up the walls and thus restored their supply of arrows.*

*The next day general Linghu realized he had been tricked and attacked the walls in revenge for being humiliated. That night the Tang again lowered the dummies but General Linghu ordered his men to ignore them believing it was the same trick to get more arrows. When general Chang saw that no one was firing at the straw dummies, he ordered that five hundred of his best troops be lowered instead. They made a lightning raid on the encamped soldiers who were caught completely by surprise. The siege was lifted and general Linghu's army fled the field.*<sup>303</sup>

#### **Advice for Beginners**

Even dead stones have their use.

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<sup>302</sup> These differing strategies are not identified yin and yang since sometimes "ordinary" refers to the thinking during the peaceful running of government while "extraordinary" thinking should be used in times of war.

<sup>303</sup> Verstappen; p. 5

## 8. Openly Repair the Gallery Road, Secretly March to Chencang

*This tactic is an extension of Strategy 6, "Make Noise in the East, Attack in the West."*

To draw the enemy's attention, physical baits are used to increase the enemy's certainty on the misinformation. These baits must be easily seen by the enemy to ensure that they will draw the enemy's attention—they are the heart of *yin*. At the same time, the baits must act as if they meant to do what they were falsely doing to avoid drawing the enemy's suspicion. In other words, as Sunzi advises, use orthodox methods—acting in full visibility—to conceal the unorthodox.

### The Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC)

[Towards the end of the Qin dynasty there] *were rebellions everywhere and the most powerful of the rebel leaders was Xiang Yu, warlord of Western Chu.*

*Xiang Yu appointed Liu Bang, his major rival, but a subordinate, to be king of Hanzhong, far to the East, effectively making him leave what was then Qin or "China." To further ensure that Liu Bang did not return, Xiang Yu divided Guanzhong (i.e. the first area "east of the passes") into three principalities and put three persons loyal to him in charge, informing them to be alert against Liu Bang.*

*Liu Bang's aide Zhang Liang said, "In order to placate Xiang Yu and the three kings, we must burn the mountain plank road (i.e. planks supported by wooden logs embedded in the cliff face) to show that we've no intention of returning to China."*

*Once Liu Bang arrived in Hanzhong, he made Han Xin commander of his army. After nine years of preparations, Liu Bang's army became powerful and was ready to march eastwards.*

*On Han Xin's suggestion, Liu Bang ordered his generals Fan Hui and Zhou Bo to take 10,000 men and horses and repair the plank road within three months. However, the scale of the job was large and it looked like they were able to repair only a few li in three months. Accordingly, Liu Bang appeared to be furious and recalled Fan Hui and Zhou Bo and put others in charge of the task.*

*Meanwhile, his enemies were greatly perturbed and one of the kings even led his forces to block the plank road exit.*

*Han Xin then led Fan Hui, Zhou Bo and several thousand troops to overrun Guanzhong by the old roundabout route through Chencang. From there, he could advance unhindered into the interior.*<sup>304</sup>

Unfortunately, Han Xin became too successful with his strategies. After being largely responsible for Liu Bang's successful campaigns against his rivals and ultimate triumph in founding the Han dynasty, Han Xin fell under suspicion and was cruelly

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<sup>304</sup> Adapted from <http://www.1155815.com/english/cultures/200804/1052.html>



executed. The legend has it that this was even after promising his general that if he remained loyal and “faced Heaven,” he would not kill him by any weapon used by soldiers. So he was hung inside a great bell where he couldn’t see Heaven as he was pierced to death by sharpened bamboo swords which are never used by soldiers.

### **Advice for Beginners**

When distant, feign to be near: hide your real motives behind innocent-looking *gote no sente* moves (moves that look like they are *gote* but are really building strength for bigger *sente* moves later on).

*Sente*: Having the initiative—making a move the other player must answer so that an extra move can be made. *Gote* is a move that loses the initiative often when forced to do so by a *sente* move.

A player can have *sente* or *gote*, a move can be *sente* or *gote* and a position can be *sente* or *gote*.

## **9. Leisurely Watch the Campfires From Across the River**

or

### **Relax on the Mountain, Watch the Tigers Fight Below**

*Mastering the art of delay.*

To reap the laurels of war, make use of the various elements involved when using external forces to achieve your goals. This strategy is more difficult to implement than Strategy 3, “Murder with a Borrowed Sword,” because it must often handle several joint forces, whether allies or enemies, with no relations to you.

The second interpretation simply means to wait until the tigers are wounded and exhausted.

### **Medieval Japan**

*In [1582] . . . the great general Toyotomi Hideyoshi was positioning his forces against Akechi Mitsuhide in what would be the battle of Yamazaki. Shortly after the battle had engaged, Tsetsui Junkeian, an ally of Mitsuhide arrived on the scene. Impressed by the superior forces of Hideyoshi, he refused to attack but instead ordered his men to line up in battle formation on a hill above the Hora-ga-toge pass where he could watch the battle before deciding which general to side with. Seeing Hideyoshi gaining the advantage he betrayed his ally and sent his troops over to Hideyoshi’s side. This*

*incident was never forgotten and henceforth the Japanese equivalent of "Watching the fire..." is known as "To wait at Hora-ga-toge."*<sup>305</sup>

### **The Eastern Han Period after the Battle of Guandu**

*Towards the end of the Eastern Han dynasty, in 200 AD Cao Cao defeated Yuan Shao's forces in the Battle of Guandu. After Yuan Shao's death, his three sons fought among themselves in a battle of succession. Cao Cao took advantage of the chaos and attacked, but the brothers united against their common enemy.*

*Cao Cao's strategist, Guo Jia suggested, "The Yuan brothers were fighting among themselves and our attack only caused them to unite against us. If we retreat, they'll fight among themselves again. Once they are weakened, it'll be easy to win."*

*After Cao Cao's troops withdrew, the Yuan brothers fought among themselves for control of Fen province. The eldest brother Yuan Tan was angry because their father had made the second son Yuan Shang his heir. The youngest son Yuan Xi supported Yuan Shang.*

*In the meantime, Cao Cao conquered Qing, Fen, Bing and You provinces. Yuan Tan was killed. Yuan Shang and Yuan Xi fled to Liaodong in the north-east to seek the help of nomadic chieftain Gongsun Kang. Instead of pursuing the Yuan brothers, Cao Cao summoned his forces back saying that Gongsun Kang would send the heads of the Yuan brothers to him.*

*After some time, Gongsun Kang indeed sent the heads of the two Yuan brothers to Cao Cao. He later explained, "Gongsun Kang was afraid he'd be my next target; he was also afraid that the Yuan brothers would annex his territory. If I attacked him, he would need the help of the brothers. But if I withdrew . . ."*<sup>306</sup>

### **Advice for Beginners**

A strong group between two weak groups is always at an advantage. Usually, both cannot be saved.

## **10. Hide Your Dagger in a Smile**

*A "smiling tiger" is an old Chinese folklore character and, in everyday life, some become wiser after being mystified by one.*

In war, on the other hand, such belated wisdom would be of no use to the loser. Thus, for example, if the outcome is not obvious, a peace proposal will always be received with suspicion, so an overconfident enemy general can be taken advantage of by using this scheme.

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<sup>305</sup> Verstappen; p. 5 He calls this a "Hojo Regency" battle which is wrong. He also gets the date wrong by a year.

<sup>306</sup> [http://english.xm.gov.cn/study/LearningChinese/201105/t20110525\\_402398.html](http://english.xm.gov.cn/study/LearningChinese/201105/t20110525_402398.html)

## Warring States Period 341 BC

*During the Warring States, in the year 341 BC, General Gongsun Yang led 50,000 soldiers to invade the state of Wei.*

*Wei's king Hui was extremely worried. Gongzi Ying of Wei said, "Gongsun Yang was originally a native of Wei and we were good friends for some years. If I could talk to Gongsun Yang, I may be able to persuade him into ordering a retreat. If we find that he cannot be trusted, we can retreat into Wu city which has impregnable fortifications." Gongzi Ying then led 50,000 troops to guard Wu city.*

*Gongsun Yang arrived at Wu city and hearing that Gongzi Ying was in charge of its defence, hatched an idea. He sent a letter to Gongzi Ying which said, "Formerly, you and I enjoyed a good relationship. I greatly appreciate your trustworthiness and your valuing of our friendship. Why not order a mutual retreat? If you agree, let's meet outside the city in three days time to discuss the matter."*

*Three days later, Gongzi Ying brought 300 unarmed troops showing his country's goodwill and sincerity. Gongsun Yang himself also brought no weapons. They started a discussion and the atmosphere was very cordial. Gongsun Yang then invited Gongzi Ying to his tent for a banquet.*

*Upon reaching the Qin camps, Gongzi Ying and his 300 unarmed troops were seized and arrested. The Qin soldiers then disguised themselves as Wei's troops and went to the city gates. They claimed that Gongzi Ying was back and asked for the gates to be opened. The Qin troops charged through the gates, conquered Wu city and Gongzi Ying was taken captive to Qin.<sup>307</sup>*

## Advice for Beginners

Watch the tiger's eyes to see what part of the board is of real concern.

## 11. Let the Plum Tree Die to Save the Peach Tree

The original meaning of this phrase comes from a poem in *The Book of Songs*, written between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> century BC.

*By the well the peach tree grows,  
and next to it was the tree of plum.  
When the root of the peach tree was being bitten by worms,  
the plum tree invites them to gnaw him.  
Even trees know how to sacrifice for others,  
why can't brothers do the same?<sup>308</sup>*

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<sup>307</sup> [http://english.xm.gov.cn/study/LearningChinese/201105/t20110525\\_402398.html](http://english.xm.gov.cn/study/LearningChinese/201105/t20110525_402398.html)

<sup>308</sup> <http://www.chinesestoryonline.com/idiom-story/352-li-dai-tao-jiang.html>

However, when the fighting of the Spring and Autumn period started, its meaning changed. It now meant: Sacrifice short-term goals for long-term objectives; Use a scapegoat to suffer circumstances so that you do not. When gazing at long distances, do not forget what is nearby; when gazing down, do not forget to look up.

Therefore, if a loss was feared, the advice of this strategy was to decrease *yin* to increase *yang*. Use one's weak forces to confront strong forces so they will lose while weakening the opposition and then use your strong forces to eliminate their weak ones. Then, you will have a chance at winning overall by defeating the depleted enemy's stronger force.

Similar to Strategy 17, "Cast a Brick to Attract Jade."

### Three Kingdoms Period (c. 184 or 220-280)



The Three Kingdoms (220-265)

309

[Following the collapse of the Han dynasty Wu and Shu fought Wei and on] *one of his campaigns Cao Cao [of Wei] was running short of food. He asked his supply sergeant what he could do. The sergeant suggested reducing the rations by secretly using a smaller cup to parcel out the rice. Cao Cao praised the sergeant and gave his consent to use the smaller measuring cup. After a few days the soldiers began to complain and accused their commander of cheating them. Cao Cao again called in the supply sergeant and told him the situation.*

*"I will do anything I can to help but what would you have me do?" asked the sergeant.*

*"I'm afraid I am going have to borrow your head." replied Cao Cao and he had the sergeant decapitated and his head stuck on a tall pole with a banner that read "Caught cheating on supplies by using a smaller measuring cup." <sup>310</sup>*

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<sup>309</sup> [www.history-of-china.com](http://www.history-of-china.com)

<sup>310</sup> Verstappen; p. 7

## Warring States Period

*In the Warring States period, Qi commander Tian Ji always lost in his horse races with one of the princes.*

*Sun Bin suggested that he pit his weakest horse against the prince's strongest horse, and his strongest horse against the prince's average horse, and his average horse against the prince's weakest horse. As a result, Tian Ji lost one race but won two.*

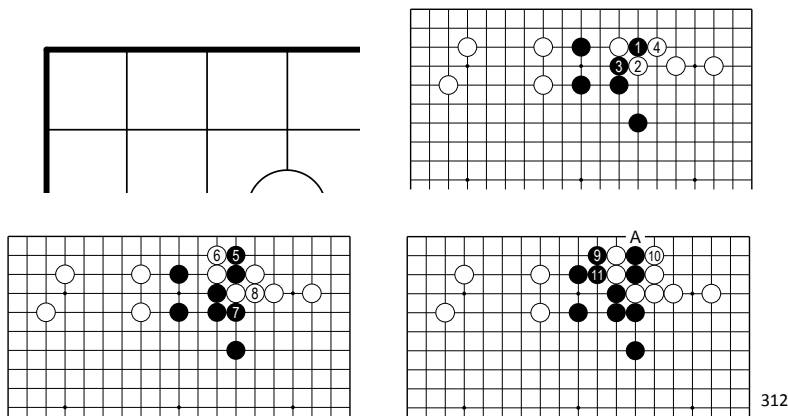
*[Later, in] the year 353 BC, Sun Bin's use of the "Besiege Wei to save Zhao" strategy sent the Wei troops rushing back to defend their state. The Wei troops split into three columns of left, centre and right in their return journey. Its left column was the strongest and right column the weakest.*

*Sun Bin again advised Tian Ji: "It's not enough to win by matching the strength of forces. We can make use of our total numerical strength to annihilate the enemy. We can send our weakest column to fight Wei's strongest. With the advantage of terrain we can win if we know how to stall for time."*

*When Tian Ji asked how they could win by doing that, Sun Bin said, "Meanwhile, we send our best column to quickly destroy their weakest column. Then our best can join our average column to annihilate their average column. Finally, our best and average columns can join our weakest column to wipe out their strongest column."<sup>311</sup>*

## Advice for Beginners

Learn the art of sacrificing, for example, when playing *sabaki* to extract oneself from a situation where one is outnumbered. *Sabaki* involves losing a little to make a light, flexible shape which makes it difficult for the opponent to launch a severe attack.



White must take at A so, with a clever sacrifice of two stones, Black has established a strong position inside of what was White's area of influence.

<sup>311</sup> Adapted from Wang Xuanming; 36 *Stratagems, Secret Art of War*; Koh Kok Kiang and Liu Yi; (trans.); An Asiapac Publication; 1993; p. 79 <http://www.1155815.com/english/cultures/200804/1055.html>

<sup>312</sup> Bozulich and Shotwell; p. 14

## 12. If You Chance Upon a Sheep, Be Sure to Steal It

*One question to ask is whether the "sheep" is really a sheep or a wolf in sheep's clothing. Another question is whether anyone else sees one stealing the sheep because, in the ensuing fight for it, the sheep might escape and one also might lose the fight.*

This strategy suggests that we act according to changing circumstances so it is like Strategy 5, "Loot a Burning House." Since minor victories might decide the final outcome of the confrontation, commanders may give orders to steal available sheep. However, as always in war, it is the subordinates who must accept the dangers of snatching them.

### Three Kingdoms Period

The great strategist of Shu, Zhuge Liang, appeared in the area where the great Battle of the Red Cliffs between the Wu-Shu alliance and Wei would take place. After the two armies with their fleets of boats faced each other across the Yangzi River, he visited Sun Quan's camp to assist Zhou Yu in his fight against Cao Cao of Wei.

*. . . Zhou Yu was jealous of Zhuge Liang's talent and felt that Zhuge would become a threat to his lord [Sun Quan] in the future. He assigned Zhuge Liang the task of making 100,000 arrows in ten days or face execution for failure in duties under military law. Zhuge Liang promised that he could complete the mission in three days. With help from Lu Su, Zhuge Liang prepared 20 large boats, each manned by a few soldiers and filled with human-like figures made of straw and hay.*

*At dawn, . . . there was [another] great fog [so] Zhuge Liang deployed the boats and they sailed towards Cao Cao's camp across the river. He ordered the troops to beat war drums loudly and shout orders to imitate the noise of an attack. Upon hearing the noise, Cao Cao's troops rushed out to engage the enemy, but they were unsure of the enemy's strength, because their vision was obscured by the fog. They fired volleys of arrows towards the sound of the drums and the arrows became stuck in the straw figures. In the meantime, Zhuge Liang was enjoying wine with Lu Su inside the cabin and they returned to camp when the fog cleared. Zhuge Liang acquired more than 100,000 arrows with his plan and Zhou Yu had no choice but to let him off.*<sup>313</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhugeliang#Borrowing\\_of\\_arrows\\_with\\_straw\\_boats](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhugeliang#Borrowing_of_arrows_with_straw_boats)

Unfortunately this incident from the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* by 14<sup>th</sup> century historian Luo Guanzhong is missing from the *Record of the Three Kingdoms* by Chen Shou, the earliest chronicle of these times which covered events between 184 and 280. However, there was a similar, if less ingenious, event that perhaps inspired Luo.

See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romance\\_of\\_the\\_Three\\_Kingdoms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romance_of_the_Three_Kingdoms) and also the commentary about Strategies 32 ("Open the Gates, Invite the Enemy into Your Empty City") and 34 ("The Self-Torture Scheme") for more details on the novel and what is in it and what is not.

### **Advice for Beginners**

Make use of a minor mistake to gain a minor victory. But check first to see that it is not a wolf in disguise!



## **Strategies for Attacking**

### **13. Beat the Grass to Startle (or Frighten) the Snake**

*Beating the grass and startling the snake gives away his plans or position and disrupts his thinking. However, consider that beating the grass also gives away your own position and intentions.*

*An Abstract of Military Works (Wu Bei Ji Yao) explains:*

*If we and the enemy have not engaged yet and are therefore unacquainted with each other, we can sometimes dispatch a band of troops to test the enemy's strength and weakness; this is called a tasting battle. For the tasting battle, we should allow it to be neither grave nor long and should withdraw the troops after a brief engagement. Coordinating forces should be sent to cope with emergencies and prevent the loss of the tasting army, which may bring about the defeat of our main force.*<sup>314</sup>

There is a connection with Strategy 20, "Muddy the Waters to Catch the Fish."

From Chapter Four of the *Book of Master Wu (Wuzi)*:

*Send a brave, low-ranking officer with a lightly equipped force to make a test, aiming at defeat instead of gain so as to observe the pursuing forces. If they remain orderly in every halt and action, delay deliberately in pursuit and ignore the allurements of profit, then their general must be wise and you have to avoid him. If they make a great noise, display a disorderly array of banners and standards, make moves at their own discretion, hold their weapons both vertically and horizontally, strain their efforts in pursuit and rush forward at the sight of profit, their general must be stupid and you can capture him even if he has superior forces.*<sup>315</sup>

### **Qin Dynasty**

*The notorious eunuch Zhao Gao is credited with helping to bring down the house of Qin ending China's first and shortest imperial dynasty. After the first emperor died he conspired with the chief minister Li Si to dispose the legitimate heir to the throne and install a weak and corrupt puppet emperor Huhei. Having established his influence over the young emperor, Zhao Gao was nervous about possible opposition from the other ministers of state so he devised a test to see which ones would be faithful to him. One day he brought a stag into the court and presented it to the emperor explaining that it was a horse.*

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<sup>314</sup> Sun; p. 117

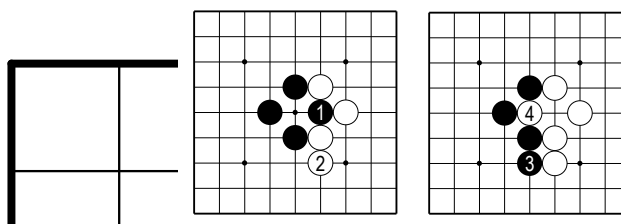
<sup>315</sup> Sun; p. 117

"You're mistaken, Prime Minister", said the emperor, "You've called a stag a horse."

Zhao Gao turned to the other ministers present and asked them whether it was a horse or stag. Some kept silent, others in an attempt to ingratiate themselves with the true power behind the throne agreed it was a horse, and still others said it was a stag. . . . Meanwhile, one of Zhao Gao's spies was recording the answers given by each of the ministers. Afterwards, Zhao Gao secretly framed charges against all those who had said it was a stag and had them executed.<sup>316</sup>

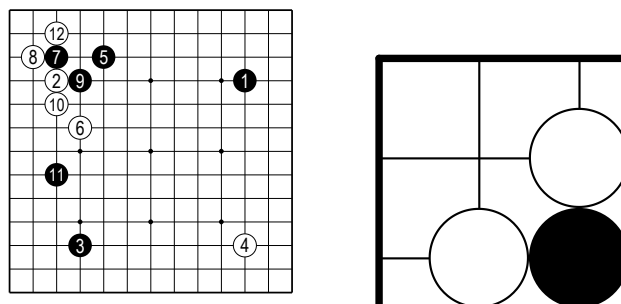
### Advice for Beginners

In handicap *weiqi*, White will sometimes try to make the threat or start a *ko* that appears to be more dangerous than it really is.



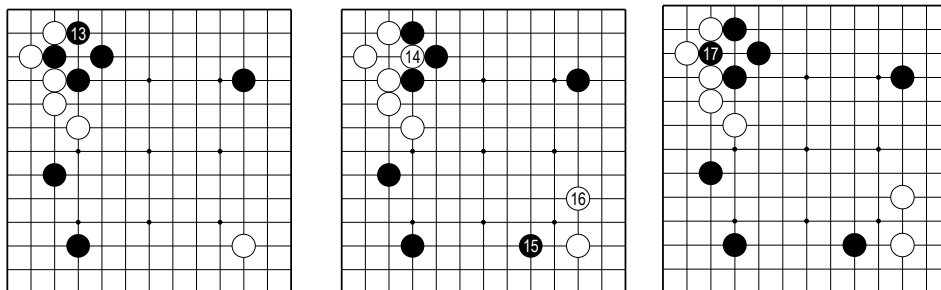
*Ko*: Go is like a river or a conversation so no board position can be repeated. White cannot take back immediately but must make a "*ko* threat" with W2. Black answers and now White can take back with W4.

### For Advanced Players

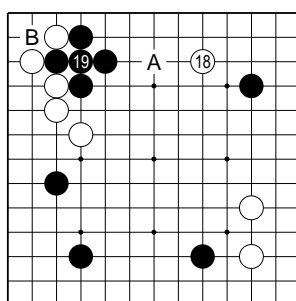


White has played W12 thinking Black will be afraid of a *ko* and play the marked stone resulting in an "empty triangle"—a clumsy, over-concentrated shape.

<sup>316</sup> <http://www.chinastrategies.com/list.htm>

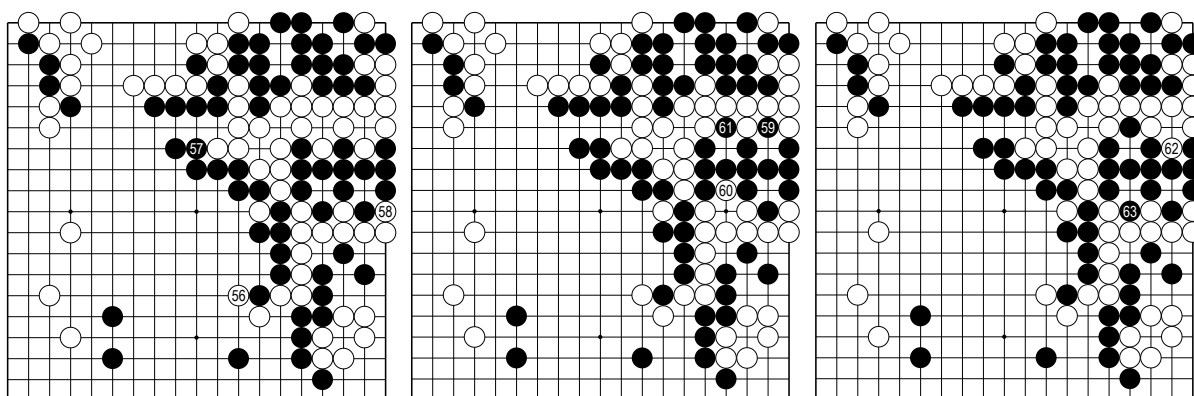


But if Black does not back down and makes the *ko* threat at B15, White must answer with W16 or be “double pincer” by a Black stone being played there. So Black can retake.



No matter where White plays, if Black “fills” the *ko*, each side is satisfied. For example, if White plays at *A*, Black can make two eyes by playing at *B*. If instead, White plays at *B* to secure the corner, Black can attack at *A* and gain enough space to guarantee two eyes.

### For Even More Advanced Players: A Quadruple *Ko*



Gu Li 9p (Black) vs. Lee Sedol 9p 17<sup>th</sup> Samsung Cup Sept. 5, 2012

This was the first time in the history of international go that a game has been declared a draw in the main stages of a major tournament. It begins with White 156.<sup>317</sup>

## 14. Find Reincarnation in Another's Corpse

*Turn yin into yang: "Make the useless useful."*

Revive something from the past—a person, an institution, an object, a method, a custom, a tradition, a technology, an ideology—and give it a new purpose and reinterpretation to suit your needs.

### Qin Dynasty

*In the fall of 209 BC, the seventh year of the Qin dynasty, two young farmers, Chen Shang and Wu Guang, under the direction of two royal officers, were put in charge of leading 900 local conscripts from what had been the area of Chu to the northern borders to fight the barbarians. However, heavy rains and flooding caused them to halt halfway to their destination.*

*Knowing the penalty for arriving late was death, they conferred with each other: if they did nothing, they would die, if they tried to escape, they would die and even if they were pardoned and went into battle, seven out ten would never return.*

*Meanwhile, Prince Fusu, the oldest son of [Emperor] Qin Shihuang and now legitimate heir, had been sent to the remote frontier by his father who was angry with him and there were rumors that he had been secretly murdered by the chief eunuch, Zhao Gao, who was manipulating the incompetent second son who sat on the throne. Moreover, the brilliant Chu general, Xiang Yan, after being defeated in the final battle for the control of all of China was rumored to either be dead or to have escaped into a remote area.*

*Cheng Shan thought that if the two of them claimed to be the vanished stalwarts who were greatly admired by the people, they would be able to attract an army and, if they were going to die, at least they would have died for their country by fighting the hated Qin. They went to a diviner who declared they would be successful, but, he asked, "Why not consult with the ghosts?" meaning this was how to create authority over men. So Chen Shan wrote with vermillion ink on a piece of silk, "Chen Shang shall be King!" and stuffed into the stomach of a fish the other conscripts had caught. Next, Wu went out at night, lit a bonfire, and declared "Chen Shan will be King and the great Chu will rise again!" The would-be conscripts were all amazed and so the next night when the officers were drunk, Wu Guang stood up and loudly declared he was going to escape! One of the officers, enraged, started to flog Wu, but his sword partially slipped out from its scabbard and Wu sprang up, snatched it and killed the officer while Chen finished off the other one.*

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<sup>317</sup> <http://gogameguru.com/quadruple-ko-group-of-death-17th-samsung-cup>

Next, Chen announced, "Who says we cannot become kings, nobles, generals and ministers? Such men do not achieve their position by birthright!"

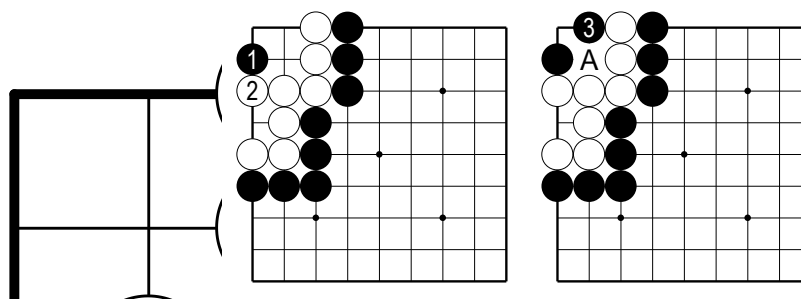
"We will follow you!" shouted all the men and an altar was built and the two officers' heads were given in sacrifice to seal their oath of loyalty. Chen then proclaimed himself general and Wu his commandant, but, as the troops marched out through the countryside, they claimed to the people that Prince Fusu and General Xiang Yan were leading a "Great Army of Chu."

Success followed success and a masterful grand strategy was presented to Chen—instead of declaring himself king and making the rebellion seem to be in his self-interest, he was advised to restore the heirs and revive the old feudal houses of Chu and other states to the west that had been so cruelly destroyed by the Qin.

However, to his doom, Chen refused and set himself up as "King of Zhangchu," the "King of Upholding Chu" and he and Wu were soon murdered by their troops. However, in their wake, other rebellions had started up and, in a few years, the Qin dynasty collapsed and a civil war ensued. But the victor, Liu Bang, who became Emperor Gaozu, the founder of the Han dynasty, had a shrine built for Chen at his gravesite that was attended by thirty families who offered up continual sacrifices to his heroism.<sup>318</sup>

### Advice for Beginners

Similar to Strategy 7, "Make Something Out of Nothing." Look for the odd move that might make a *seki* or *ko* out of a seemingly dead group of stones.

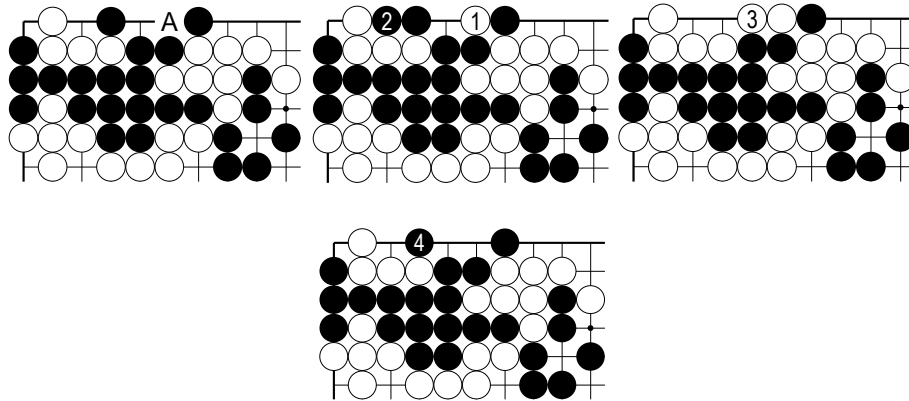


*Seki*: White can make two eyes and live, but if it is Black's turn, B1 can produce a *seki* since White must play W2 to live. After B3, neither player wants to play a suicidal move at A.

<sup>318</sup> Adapted from Sun; pp 137-142

## For Advanced Players

### *Seki* as “Eternal Life”



A portion of Choi Cheolhan 9p (Team SK Energy) vs. Ahn Seongjun 4p  
(Team Jeongganjang)  
Korean Baduk League 5th round June 29, 2013.

This was the first Eternal Life in the history of professional Korean *baduk*.

Black could live by playing at *A*, so White played a throw-in to prevent it. If Black captured it, he would die so he must play B2 where White would have wanted to. Now White was in *atari* with only one liberty so he captured with W3. Black was now in *atari* so he captured the two white stones and they were back to where they started. Since there were no bigger places to play, the board the game was declared drawn by the referee. However, if this had happened in another tournament such as the Ing Cup, which uses Ing Rules, it would have been regarded as a special type of *ko* instead of being a *seki*. There have been at least two of these types of games in Japanese tournaments.<sup>319</sup>

## 5. Lure the Tiger Down from the Mountain

As was shown before, don't be maneuvered; maneuver the enemy. Use various means to entice the enemy to come forward while you wait. Often associated with Strategy 30, “The Host Becomes the Guest; the Guest Becomes the Host.”

<sup>319</sup> All the eternal life games are at <http://gogameguru.com/eternal-life>. For the Ing Cup and its rules, see <http://gogameguru.com/tag/ing-cup>

## Eastern Han Dynasty

*In the year 199, Sun Ce had consolidated his newly conquered territories in the south [that were to become the state of Wu] and his next goal was the prosperous area of Lujiang to the north. However, Lujiang had a professional army and was well defended. In addition it also had the advantage of terrain, being accessible only through a couple of easily defended passes.*

*Sun Ce's advisors cautioned against moving directly against such a well-entrenched and powerful state so they devised another scheme. Sun Ce sent an emissary laden with gifts and a letter to the king of Lujiang, Liu Xun. The letter praised the King's military skills and begged for his assistance. Sun Ce wrote: "For years the state of Shangliao has invaded my territory unhindered and carried away booty, yet we are too weak to launch a retaliatory raid. If Your Majesty would attack Shangliao we would give assistance and you could annex the state for yourself."*

*Flattered and covetous of increasing his domains, the king of Lujiang disregarded the advice of his counselors and attacked the state of Shangliao. Several weeks later, while the king of Lujiang was busy laying siege to Shangliao's capital, Sun Ce attacked the almost undefended Lujiang and easily seized the capital. Without the expected support from Sun Ce, the king of Lujiang failed to take the capital of Shangliao and he returned only to find his own capital already in enemy hands. Sun Ce now had the advantage of the Lujiang terrain and the former king could do nothing but flee with his army. [However, Sun Ce only enjoyed his success for one year and lost his life at age 25.]*<sup>320</sup>

## Advice for Beginners

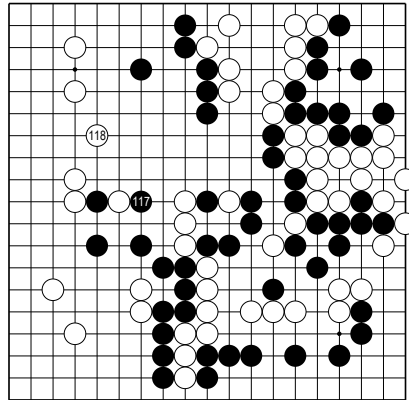
This Strategy seems to encapsulate Sunzi's advice to not attack walled cities (the corners) and instead attack the strategy (the direction of play) of the opponent. If that fails, attack the allies (unconnected groups) and then the supplies (the groups)—in other words, don't attack where the opponent is strong.

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<sup>320</sup> <http://www.1155815.com/english/cultures/200804/1059.html>



## For Advanced Players



Black 117 goes after the Tiger, forgetting about the larger issue of the Mountain that White took control of with 118.<sup>321</sup>

## 16. Set Free What You Want Most to Capture

*A cornered prey will often mount a final desperate attack. To prevent this, the advice is to let the enemy believe there is still a chance to escape, thereby dampening their will to fight it out. When in the end freedom is proven a falsehood, the enemy's morale will already be defeated and will surrender without a fight.*

Sunzi discussed the wisdom of this type of strategy which contradicts the military maxim that "speedy maneuvers" can produce a "quick victory." Instead, *yin* is used to delay actions while wearing the enemy out. But he also cautioned about its anti-version, whereby a general deliberately puts his soldiers into a desperate situation in order to make them fight harder.

Both cases follow the wisdom of Strategy 28, "Remove the Ladder after the Enemy is on the Roof" (or "Climb Up On the Roof and Remove the Ladder").

In other words, when forced to their extremes *yin* and *yang* can turn into their opposites.

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<sup>321</sup> Shotwell; p. 169

## Han Period

*In 238 AD, Sima Yi led the Wei army against the rebel, Gongsun Yuan, surrounding his capitol city of Xiangping after winning several previous engagements. In heavy rain, Sima forbade his soldiers to harass the townspeople who ventured out of the city walls to gather firewood in the nearby hills. Thus, Gongsun's army grew confident that the Wei army had not the strength to trouble them.*

*As the stalemate dragged on, a general asked Sima why, when he attacked the city of Shangdong and the rebel Meng Da, he had divided his army into eight parts and made them charge in relays day and night, conquering the city in five days.*

*"The situations are very different," Sima replied. "Meng Da had few troops and a year's worth of provisions, while we outnumbered him four to one but only had provisions for a month. What else could we do? Pitting four soldiers against one, we could afford to lose half our army in the race against time. Now, however, the conditions are different. The enemy has superior numbers but inferior provisions. In this heavy rain, we cannot launch an effective attack. What good is it to look for small gains and harass the wood gatherers? In this campaign, I am not worried the enemy will come forward to attack. I only fear that it will come to its senses and try to escape.*

*When the rain abated, Sima assaulted the city which soon ran out of food and surrendered.*<sup>322</sup>

## Advice for Beginners

In *weiqi*, sometimes it is not advisable to capture immediately. Instead, as the saying goes, "Fatten the pig"—let the group run for its life where it can get bigger and tastier, or it can be used to build strength in order to turn on a second group that was previously not in danger.

## 17. Cast a Brick to Attract Jade

*Bait someone by making him believe he will gain something for nothing.*

However, militarily, if two armies are far apart and one sends out a force, do not overreact—this could be a "bait army" as in Strategy 13, "Beat the Grass to Startle the Snake."

Broadening the meaning, today, if a modest person is asked to speak first at a banquet, they might say that they will "get rid of the brick to attract the jade."

The most famous use of this strategy comes from the world of poetry.

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<sup>322</sup> Adapted from Sun; pp. 148-9

## Tang Dynasty

*It was said that a poet named Chang Jian . . . one day heard that the great poet Zhao Gu would visit the Ling Yan Temple of Su Zhou. In order to invite Zhao Gu to poetize, he wrote down two sentences on the wall in advance. Sure enough this unfinished poem attracted Zhao Gu's attention, and he wrote down another two more wonderful sentences to finish this poem. Later on people described Chang Jian's action as "Throwing out a brick to attract a jade."<sup>323</sup>*

### Advice for Beginners

If White tries something seemingly stupid, ask yourself, "Why isn't that group being protected?" As the saying goes, "Do not mistake fish eyes for pearls."

## 18. Catch the Leader to Catch the Led

*The David and Goliath strategy.*

*Another way to look at it is to let the tiger escape back up the mountain so one can follow it and find its lair with the cubs.*

If the enemy's army is strong but is allied to the commander only by money, superstition or threats, then take aim at the leader. If the commander falls in combat the rest of the army will disperse or come over to your side. If, however, they are allied to the leader through loyalty, then beware, the army could continue to fight on to avenge his death.

The phrase is in a Tang dynasty poem by Du Fu (712–770)

*If you draw a bow, draw the strongest,  
If you use an arrow, use the longest:  
To shoot a man, first shoot his horse,  
To capture rebels, first capture their chief.  
In killing men, also, there are limits,  
And each state has its own borders.  
So long as invasion can be curbed,  
What's the use of much killing?<sup>324</sup>*

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<sup>323</sup> Adapted from <http://www.1155815.com/english/cultures/200804/1061.html>

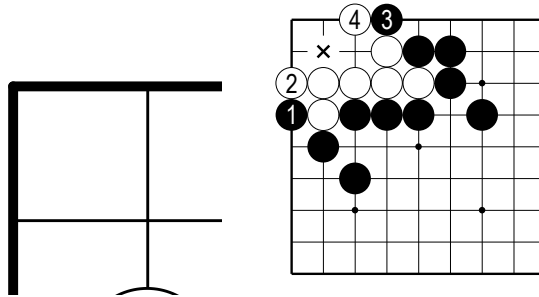
<sup>324</sup> Burton Watson; *The Columbia Book of Chinese Poetry*; Columbia Univ. Press; 1984; p. 221

## Spring and Autumn Period

*In 756 BC the rebel commander Yin Ziqi led an army to lay siege against the strategic city of Suiyang. The defending commander, Zhang Xun, noticed that Yin Ziqi oversaw the siege from well outside the range of the city's archers. He believed that if he could take out the leader the rebel's morale would sink and he would be able to launch a counter attack. He devised a plan with his best archers. The next time the rebels assailed the wall they were to shoot back using . . . [sharpened sticks]. When Yin Ziqi heard that the defenders were reduced to . . . [this] he felt certain the city was ready to be taken. Before the next assault he moved in closer to better oversee the final victory. Riding atop his horse he unknowingly came within range of the archers who had saved their arrows for just such a moment. One arrow hit Yin Ziqi in the left eye killing him instantly. The spectacle of their commander's death in front of almost the entire rebel army served to demoralize them to such an extent that they dispersed the field.*<sup>325</sup>

## Advice for Beginners

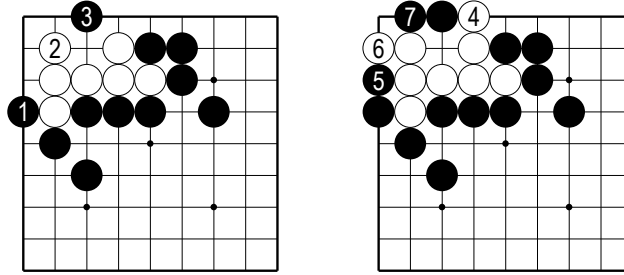
An "eye-stealing" *tesuji* can sometimes lead to the killing of even the largest of groups.



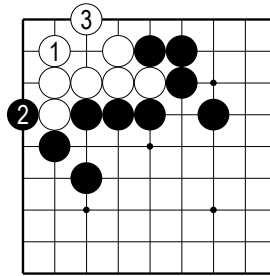
However, after two *hane* moves by Black, the vulnerable spot is marked by X. Black plays there next and White cannot make two eyes.

*Hane*: a diagonal move after attaching to an opposing stone.

<sup>325</sup> <http://www.chinastrategies.com/List.htm#Strategy%2017>



If White tries to play there first, Black plays at the vital spot of B3 and the White group is doomed.



If White had gotten to the vital spot first, the group would have been safe with two eyes.

### **A Note on How the Tiger Game Perhaps Fits Into This Section of the Thirty-six Strategies**

Although it is not a traditional exercise, it is tempting to think about how the Strategies in the "Attacking" section can sum up a broader strategy that intertwines them. First, the hunter startles and stirs up the nest (Strategy 13), then sets a trap with dead bait (14) to lure the tiger down from the mountain (15). Next, he can capture it with the least amount of effort by letting it go because he has bigger plans (16), that is, he can follow the tiger up the mountain. When next he lures it back down, he not only gets the tiger but now he knows where the defenseless cubs are. He has turned a brick into jade (17).

## **Strategies for When Conditions are Chaotic**

### **19. Steal the Firewood From Under the Caldron**

*Apply excessive yin to decrease excessive yang.*

When faced with an enemy too powerful to engage directly you must first weaken him by undermining his foundation and attacking his source of power.

On the other hand, it is said that, "Once the water has boiled when making tea, the firewood needs to be taken away." In other words, don't antagonize a powerful opponent. It is better to apply *yin* to *yang*.

Similar to Strategy 4, "Take One's Ease While the Enemy Becomes Exhausted."

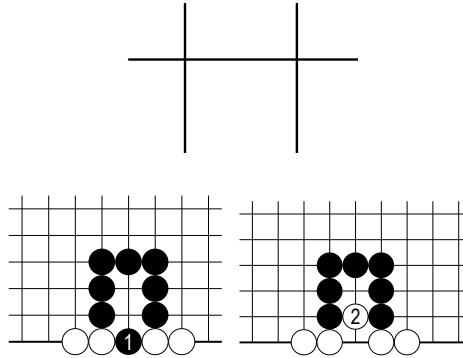
#### **Six Dynasties Period China (220/222-589)**

*In 431 the Song emperor Wendi launched a campaign to win back the province of Honan, which was under the control of the kingdom of Wei. The emperor sent his general Tao-cu in charge of the army to attack Wei. The Song army fought and won more than thirty engagements penetrating deep into Wei territory. Now every commander knows that when an army is deep inside enemy territory his supply lines are the most crucial and vulnerable. Wei took advantage of this weakness to secretly send a detachment of cavalry that succeeded in cutting off the Song supply lines. The Song army was without provisions and in desperate straits. Tao-cu was planning to retreat but this would leave the army extremely vulnerable to a rout and slaughter. To make matters worse, many of his soldiers, afraid and starving, deserted to the Wei side and divulged to Tao-cu's the plan to retreat. The Wei readied their forces to pursue the Song the instant they broke camp. To avert the impending tragedy, Tao-cu devised a stratagem. During the night he ordered his troops to carry baskets of sand and pile them into great heaps within the compound. The Wei scouts listening to the nightlong commotion were curious and crept closer to the Song positions in order to see by first light what was happening. Tao-cu then had the piles of sand covered by a thin layer of grain. The next morning the Wei scouts were shocked to see huge piles of grain that they assumed were smuggled in during the night. When the Wei commander heard this, he suspected that the deserter's reports were a ruse to lure him into a trap, and had them all executed. The Wei [then] cancelled their planned attack. Two days later the Song army quietly escaped to their home territory.*<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>326</sup> <http://www.chinastrategies.com/sample%2021.htm> (Sample page from Verstappen's website).

## Advice for Beginners



A simple example of *ishi-no-shita*, “playing under the stones” to “steal the firewood.”

## 20. Muddy the Waters to Catch the Fish

*Confusion and its uses and abuses is a vast subject that ranges from the military to the financial to the political to just plain fishing.*

Searching for “muddy the waters” on the Internet brings up examples not only from the world of fishing but also that of international finance. As in the introduction to the 15<sup>th</sup> Strategy, “Lure the Tiger Down From the Mountain, one can find out all about how the Chinese obfuscate matters for their financial “fishing” expeditions. And, using the opposite principle, one can find various techniques to drive fish from muddy waters to clear water where they can see the lures.”<sup>327</sup>

As for the military, one way has been to dress soldiers in the enemy’s uniforms and have them penetrate the ranks to create confusion by insinuating false intelligence and deviously jumbling orders, signals, insignias and banners.

### One Crucial Part of the Battle of Chengpu

*In 632 BC the armies of Jin and Chu faced each other at Chengpu before the battle of the same name. [See the end of this Part for a detailed look at this battle and the use of the thinking that became encapsulated in the 36 Strategies.] Chu sent an envoy to Jin requesting to fight a chariot duel the next day to which the Jin ruler, Duke Wen, agreed. In the morning Duke Wen climbed to the top of an observation tower and [after] looking down on his camp’s preparations . . . ordered his troops to cut down trees to be used as part of an unorthodox tactic. While the chariot duel was underway Duke Wen launched a sudden cavalry attack against the Chu right wing causing it to*

<sup>327</sup> <http://voices.yahoo.com/10-tips-fishing-muddy-water-5959156.html?cat=11>  
<http://www.muddywatersresearch.com/>

*collapse. At the same time as the right was being pushed into the main body, the Jin troops in the center raised the retreat pennants and began pulling back. As the Jin troops retreated they dragged behind them the trees they had cut down earlier that morning. This raised such a dust cloud that the Chu commanders thought the Jin were fleeing in panic and eagerly gave chase. When the main body of the Chu army was enveloped in the cloud of dust they were unable to see that the Jin forces had split into two divisions and had turned around. The Jin attacked in a classical pincer movement on both of the Chu flanks. The result was a resounding defeat after which the Chu general was ordered to commit suicide. Duke Wen had taken advantage of the distraction provided by the chariot duel to launch both a surprise attack, and a retreat, manipulating the Chu forces into a trap.*<sup>328</sup>

### **Advice for Beginners**

White's basic strategy in handicap *weiqi* is to complicate things.

## **21. The Golden Cicada Sloughs Its Skin**

*Use yin to decrease yang.*

The sloughed skin of a cicada looks like the cicada.

This stratagem is mainly used to escape from an enemy of superior force, for example, by building a false fort when retreating to delay the enemy.

It can also mean to remove decay in order to make a fresh start.

### **Three Kingdoms Period**

*The warlord Cao Cao of Wei was pursuing the fleeing army and population of Shu led by the heroes of the Peach Grove, Liu Pei and Chang Fei. The retreating column came upon the Changpan Bridge over the Wei River with the enemy army only hours behind. On the opposite side of the river there was heavy forest. Chang Fei turned to [his ruler] Liu Pei and said: "This bridge is the only crossing point for miles and provides us with an advantage. You take the army and people across while I hold off the Wei army to give you as much of a lead as possible." After the Shu army had crossed over, Chang Fei sent his small group of cavalymen across the bridge into the forest where they tied branches to their horses' tails and rode around in circles. Chang Fei remained sitting on his charger in the middle of the bridge. When the pursuing army of Wei came upon the sight of Chang Fei alone on the bridge they stopped. Cao Cao noticed the huge dust cloud in the distance behind the woods and suspected a trap. Chang Fei roared out a challenge to the Wei army . . . [three times] . . . but Cao Cao, now convinced this was a ruse, turned his men around to retreat. Chang Fei seeing the Wei*

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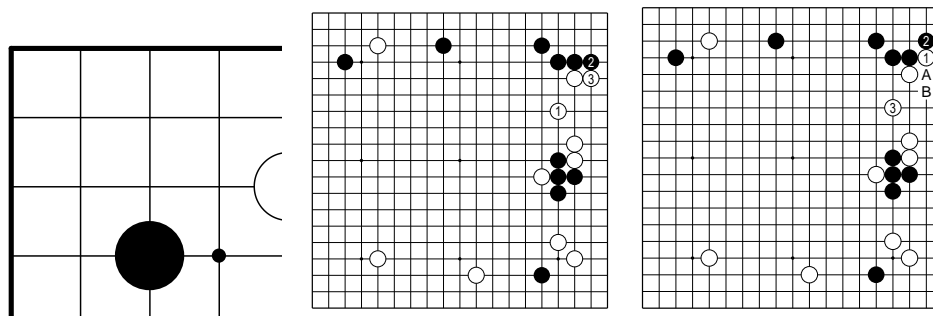
<sup>328</sup> Kierman; pp. 17-56



*army turn about spurred his charger towards the Wei as though to attack them single handedly. This so unnerved the Wei forces that they made a mad scramble to escape the area convinced a trap was closing around them. This trick bought Lui Pei and Chang Fei enough time to escape with their men . . . [Later, after crossing, Chang Fei burned down the bridge and they all regrouped at Jian Ling].*<sup>329</sup>

### Advice for Beginners

In a sacrifice situation such as making *sabaki* to get out of a hole, look for which stones are valuable and worth saving and which can be thrown away.



This example comes from a famous early 19<sup>th</sup> century Japanese game. White is vulnerable on the upper-right side and wants to move quickly into the center but if that is done immediately, as in the diagram on the left, Black descends and White must follow leaving Black an extra move.

So, instead, in the diagram on the right, White “sloughs” its skin with a move underneath Black so that if Black *A* then White *B*. Black must take and White has had an extra move into the center.<sup>330</sup>

## 22. Lock the Door to Seize the Thieves

*Yin captures Yang with a “honey trap.”*

In the open, thieves are quick to run away, so instead of bolting the door first from the inside and keeping them out, leave it wide open and lock it from the outside after they enter. The latter method is illustrated in a famous Beijing Opera scene that took place at night in a country inn.

<sup>329</sup> <http://www.chinastrategies.com/sample%2021.htm>

<sup>330</sup> From a game between Jowa (1787-1847) (White) and Hattori Rittetsu better known as Gennan Inseki (1798-1859) (Black). <http://senseis.xmp.net/?SabakiExamples>

## Beijing Opera—A Nighttime Sword Fight in a Country Inn

*One night, there were two visitors to a country inn who hadn't encountered each other because they had arrived at different times and quickly retired to their rooms to eat their dinners. One was a visiting general and during a previous visit some time before, the landlord had killed two guests who had tried to assassinate him.*

*The other visitor was a stranger who was carrying weapons, including a long sword, and wasn't talkative, so the landlord began to convince himself that he was part of that same rebel gang. Taking his own long sword, he waited until all the candles were out before quietly entering the stranger's room. However, the man awakened and a skillful, dramatic acrobatic swordfight began. The audience could see the elaborately dancing action, but the two couldn't see each other in the dark. After a long fight, the general woke up and demanded to know what was going on. The innkeeper raced to get a candle and they discovered that the traveler was instead a loyal follower of the regime.*

There is a video on the Internet that must be seen to be believed.<sup>331</sup>

## Song Dynasty (960-1279)

*The Song dynasty was weakened because the generals who were fighting the northern barbarians were mistrusted by the emperors who assumed command themselves. In one famous incident, Ren Fu, one of its incompetent generals leading a rag-tag army of new recruits was allowed to win one battle by the tribe of Xia and pursued the apparently fleeing horsemen for a long distance high into the mountains.*

*Suddenly the Xia disappeared and even the scouts could not find them. The imperial forces, realizing they had been deceived, turned around and followed a river downstream. Hearing reports of enemy actions in the area below, they marched onward and after finding a road, they encountered several large boxes and heard rustling sounds coming from inside. Curious, Ren Fu ordered the boxes opened and was startled when dozens of pigeons suddenly fluttered upward making noisy tinkling sounds with little bells tied to their claws. The Song soldiers looked up in astonishment and soon after, large hosts of barbarians had appeared in every direction from the hills where they had been waiting for the bird-borne signal. Completely encircled, they were locked into the "house" and the battle did not last long.<sup>332</sup>*

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<sup>331</sup> <http://physicalcomedy.blogspot.com/2011/10/beijing-opera-fight-in-dark.html>

<sup>332</sup> Adapted from Sun; pp. 195-204

## Warring States Period

*In the year 260 BC, the armies of Qin and Zhao met in a decisive battle. Qin used the strategy of sowing discord among the enemy to cause the Zhao commander Lian Po, an experienced general, to be replaced by an armchair strategist, Zhao Kuo.*

*The Qin general Bai Qi ordered, "Take our main forces to Changbi in Qin and be well-entrenched there. Block off all exits, then take 3,000 soldiers to lure the Zhao troops out." When Qin deliberately let Zhao Kuo win his first battle, he was extremely elated and cocky. He even ordered an all-out attack and his troops pursued what was left of the 3,000 soldiers all the way to Changbi. Bai Qi then caused their only route of retreat and supplies to be cut off so the Zhao troops would be unable to call for reinforcements. The Qin maintained the siege and refrained from fighting and for 46 days, the Zhao could not break through the Qin encirclement..*

*As a last ditch attempt, Zhao Kuo tried to break through the encirclement with a shock force of 5,000 men but he was killed.*<sup>333</sup>

The remaining troops (Sima Qian said it was 400,000 men) surrendered but King Chao, who had once told the ultra-Confucian philosopher Xunzi that his principles were "useless for running a state," with Legalist logic, ordered the execution of all of them.<sup>334</sup>

## Advice for Beginners

Unlike the direct methods of killing in chess, remember why *weiqi* is called the "surrounding game" and how the thinking must be different. So to capture the enemy, you must plan prudently if you want to succeed. Do not rush into action. Before "moving in for the kill," the priority is to cut off your enemy's escape routes and any routes through which outside help can come in.

## 23. To Attack Your Neighbor, Befriend Far Away States

To repeat a Daoist maxim: *To gain mastery of the world, one must make use of the world and not rely on one's strength.*

## Advice for Beginners

What this advice can mean on the *weiqi* board is that the player whose stones or groups are not coordinated but have contradictory aims will always lose to the calm player who looks further ahead and has only one aim in mind. Also, see the Advice for using the next Strategy.

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<sup>333</sup> <http://www.1155815.com/english/cultures/200804/1066.html>

<sup>334</sup> Graham; p. 238

## 24. Obtain Safe Passage from Guo to Attack Yu

*The opposite Strategy of Number 23.*

In this example, a more distant state was attacked in order to conquer a closer one:

### Spring and Autumn Period

*Duke Xian, the ruler of Jin wanted to attack the State of Guo who frequently attacked his borders. To do this, he needed passage through the State of Yu, which was allied with Guo. On the advice of his officer, Xun Xi, Duke Xian sent beautiful women to the Duke of Guo and a beautiful young man to the Duke of Yu with instructions to distract the rulers from government affairs. At the same time, men were sent to cause trouble on Guo's northern border.*

*As expected, officials in Guo blamed Duke Xian for the new trouble they were encountering on the northern border. Feigning insult, Duke Xian sent officer Xun Xi to the State of Yu to request passage so that they could avenge the insult. He carried with him many horses and jade as gifts. Duke Xian had objected to the idea of giving away so much treasure and had asked "What if the duke of Yu accepts our gifts but refuses us passage?" General Xun had replied, "If he doesn't intend to let us through, then he wouldn't accept them, but if he does accept the gifts, and he does let us through, then it will only mean that the treasure is stored temporarily in his storehouse rather than ours."*

*Under the influence of his new beloved, the Duke of Yu immediately agreed, over the protestations of his own official, Gong Zhiqi. Gong Zhiqi described the relationship of Yu and Guo, "Yu is to Guo like lips are to teeth. Our ancestors had a saying; 'If the lips are gone, the teeth will be . . . cold.'" That Guo is able to exist depends on Yu while Yu's ability to survive hinges on Guo. If we make way for Jin, then the day will see Guo perish in the morning to be followed by Yu in the evening. Why should we ever let Jin pass?" The Duke of Yu ignored his warning and Gong Zhiqi secretly left the state of Yu, foreseeing its destruction.*

*In 658 BC, the 19th year of his reign, Duke Xian of Jin sent his general Li Ke and his officer Xun Xi to attack the State of Guo. Ever more favorable to Jin, the Duke of Yu assisted in the invasion. He sent his own army to capture Xiayang Pass for Jin, under the ruse that his army was there to subdue the rebellious Quanrong tribe..*

*In the winter of 655 BC, the 22nd year of his reign, the State of Guo was conquered by Jin. The Duke of Yu was given a part of the women and treasures sacked from Guo. Li Ke was then granted permission to station the Jin army outside the Yu capital to rest. After a few days, the Duke of Yu was suddenly informed that Duke Xian of Jin was outside the city wall of the Yu capital. The Duke of Yu quickly went out to greet him and Duke Xian invited him to the Ji Mountain to hunt. In an ostentatious display, perhaps still under the influence of the beloved planted at his court by Duke*

*Xian, the Duke of Yu brought the entire military force stationed in the capital to the hunt.*

*While hunting, the Yu officer Baili Xi reported to the Duke of Yu about trouble at the capital. By the time the Duke of Yu arrived at the outskirts of the city, the Yu capital has already been captured by the Jin army. After recovering the treasure, general Xun returned the jade and horses to the duke. Duke Xian was pleased and said in good humor "the jade is untouched but the horses seem to have gained some more teeth!"*

335

### **Advice for Beginners**

If two of the opposing groups are unstable or not yet formed, carefully consider how to keep both of them weak and how to eventually attack them in the right order.

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<sup>335</sup> Adapted from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duke\\_Xian\\_of\\_Jin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duke_Xian_of_Jin) and <http://www.chinastrategies.com/list%202.htm#Strategy%2019>

## **Strategies to Take What Your Opponent Has**

### **25. Steal the Beams and Replace the Pillars**

*Since ancient times in China, "battle formations" have been the subject of much thought and discussion.*

A typical formation has a "Central Axis" (called the "Beam of Heaven") extending from front to back, and a "Horizontal Axis" (the "Pillar of Earth") connecting the left and right sides. These two Axes are composed of the best fighters and are used to maintain coherence of the whole formation. When they are attacked, even with shock troops, they will not easily be moved and yield a passage. Therefore, one must use tricks to create disorder in the structure before launching a frontal attack.

#### **Six Dynasties Period (220 or 222 – 589)**

*In 383 AD emperor Fu Jian of Qin, personally led an advance guard of 5,000 horses to attack the Jin general Xie Shi. Discovering that the Jin forces were greater than he anticipated, the emperor had his army form defensive positions along the bank of the river. The Jin armies likewise encamped on the opposite side. Neither side wished to cross first since it was well known that an army is most vulnerable when crossing a river. General Shi sent an envoy across the river with a message that read: "My lord, your army has entered deeply into our territory, and in deploying your ranks you have crowded upon the river. This is the plan for a lengthy stalemate. Do you really want to fight? If you will order your men to withdraw to a safe distance and allow us to cross we can then fight it out and settle the matter quickly."*

*The emperor agreed to the request. When his advisors objected, emperor Fu Jian told them that he planned to turn his army about and attack the Jin after half their troops had crossed. But general Xie anticipated the emperor's treachery and sent scouts disguised as imperial troops to infiltrate the Qin ranks. When the emperor ordered his army to pull back, the disguised Jin troops began to incite panic by spreading the rumor that Qin was withdrawing in defeat and that Jin was in hot pursuit. The retreat quickly turned into a rout as the Qin troops broke formation to escape. The emperor and his generals raced frantically after the fleeing soldiers with whips in hand to stop them, but to no avail. The Jin army quickly crossed the river and pursued the Qin forces inflicting enormous casualties. The emperor was wounded and narrowly escaped. He was captured and strangled a few weeks later.<sup>336</sup>*

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<sup>336</sup> <http://www.chinastrategies.com/list%202.htm#Strategy%2025>

### Advice for Beginners

Look like you are after territory when you are really after influence, and vice versa.

## 26. Point at the Mulberry and Curse the Locust Tree

*Kill the chicken inside the yard to scare the monkey outside of it.*

### Spring and Autumn Period

*In 678 BC, Duke Huan of the prosperous state of Qi succeeded in forming an alliance of eight states that he could dominate with barely any fighting. After appointing Guan Zhong as his chief minister, he invited the eight states to a meeting. Chen, Cai, Zhu and Song attended the meeting but Lu, Wei, Zheng and Cao did not. He then told those who attended that he wanted their support to deal with Lu first. The duke of Song however did not want part of it and left.*

*A greatly angered Duke Huan then wanted to launch an attack to punish Song but Guan Zhong stopped him. "Song is far, Lu is near. Let's deal with Lu first. We can attack Lu's vassal Sui." Sui was small and easy to conquer. "We can strike at Sui first to scare Lu. Lu will then pay allegiance to us. Song will also feel intimidated."*

*Duke Huan then sent his army to attack Sui. The duke of Lu was told that the Qi army had subdued Sui and quickly apologized to Qi. Wei and Cao also apologized for their absence at the meeting. Lu, Wei, Cao and Qi joined forces and prepared to attack Song but the duke of Song became terrified and quickly mended fences with Qi.*<sup>337</sup>

### Advice for Beginners

Calmly wait until the middle game to suddenly and skillfully combine *tesuji* and sacrifices to confuse the weaker player who will then become overly cautious in the end game.

## 27. Feign Foolishness, Madness or Drunkenness

*Feigning madness, foolishness and drunkenness can be a fun and useful tool when "proving" it.*

The Tang Emperor Taizong (599-649) once asked his minister Li Jing:

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<sup>337</sup> Adapted from <http://www.1155815.com/english/cultures/200804/1070.html>

*As for the tricks of yin-yang and mystical numbers, can they be done away with?"*

Li Jing replied,

*No, they cannot be done away with. War is the art of employing deceptions. We can issue orders in the name of yin-yang and mystical numbers to employ the greedy and the stupid. Therefore they should not be abolished."*<sup>338</sup>

Feigning ignorance, foolishness, drunkenness and madness and making no move to acquire knowledge can lure the opponent into feeling that:

*It would have been better to keep your mouth shut and be thought a fool [or a drunk] than to open it . . . and remove all doubt."*

Once the adversary thinks this is the case, it can then be used against him.

### **Sui Dynasty**

*During the final years of Emperor Yang of the Sui Dynasty [589-618] there appeared a ballad that foretold the fall of the house of Sui and the ascent of a man named Li as emperor. The ballad became immensely popular among the disaffected subjects of Emperor Yang's infamous rule. The emperor, being superstitious and believing in the prophecy himself, began a campaign to search out and execute anyone of importance with the surname Li. He had numerous ministers and officials along with their entire families put to the sword. A minor official whose name was Li Yuan, was serving as superintendent in the provinces when he was summoned to the court. Li Yuan delayed appearing in court by claiming poor health. Li Yuan had a niece who was a palace maid and one day the emperor asked her where her uncle Li has been. The lady replied that her uncle was ill. The emperor said: "I wonder if he is courting death?" When Li Yuan heard this he was certain that if he obeyed the summons to court he would never return. Thereupon he feigned madness and pretended to become an incorrigible drunk. When the imperial spies reported Li's behavior the emperor thought that a madman could never fulfill the prophecy and was no longer suspicious of Li. Surprisingly, two years later the Sui emperor placed Li in charge of a field army to defend the empire against barbarian incursions. Li fought bravely, won the respect of his troops, marched on the capital, and went on to found the illustrious Tang dynasty thus fulfilling the prophecy.*<sup>339</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> Li Jing's Reply to Emperor Taizong of Tang; Tome Three: (Sun; p. 244)

<sup>339</sup> Verstappen; p. 138



## Advice for Beginners

The deer, the tiger, the birds, the fish and the weak *weiqi* player are caught by movement. "If there is no good move, play elsewhere" is a *weiqi* proverb.

## 28. Remove the Ladder After the Enemy is on the Roof

or

### Climb Up On the Roof and Remove the Ladder

*With baits and deceptions (the "ladder") lure your enemy into treacherous terrain, then cut off his lines of communication and avenues of escape. To save himself he must fight both your own forces and the surrounding terrain.*

However, Sunzi suggests that this can sometimes be a bad idea.

*Throw your soldiers into positions whence there is no escape, and they will prefer death to flight. If they will face death, there is nothing they may not achieve. Officers and men alike will put forth their uttermost strength.*

*Soldiers when in desperate straits lose the sense of fear. If there is no place of refuge, they will stand firm. If they are in hostile country, they will show a stubborn front. If there is no help for it, they will fight hard.*<sup>340</sup>

In other words, troops prepared to die will survive.

## Qin Dynasty

*Xiang Ji of Chu, whose polite name was Yu, lived about the time that Qin Shihuang and the Qin were solidifying their short lived empire that began in 215 BC. For generations the Xiang had served as generals of Chu, he had an uncle named Xiang Liang who was the son of a famous Chu general who had died fighting the Qin.*

*When Xiang Yu was young, at the behest of his uncle, he studied writing but gave it up. Then he studied swordsmanship but gave that up, too, saying, "The study of writing only enables one to keep records of names and the study of swordsmanship only enables one to deal with one person. What I want to learn is the art of fighting 10,000 men!" Accordingly, his uncle taught him strategies but he still did not bother to pursue it to the end.*

*Xiang Liang later killed a man and the two had to flee to Wu where he was put in charge of labor conscription for the Qin endeavors and also funeral services because he*

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<sup>340</sup> <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?l=Sunzi&s=11>

*was judged by the local governor in the employ of the Qin to be more capable than the locals. Seizing this opportunity, Xiang gathered followers and taught them the arts of war. Meanwhile, his nephew had grown into a youth of imposing stature and matchless strength.*

*Soon enough, in 209 BC, Chen Sheng and Wu Guang had begun their rebellion (see Strategy 14) and all the territories west of the Yangtze followed their lead. The governor, thinking that Heaven was turning against the Qin, decided to strike first, reasoning that he would lead the others rather than waiting to be led by others. He wanted Xiang Liang and a rebel leader who had been hiding in the nearby swamps to be his generals. Xiang Liang told him Xiang Yu knew where to find the man and brought him into the house. The three talked for awhile, then Xiang Liang said, "It is time!" and Xiang Yu with one stroke cut off the governor's head. Xiang Liang picked it up and put the seals of office on his belt and calling on his followers and others in the district, he raised an army of 8,000 men for his war against the Qin, making Xiang Yu his lieutenant-general. However, a minister advised him that because Chen Sheng had declared himself king of Chu, he did not last long. Therefore, Xiang should seek out the still-living grandson of King Huai, the last ruler of Chu who was now living as a common shepherd. Enthroned, the new King Huai then officially made Xiang Liang his chief general.*

*However, after several victories, Xiang Liang grew overconfident and lost a major battle with a Qin general named Zhang Han and was killed, although not all of his army was lost. The victorious Qin then advanced on Zhao, a weak state that was also in revolt and surrounded its army in the city of Julu, while Zheng Han led a second force south to make a well fortified camp that guarded the supply route to his troops in July.*

*Meanwhile King Huai had made Song Yi his new chief general with Xiang Yu as his lieutenant. This army reached Anyang but then did not move to cross the Yellow river into Zhao for forty-six days. Xiang Yu argued with Song Yi that it was their duty to go forward to join with Zhao to defeat Qin because King Huai was greatly troubled after the last defeat and greatly desired it. He said that while there was plenty of food in the Zhao countryside, the countryside they were in was barren, the people were poor and the troops were only eating taro roots. They also lacked proper clothing and it was cold and rainy. Yet in spite of this, the general had invited his followers to a celebratory feast where he appointed his son to be the chief minister of Qi.*

*Song Yi replied to him that, "I am no match to you with the use of weapons, but you are no match to me in devising strategy. I am staying on the hillside and 'watching the tigers fight,' and anyone who takes headstrong actions will be summarily executed!"*

*Xiang Yu countered that Qin would only grow stronger with the victory and so the next morning he cut off Song Yi's head, declared to the troops that the man was found to be a traitor, that he had taken a bribe to stay put and that Xiang had been ordered by King Huai to execute him. He sent someone to kill Song Yi's son before he reached Qi and then sent an envoy to King Huai, who had no choice but to appoint him commander-in-chief.*

*Xiang Yu quickly sent two Zhao generals with 20,000 troops to cross the river and while they gained some minor victories, the Zhao generals begged for more help.*

*With that, Xiang had all his oxen killed, gave his men three days rations, broke the cooking cauldrons, burned all his tents, and, after moving his entire force across the river, sank all his boats.*

*By this time, ten armies had arrived from various states to help rescue Julu but they all entrenched themselves outside the city and stayed behind their ramparts when Xiang Yu launched his attack. It turned out that the Qin were no match for his fired-up men and after nine victories Zhang Han had been killed and his army slaughtered.*

*Afterwards, Xiang called the generals of the other armies to his tent. They bowed before him without raising their eyes and so Xiang Yu became generalissimo of all the armies and their rulers took orders from him without exception.*<sup>341</sup>

### **Advice for Beginners**

Allow your opponents to attack repeatedly so that their connections become thin. When the time is right, then mount a strong counterattack that cuts up everything.

## **29. Silk Flowers Blossom in the Tree**

*Make something of no value appear valuable; of no threat appear dangerous; of no use appear useful*

Tying silk blossoms on a dead tree gives the illusion that the tree is healthy.

### **Warring States Period**

*In the fourth century BC, unprecedented political events were taking place that would have been inconceivable in the Spring and Autumn period. Ministers had begun to take over governments and wars were being fought on a grander scale for aggrandizement and not for the honor of the ancestors. Such was the case in 332 BC when the King of Yan handed over state affairs to his chief minister Zi Zhi, after inheriting the throne from his father who had usurped it in 332 BC.*

*However, Zi's ambitions for power far outweighed his abilities to govern and chaos soon spread throughout the region. Neighboring Qi saw this as an opportunity to invade and Yan's cities gladly opened their gates while its army gave no resistance. Zi Zhi was captured, taken to Qi, and slowly dismembered.*

*Had all this happened a few hundred years earlier, the Qi would have undoubtedly sought out the legitimate heir and enthroned him with the result that the two kingdoms would have been peaceful neighbors who supported each other. Instead, the Qi general stationed his troops throughout Yan and proceeded to govern with impudence. The people became indignant and so the son of the former King of Yan*

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<sup>341</sup> Adapted from Sun; pp. 252-60

*stepped forward to establish himself as King Zhao. The Qi general grew fearful and withdrew his forces and Zhao entered his capital in 311 BC.*

*Uniting his people with royal austerities and good management, the king attracted talented advisors from near and far. One of these was Yue Yi who came from the nearby state of Zhao, and, as Qi grew more powerful and belligerent, he organized an alliance with Zhao, Chu, Wei and Han and Yue Yi and led it to victory over Qi.*

*Afterwards, while these other states plundered along the borders of Qi, Yue Yi was bent on revenge and fought all the way to the capital of Qi which he captured while the king escaped to the city of Lu. In the next five years, Yu Yi captured more than seventy cities and turned them into Yan fiefs. Only Lu and Jimo remained in Qi hands and they were under the command of a new leader, Tian Dan.*

*Tian Dan had been a minor official who fled the capture of the capital to the city of Anping. There he told his clansmen to reinforce their chariots by attaching iron cages after cutting off the protruding ends of the wooden axles. As the city fell, the aristocrats fled the city but their chariots smashed into each other in the rush and many of the axles were broken. However, with their axles protected by the iron cages, Tian Dan and his kinsmen managed to escape to Jimo, where, after its general had been killed in battle, the people declared him their leader because, as they said, "He understands war!"*

*Aiming to control all of Qi, Yue Yi laid siege to the two cities but did not assail them vigorously. Instead, he carried out a conciliatory policy to bring the conquered land and peoples of Qi under control.*

*But then King Zhao suddenly died and a King Hui succeeded to the throne. A resourceful Tian Dan took this opportunity to spread rumors that Yue Yi wanted to set himself up as the King of Qi and therefore was leaving the two cities unconquered so he could stay there. It was added that the people of Jimo were fearful King Hui would come to his senses and appoint another general. The inexperienced king fell for the trick and promptly replaced Yue Yi with a general named Qi Jie.*

*Fearing punishment, Yue Yi took refuge in Zhao, his native state, causing much agitation and consternation among the Yan troops. Meanwhile, one morning Tian Dan woke up and declared to his men that he had dreamed that the Jade Emperor had promised to send him a teacher. A quick-witted soldier quickly whispered in his ear, "Can I be that teacher?" Tian Dan grabbed him and said in great excitement, "You are the god I saw in my dream!" He led him off to his house but the man whispered, "I cheated you, sir. I know nothing of strategy" but Tian Dan whispered, "Shut up!"*

*Thereafter, whenever orders were issued, they came from the "Divine Master" and the rumors spread to the Yan army that a god was guiding the Qi.*

*Next, Tian Dan told the people that the Divine Master had ordered them to present sacrificial offerings of grain at mealtime to honor the ancestors who would bless the city and help them prevail. Outside the walls, the Yan army became dismayed when twice daily, flocks of birds appeared over the city. Indeed, there seemed to be a god at work.*

*Then, to contravene whatever good feelings about the Qi that Yue Yi had instigated with his conciliatory policies, Tian Dan spread a rumor among the Yan army*

*that Yi had failed to conquer Jimo and Lu because he acted too kindly toward the people of Qi. If the Yan army cut off the noses of Qi prisoners and put them in front when attacking, the Qi soldiers would become afraid and Jimo would succumb of its own accord. Qie Ji quickly complied.*

*Of course, this aroused the populace to greater valor, especially when Tian spread another rumor that the despoiling and burning of the bodies in the Qi graveyards, which were outside the city, would dispirit the defenders. Again, Qie Ji acquiesced. The enraged soldiers and populace begged Tian to lead them out of the city to fight.*

*But Tian Dan had further plans. He enrolled his wife and concubines in the army, shared all his food and wine with the soldiers and ordered the fully-equipped and able-bodied to stay out of sight inside the houses while the weak, the old and the women mounted the walls to apparently defend the city. Then he collected a thousand yi in gold from the wealthy and sent several of them to see Qie Ji. They told him, "Jimo is about to yield. Please accept this gift and spare our wives and concubines and let us live in peace." Qie Ji and the Yan army were overjoyed to hear this and he gladly accepted the treasure, following what would become the 12<sup>th</sup> Strategy, "Take a sheep in passing."*

*Back in Jimo, Tian distributed what food was left so his men could have a few good meals before the major action that was imminent. Collecting a thousand bulls from within the city, he covered them with purple silk, painted them with fantastic stripes of various colors, bound daggers to their horns and tied oil-soaked straw to their tails. He then dressed his army of five thousand of the best in black clothing, painted their faces with shapes in five colors and armed them with long swords and axes. Next, he had his men make partial breaches in the walls that could not be seen from the outside.*

*Night fell and the Yan encampment settled down and were sleeping when suddenly holes opened up in the walls and a deafening racket began to roar from the tops of the city walls as the thundering beasts with the fiery tails slashed into the Yan encampment followed by the savage attack of dark, noiseless creatures that only appeared to be men. The tents were already slashed and burning and the daggers on the bull's horns were doing further work as the Qi soldiers struck. The hapless Qi Jie was quickly killed and the Yan who still could ran for their lives.*

*Before long, the seventy cities were recovered and, back at the capital, Tian Dan was richly rewarded by his king.<sup>342</sup>*

### **Advice for Beginners**

If you find you have made a mistake in reading out a life-and-death problem, don't panic. Determine if your opponent knows this. If not, chances are it will hold up for a long time.

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<sup>342</sup> Adapted from Sun; pp. 264-72

### 30. The Host Becomes the Guest; the Guest Becomes the Host

*The host and guest both have obligations—thus the idea is to find a way to exchange the roles.*

Usurp leadership in a situation where you are normally subordinate. Infiltrate your target. Initially, pretend to be a guest to be accepted, but develop from inside and become the owner later.

Connected to Strategy 20, "Muddy the Waters to Catch the Fish."

*In the Chinese military vocabulary, the "guest" refers to one who invades the territory of his opponent who thus becomes the "host." In so doing, the guest suffers from many disadvantages. He must carry provisions for long distances, fight on unfamiliar terrain, deal with a hostile population and lay siege to well-fortified cities. [Meanwhile,] . . . the host can starve a well-fed guest, and exhaust a well-rested one. However, an experienced attacker can find several ways to surpass these difficulties. He can raid the enemy's base of provisions and befriend the locals to acquire reliable guides and agents. Before a fortress or unfavorable terrain, he can feign weakness and lure the army of defenders to venture to attack it in a better chosen place and so become the host.*<sup>343</sup>

#### Tang Dynasty Zen (Chan) Buddhism

*As for the Lin-chi school, it was known for its teaching method of the "Four ranks," which were also called the "Four positions of host and guest" or "Four selections." Most people who know a little of Zen are able to match the four positions with various relationships between the subjective and objective view. But there is a real esoteric secret of this school that most people do not know. It starts with the fact that in all cultivation work, the chi mai and the physical body are all considered "guests." In other words, the five elements of the physical body, as well as the various experiential realms of samadhi, are all considered to be guests. The true mind of original nature, not the thoughts but that which knows, is the "host." This is the meaning behind Lin-chi's four positions of guest and host.*<sup>344</sup>

#### Feudal Japan

*In feudal Japan there lived a venerable Kendo master who decided to test his three highest-ranking students. He brought them one by one to an old temple in the nearby mountains where he told each student the following: "You have studied with me many years, now let's see if my teaching has been in vain. There within the temple awaits your test, pass and you will have graduated."*

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<sup>343</sup> Adapted from Sun; pp. 274-5

<sup>344</sup> <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?l=36ji&no=30>

*Within the dimly lit temple the Master had hidden four Samurai armed with clubs and instructions to jump anyone who entered the temple. The first student entered the temple and before his eyes could adjust to the light, was surprised and beaten by the Samurai. "I am sorry, you have failed," said the master.*

*The second student entered the temple and sensed the attackers. He was able to deftly evade their attack and defeat them. The student came out of the temple triumphant, but again the master said, "I am sorry, you have failed"*

*Finally the third student was brought to the temple and told about the test. The student replied, "But venerable master, protocol dictates that when entering a temple the master must always precede the student, so if you please, I shall follow you in." To which the master replied, "You rascal, you have learned all I can teach you."<sup>345</sup>*

### **Advice for Beginners**

Try to master the arts of invasion so that as a "guest" you can become the "host" and vice-versa.

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<sup>345</sup> <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?l=36ji&no=30>

## **Strategies for When Everything Seems Lost**

### **31. The Beauty Trap**

*War is a continuation of Politik by other means.*

Carl von Clausewitz

There are two ways of dealing with a situation if one is weak. One is to use double agents and the other is to use a beautiful woman or man. This stratagem can work on three levels. First, the ruler becomes so enamored with the enticements and desires stirred up by the cleverness of an agent or the beauty of a gift-person that he neglects his duties and allows his vigilance to wane. Second, some targeted males at court will begin to display aggressive behavior towards the ruler that inflames minor differences, thus hindering co-operation and destroying morale. Third, other females at court, motivated by lies, jealousy and envy, begin to plot intrigues further exacerbating the situation.

#### **Spring and Autumn Period**

*One part of the long battles between Yue and Wu, two neighboring states in southeast China, featured the most famous use of the Beauty Trap strategy.*

*Yue and Wu were once friends when they were vassals of Chu. In the middle of the Spring and Autumn period, Jin was contending with Chu for supremacy in the Yangtze River Valley and sent men to Wu to train them to attack Chu [See Strategies 20 and 36]. In retaliation, Chu dispatched Fan Li and Wen Zhong, two of its most able men, to train Yue to attack Jin and so Yue and Wu had become enemies. Between 506 and 473 BC when Yue finally conquered Wu, they fought many battles and used many devious strategies. In the middle of this period, after a severe defeat, the Yue forces led by King Guo Jian fled to a walled city and were encircled by Fu Chai, the king of Wu.*

*Guo Jian, asked Wen Zhong for advice, and he replied, "Fate is against us, but it is not too late to sue for peace. There is a Wu minister, Bo Pi, who is the king's favorite but who also has a weakness for wealth and women and is jealous of other ministers, particularly Wu Zixu. With proper gifts, we can persuade him to talk the king into helping us."*

*For twenty pairs of jade, a thousand catties of gold and eight beauties, Bo Pi readily agreed to convince the king that the King of Yue was only asking to continue worshipping his ancestors. If that request was refused, he argued, there would be a last-ditch effort that would make Wu suffer many losses. Moreover, all the treasures would be burnt and the king would only flee to a neighboring state. Besides, if Yue were made a vassal state, there would be a never-ending stream of tribute and Wu (whose ambitions in the Valley were extensive) would gain a reputation for generosity. Wu Zixu protested vigorously against the arguments of his rival, but to no avail and so he declared that if that course of action was followed, "In twenty years, the palace of Wu will be a wasteland!"*



*According to the terms of peace, the king and queen of Yue spent three miserable years living in a stone house, tending Fu Chai's horses by the grave of the late king of Wu. But feigning submissiveness and gratitude for living, they finally mollified Fu Chai into allowing them to return to Yue.*

*Back in his homeland, Guo Jian thirsted for revenge, strengthening his resolve every day by swallowing bitter gall that he had hung on his wall and sleeping on brushwood every night. He also took measures to restore his army—no elders, male or female, were allowed to have younger husband or wives; the parents of girls of 17 and boys of 20 were severely punished if their children went unmarried; women had physicians at hand when they gave birth; and in families that had three sons, two were supported by the state.*

*Since Wu was so strong and Yue so weak, Guo Jian turned to Wen Zhong for strategies to deal with the situation. Wen told him there were seven methods to deal with the situation:*

- 1) Accumulate wealth, train soldiers and wait for the moment to strike.*
- 2) Give money to Fu Chai.*
- 3) Import grain from Wu at high prices to deplete its food reserves.*
- 4) Bribe and employ the sycophants in the court to disturb the king's policies.*
- 5) Sow dissension between the capable ones and the king.*
- 6) Send skillful artisans to build palaces that the king might over-enjoy and drain his wealth.*
- 7) Send a beautiful woman to corrupt the king.*

*Gou Jian ordered a beauty-hunting team led by Fan Li to travel over all of Yue disguised as street performers. Finally, in a remote village in the west, they found a woman who was willing to become a victim as well as a victimizer, and who is now known as Xi Shi. The tutoring for her court debut lasted three years, and she became a master in courtly manners and the arts of singing, dancing, playing the zither and the techniques of love. Needless to say, Fu Chai became besotted, building Guanwa Palace ("The Palace of Beautiful Women") in an imperial park outside the capital. Spending endless days there, Bo Pi attended him but Wu Zixu was seldom granted an audience.*

*Yue then had a poor harvest and its people were starving so Wen Zhong went before Fu Chai and begged for a loan of 10,000 bushels of grain to be repaid the following year. In spite of Wu Zixu's protests, Fu Chai sent the grain. The next year produced a bumper crop for Yue and Wen Zhong had most of his 10,000 bushels of grain cooked and dried and then sent to Wu. Finding the sample grain he was shown to be of the best quality, Fu Chai used it for seed the following year and never suspected that it was not the differences in soil and climate that caused little to sprout.*

*Finally, events, double agents and the wiles of Xi Shi and her companion Zheng Dan conspired to convince Fu Chai to send Wu Zixu a sword to be used to commit suicide. This loss, along with the attentions of Xi Shi, contributed heavily to the final defeat of Wu in 473 BC, along with the suicide of a now remorseful Fu Chai.*

*However, for the Yue advisors, Fan Li and Wen Zhong, events had not yet ended. Shifts in favoritism and suspicions of treason caused Fan Li to write to Wen Zhong, "After all the birds are shot, the good bow will be tucked away, after the rabbit is caught, the hunting dog will be cooked by his master. The King of Yue is the kind of man with whom one can share misfortunes but not success. Why not leave him?"*

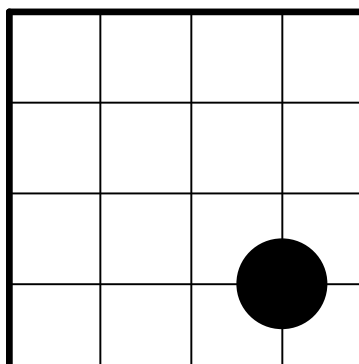
*Fan Li fled the state and legend has it that he retired to Tai He Lake with Xi Shi on a fishing boat. They roamed like fairies in the misty wilderness until no one saw them again.*

*However, Wen Zhong did not leave and, as had happened with Wu Zixu, soon came a sword from the royal hand, but this one was accompanied by a message: "You taught me seven methods, and by using three of them I have destroyed Wu. You may recommend the other four to our late king."<sup>346</sup>*

### **Advice for Beginners**

Use the art of *tesuji*, where pretty-looking shapes contain deadly traps.

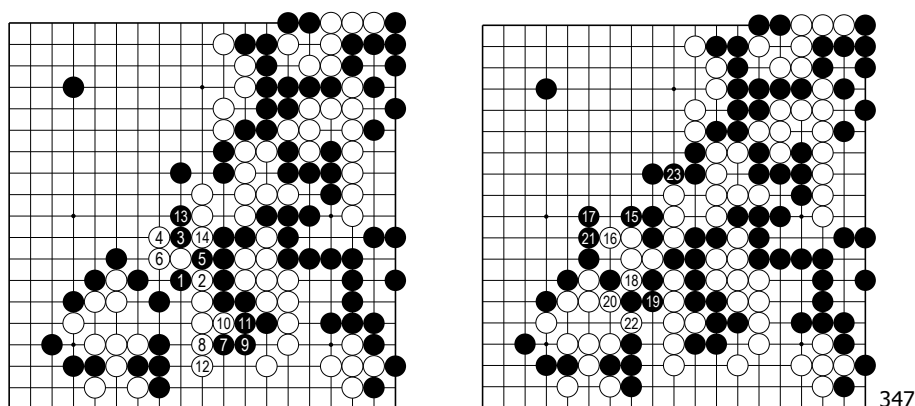
### **For Advanced Players**



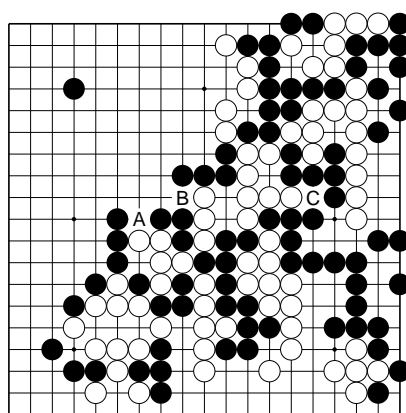
The Beauty Trap—the marked stones are the bait. It is Black's move.

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<sup>346</sup> Adapted from Sun; pp. 285-96



White 22 is forced and Black has made his sacrificial pig “fatter” with the loss of three more stones.



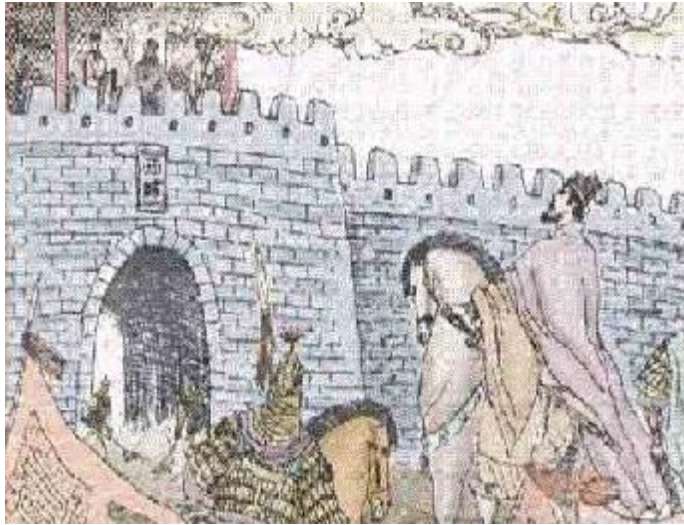
Black *A* and *B* are now *sente* and Black has magnificent influence. Not only that but *C* ensures the life of the Black group on the right and is *sente* besides. This good opportunity to win wouldn't have been the case if Black had tried to save his sacrificed groups.

## 32. Open the Gates, Invite the Enemy into Your Empty City

*The use of the strategy depends on two things: Yourself having a reputation for strategic prowess and having a clever opponent who, in perceiving a possible trap, may over-think his reaction.*

<sup>347</sup> Ma; pp. 155-60

## Three Kingdoms Period



348

This is the scene of one of the most famous stories in the history of Chinese strategic thinking. As recounted in *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* by Luo Guanzhong in the 14th century, the famous strategist Zhuge Liang had sent off the major part of his army and was left with only a few troops in the city of Xicheng in central China as his enemy approached with a large, imposing force . . .

*All arrangements made, Zhuge Liang took five thousand troops and set out for Xicheng to remove the stores. But messenger after messenger, more than ten of them, came to report: "Sima Yi is advancing rapidly on Xicheng with [a vast] army."*

*No leader of rank was left to Zhuge Liang; he had only the civil officials and the five thousand soldiers, and as half this force had started to remove the stores, he had only two thousand five hundred left. His officers were all frightened at the news of the near approach of the enemy. Zhuge Liang himself went up on the rampart to look around. He saw clouds of dust rising into the sky. The Wei armies were nearing Xicheng along two roads. Then he gave orders: "All the banners are to be removed and concealed. If any officer in command of soldiers in the city moves or makes any noise, he will be instantly put to death."*

*Next he threw open all the gates and set twenty soldiers dressed as ordinary people cleaning the streets at each gate. When all these preparations were complete, he donned a simple Taoist dress and, attended by a couple of lads, sat down on the wall by one of the towers with his lute before him and a stick of incense burning.*

It is often thought in *weiqi* circles that he was calmly playing their game. However, there seems to be no trace of it in the literature.

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<sup>348</sup> [http://www.new3k.com/files/%5BDW3K.COM%5DThe\\_New\\_Three\\_Kingdoms\\_Ebook-Part5of6.pdf](http://www.new3k.com/files/%5BDW3K.COM%5DThe_New_Three_Kingdoms_Ebook-Part5of6.pdf)

*Sima Yi's scouts came near the city gate and saw all this. They did not enter the city, but went back and reported what they had seen. Sima Yi smiled incredulously. But he halted his army and rode ahead himself. Lo! It was exactly as the scouts had reported; Zhuge Liang sat there, his face with all smiles as he played the lute. A lad stood on one side of him bearing a treasured sword and on the other a boy with the ordinary symbol of authority, a yak's tail. Just inside the gates a score of persons with their heads down were sweeping as if no one was about.*

*Sima Yi hardly believed his eyes and thought this meant some peculiarly subtle ruse. So he went back to his armies, faced them about and moved toward the hills on the north. "I am certain there are no soldiers behind this foolery," said Sima Zhao, "What do you retire for, Father?" Sima Yi replied, "Zhuge Liang is always most careful and runs no risks. Those open gates undoubtedly mean an ambush; and if our force enters the city, they will fall victims to his guile. How can you know? No; our course is to retire."*<sup>349</sup>

The problem is that this was all false, however there was an earlier similar incident in the Three Kingdoms period that is noted in a Wikipedia article on "The Empty Fort Strategy."<sup>350</sup> The article has the following to say about the comments of Pei Songzhi (372–451), who was called upon to annotate the *Records of the Three Kingdoms* written by Chen Shou (233–297), which was the basis for Luo Guanzhong's version. It is given almost in its entirety to demonstrate how Chinese "history" was sometimes put together.

*. . . Pei Songzhi made some personal comments about the account. He pointed out some fallacies and dismissed it as fiction. He noted that:*

*When Zhuge Liang garrisoned at Yangping, Sima Yi was serving as the Area Commander . . . of Jing Province and he was stationed at Wancheng (. . . present-day Wancheng District, Nanyang, Henan). He only came into confrontation with Zhuge Liang in Guanzhong after Cao Zhen's death (in 231). It was unlikely that the Wei government ordered Sima Yi to lead an army from Wancheng to attack Shu via Xicheng . . . because there were heavy rains at that time (which would obstruct passage). There were no battles fought at Yangping before and after that period of time. Going by Guo Chong's account, if Sima Yi did lead 200,000 troops to attack Zhuge Liang, knew that Zhuge's position was weakly defended, and suspected that there was an ambush, he could have set up defences to resist Zhuge instead of retreating. According to Wei Yan's biography, which states, "Each time Wei Yan followed Zhuge Liang to battle, he would request to command a separate detachment of about 10,000 men and take a different route and rendezvous with Zhuge's main force at Tong Pass (present-day Tongguan*

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<sup>349</sup> Luo Guanzhong; *Romance of Three Kingdoms*; C.H. Brewitt Taylor (Trans.); Tuttle; 2002; pp. 284-9

<sup>350</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empty\\_Fort\\_Strategy#Zhao\\_Yun](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empty_Fort_Strategy#Zhao_Yun)

County, Shaanxi). Zhuge Liang rejected the plan, and Wei Yan felt that Zhuge was a coward and complained that his talent was not put to good use.” Zhuge Liang never agreed to allow Wei Yan to command a separate detachment of thousands of troops. If Guo Chong's account was true, how was it possible that Zhuge Liang would permit Wei Yan to lead a larger force ahead while he remained behind with a smaller army? Guo Chong's account was endorsed by the Prince of Fufeng (Sima Liang, a son of Sima Yi). However, the story puts Sima Yi in a negative light, and it does not make any sense for a son to approve a story that demeans his father. When we read that “the Prince of Fufeng generously endorsed Guo Chong's account”, we know that this account is purely fiction. <sup>[5]</sup>

Evidence from historical sources indicate that Sima Yi was indeed not present around the Jieting area (in present-day Gansu) at that time. The Battle of Jieting took place in 228 but Sima Yi's biography in the Book of Jin claimed that in 227, Sima Yi was stationed at Wancheng in the north of Jing Province. He later led an army to suppress a rebellion by Meng Da at Xincheng . . . in northwestern Jing Province, and returned to Wancheng after his victory. Later, he was summoned to the capital Luoyang to meet the Wei emperor Cao Rui, who consulted him on some affairs before ordering him to return to the garrison at Wancheng.<sup>[6]</sup> Sima Yi only came into direct confrontation with Zhuge Liang after 230. <sup>351</sup>

### Advice for Beginners

When behind, do not reinforce your corner in *gote* and lose a move, but invite the enemy to invade and hope for the best: perhaps he or she will think you have a plan and not enter.

## 33. Use the Enemy's Agents Against Him

By “agents” are meant spies and Sunzi says there are five types.

*Thus, what enables the wise sovereign and the good general to strike and conquer, and achieve things beyond the reach of ordinary men, is FOREKNOWLEDGE.*

*Now this foreknowledge cannot be elicited from spirits; it cannot be obtained inductively from experience, nor by any deductive calculation.*

*Hence the use of spies, of whom there are five classes:*

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<sup>351</sup> The footnotes in the article are:

(5) Pei Songzhi's comments on annotations from Guo Chong's *San Shi* . . . in Chen Shou's *Records of the Three Kingdoms*, Volume 35, Biography of Zhuge Liang.

(6) Fang Xuanling et al.; *Book of Jin*, Volume 1, Biography of Sima Yi

- 1) *Local spies*
- 2) *Inward spies*
- 3) *Converted spies*
- 4) *Doomed spies*
- 5) *Surviving spies.*

*When these five kinds of spies are all at work, none can discover the secret system. This is called "divine manipulation of the threads." It is the sovereign's most precious faculty.* <sup>352</sup>

All of Sunzi's types can be employed as *agent provocateurs* in disguise whose efforts are aimed at secretly causing discord between rulers, allies, advisors, commanders, soldiers, and the general population of friends and families.

Of course, as this Strategy indicates, once found out, the enemy agents can be bribed to turn on their employers or the information given can be false. In this way, the 33<sup>rd</sup> Strategy is linked to many other of the strategies that represent reversals of fortunes, so perhaps the best kind of *agent provocateur* is one that cannot be bribed or lied to, for example, a Trojan Horse or, as in the case below, a simple barrel of wine.

### **Six Dynasties Period**

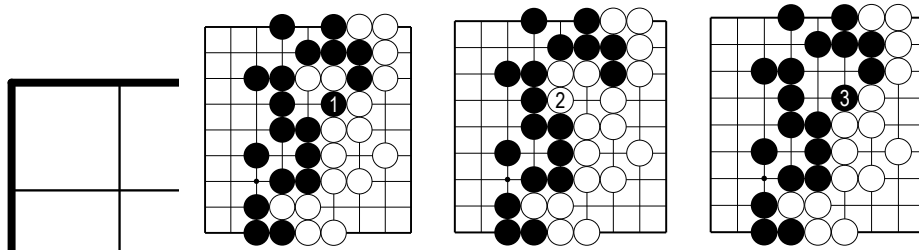
*In the later Wei dynasty [386-534] the emperor Tai Wu led a hundred thousand troops against the Song general Zang Zhi. The emperor, with his superior forces, chased general Zhang to the city of Yu where he was cornered. The city was strongly fortified and so the emperor planned to surround it and starve the defenders into surrender. Feeling confident of his position, the emperor sent a cart carrying a large jar of wine to the city gate with the message asking for the traditional exchange of wine before commencing his siege of the city. Zang Zhi, knowing that he needed to fight a decisive battle quickly or suffer defeat, saw this as an opportunity. He sent some soldiers to gratefully accept the jar of wine and in turn deliver another large jar sealed with the wine maker's stamp. When a cup of this wine was poured for the emperor it was discovered to be urine. This caused the emperor a humiliating loss of face before his own troops and in a rage he ordered an immediate assault on the city. The defenders were well prepared and the bodies of the slain imperial troops piled up nearly to the top of the ramparts. In his haste and anger the emperor lost half his forces.* <sup>353</sup>

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<sup>352</sup> <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?lang=en&l=Sunzi&s=13>

<sup>353</sup> Verstappen; p. 177

## Advice for Beginners



The use of the “snapback”—where hidden forces are used to your advantage.<sup>354</sup>

## 34. The Self-Torture Scheme

*Pretending to be injured has three possible applications. In the first, the enemy is lulled into relaxing his guard since he no longer considers you to be an immediate threat. The second is a way of ingratiating yourself to your enemy by pretending the injury was caused by a mutual enemy. The third is to simply falsify the cause of injury so it looks as though it was not self-inflicted.*

### Three Kingdoms Period: The Battle of the Red Cliffs

Note: The following was compiled and adapted from a number of sources.<sup>355</sup>

*Following the breakup of the Han Empire [in 220], three kingdoms with their generals battled for supremacy. The story begins when Cao Cao of Wei in the north started a campaign aimed at wiping out all opposition in southern China. As his massive army said to be 800,000 (but more likely 220,000 of whom 70,000 were impressed) conquered Jing Province (covering present-day Hubei and Hunan) and was closing in on Sun Quan in the south of Chu, the latter’s court was divided upon the issue of whether to surrender or resist.*

*Sun Quan consulted Zhou Yu, who replied: “Although Cao Cao pretends to be a minister of the Han Dynasty, he is actually a thief who is attempting to steal the empire from Han. My lord, with your brilliant talent and your father and brother’s military prowess, you have ruled and pacified Eastern Wu. The territory stretches thousands of li, the soldiers are well trained, brilliant advisors of great talents are at your disposal. It*

<sup>354</sup> Peter Shotwell; *Beginning Go*; Tuttle; 2008; cover illustration

<sup>355</sup> Luo; *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*; Chen; *Records of the Three Kingdoms*; <http://www.1155815.com/english/cultures/200804/1078.html>; [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhou\\_Yu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhou_Yu); [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kan\\_Ze](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kan_Ze) (Chen c. 280:54.1262–63); Eikenberry 1994:60; de Crespigny 2007:239). [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_fictitious\\_stories\\_in\\_Romance\\_of\\_the\\_Three\\_Kingdoms#Huang\\_Gai.27s\\_self-torture\\_ruse](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_fictitious_stories_in_Romance_of_the_Three_Kingdoms#Huang_Gai.27s_self-torture_ruse) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Red\\_Cliffs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Red_Cliffs)



*is the time to get rid of Cao Cao and restore the Han Dynasty. Cao Cao has come down south and presented himself as an opportunity for you, my lord. Now I will analyse for you the dire situation Cao Cao has placed himself into: Even if the north has been completely unified, can Cao Cao's ground based army fight against our superior navy and marines? The truth is that the north has not been completely pacified. Ma Chao will remain a thorn in Cao Cao's flesh. Cao Cao's superior cavalry is useless against the mountainous and watery terrain of the south. Winter is upon us, and yet Cao Cao's large army has to depend on a long supply line halfway across China. Cao Cao's army are mainly composed of northerners, and they are not used to the environment of the south, thus they will easily become sick with tropical diseases. With all of these problems, I promise you that with 30,000 men, I can easily defeat him."*

*Greatly relieved, Sun Quan decided to resist Cao Cao's invasion.*

*. . .*

*After the two armies with their fleets of boats faced each other across the Yangtze River, the great strategist Zhuge Liang visited Sun Quan's camp to assist Zhou Yu. However, Zhou Yu, as described in Strategy 12, mistrusted and was jealous of Zhuge Liang, so he ordered him to perform the Herculean task of making 100,000 arrows which Zhuge completed the next day.*

*On the other side of the river, Cao Cao's advisor Pang Tong suggested a plan to make up for his army's inexperience with naval warfare—they had had only a few days of drill—and their other weaknesses. This was to link Cao Cao's battleships together with heavy iron chains so as to make them more stable and easier to manage and also to reduce the dangers of seasickness from the excessive rocking of the boats.*

*Observing Cao Cao's linking of the boats, Zhou Yu was thinking hard in his tent when Huang Gai came in. He suggested attacking with fire. "Well, it's exactly what I mean to do," said Zhou Yu. "That's why I'm keeping those two spies to convey false information to Cao's camp. But I need a man to play the same game for us." Huang Gai said he was willing to do it. They decided to carry out the trick of being flogged to win the enemy's confidence.*

*The next day Zhou Yu convened a general assembly of his commanders outside his tent. He ordered the commanders to take three months rations and prepare to defend their line. Huang Gai came forward and said: "We don't need three months. If not, we'd better throw down our weapons and sue for peace."*

*Zhou Yu exploded in fury. "I bear our lord's mandate," he cried, "to lead our troops to destroy Cao Cao. How dare you weaken our morale? Remove him and execute him!"*

*Huang Gai said proudly, "I have served the Southland through three successive reigns. Where do the likes of you come from?"*

*The entire assembly got on their knees to intercede for Huang Gai. Zhou Yu said at last: "In consideration for the commanders' views, I shall not kill you. Give him one hundred strokes across the back!"*

*Huang Gai was forced facedown to the ground. Not yet at fifty blows of the rod, his skin was broken and his oozing flesh was crossed with welts. He fainted several times.*

*After he recovered, he wrote an angry letter to Cao Cao describing the unjustness of his torture and offered to defect with his men. "Look for a squadron of mengchong with blue-green flags at the bow," he wrote. "That will be us."*



*A mengchong—a small leather-covered battle boat*

*His friend Kan Ze disguised himself as a fisherman, crossed the river and delivered the letter.*

*Initially, after Cao Cao read Huang Gai's letter, he saw through the plan and ordered Kan Ze to be executed. However, Kan Ze remained calm and broke into laughter, prompting Cao Cao to question him. With his glib tongue, Kan Ze managed to convince Cao Cao that Huang Gai's defection was real.*

*Also Cai Zhong and Cai He, the two spies planted by Cao Cao in Zhou Yu's camp, confirmed Huang Gai's account that he was flogged on Zhou Yu's orders.*

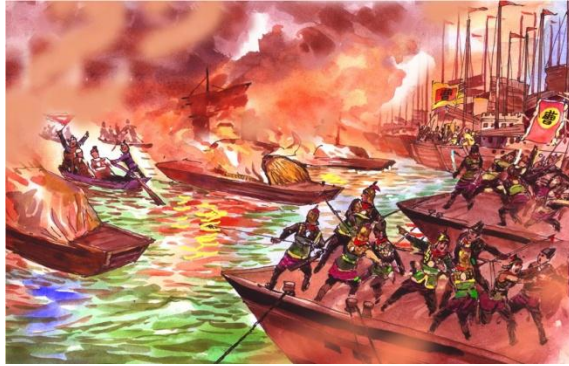
*After all preparations for the fire attack on Cao Cao's fleet had been made by filling the many mengchong with reeds, kindling and straw soaked with fatty oil.*

*However, Zhou Yu suddenly realized that in order for his plan to succeed, the wind must blow from southeast or else his own fleet would catch fire. He saw that the wind was blowing from the northwest and vomited blood, fainted, and became ill. Zhuge Liang visited him and pointed out the root cause of Zhou Yu's "illness". He claimed that he knew Taoist magical arts and had the ability to change the wind direction. An altar was set up and Zhuge Liang performed rituals there for several days until the southeast wind started blowing as night fell.*

*Hours later, Huang Gai's "defecting" squadron approached the midpoint of the river, and the sailors applied fire to the ships before taking to small boats to escape. The unmanned fire ships, carried by the southeastern wind, sped towards Cao Cao's fleet and set it ablaze.*

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<sup>356</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Red\\_Cliffs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Red_Cliffs)



357

*Within a short time smoke and flames stretched across the sky, and a large number of men and horses either burned to death or drowned as the fires spread to Cao Cao's camp.*

*Following the initial shock, Zhou Yu and the allies led a lightly armed force to capitalize on the assault. The northern army was thrown into confusion and was utterly defeated. Seeing the situation was hopeless, Cao Cao issued a general order of retreat and destroyed a number of his remaining ships before withdrawing*

*Cao Cao's army then attempted a retreat along Huarong Road, including a long stretch passing through marshlands north of Dongting Lake. Heavy rains had reduced the track to a thick mire, making the road so treacherous that many of the often sick soldiers had to carry bundles of grass on their backs and use them to fill the road, to allow the horsemen to cross. Many of these soldiers drowned in the mud or were trampled to death in the effort. To the misery of Cao Cao's army, the allies, led by Zhou Yu and Liu Bei, gave chase over land and water and thus, combined with famine and disease, this decimated Cao Cao's remaining forces.*

*As for Zhuge Liang, he left immediately after the wind started blowing as he knew that Zhou Yu would send his men to kill him because Zhou Yu would think he had magical Daoist powers that would ultimately hurt his lord. As Zhuge Liang expected, Zhou Yu did send Ding Feng and Xu Sheng to do this, but Zhuge had already fled on a vessel commanded by Zhao Yun.*

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<sup>357</sup> [http://blessedfool.blogspot.com/2011\\_04\\_01\\_archive.html](http://blessedfool.blogspot.com/2011_04_01_archive.html)



### *The Battle of the Red Cliffs*

Note: Following the non-existence of Zhuge Liang's arrow borrowing incident in Strategy 12 and the non-existence of his lute playing in Strategy 32, the *Romance* also veers off from the *Records of the Three Kingdoms* in these passages. Chen Shou did note that Cao Cao's ships were linked but there was no self-torture—Huang Gai simply appeared to be surrendering along with a small fleet of 10 *mengchong* which were then set afire. Also, there is no mention of Pang Tong, Kan Ze or Zhuge Liang's ritual summoning of the Eastern Wind.<sup>359</sup>

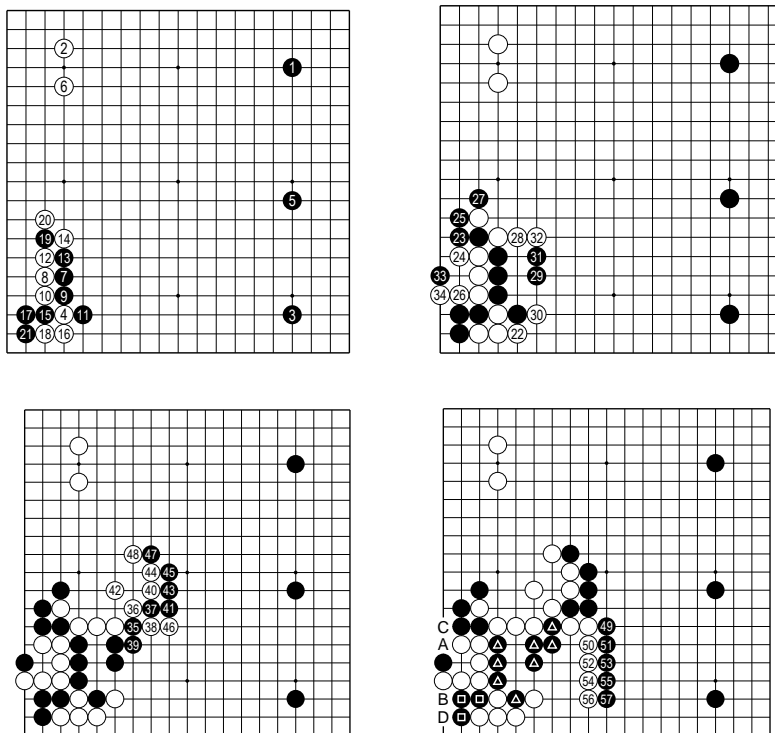
### **Advice for Beginners**

Learn the art of really big sacrifices.

<sup>358</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Red\\_Cliffs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Red_Cliffs)

<sup>359</sup> See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romance\\_of\\_the\\_Three\\_Kingdoms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romance_of_the_Three_Kingdoms)

## For Advanced Players



The great Cho Chikun 9-*dan* plays Black against Takagi Shichi 8-*dan* in 1978. The square-marked stones are the first sacrifice since *A* to *D* can be played at any time. Next, he boldly sacrifices the triangle-marked stones with Black 49 to Black 57, thereby creating a "Great Wall" of influence in conjunction with his stones on the right.<sup>360</sup>

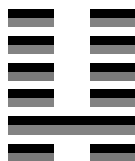
## 35. The Interwoven Stratagems

*Different stratagems can be applied simultaneously or one after another as in a chain. In either case, however, if one of the interlocking links fails, the chain breaks and the whole scheme can fall apart.*

The 35<sup>th</sup> Strategy has been linked to the fifth line of Hexagram 7, "The Army," the closest of the *Zhouyi* and *Yijing*'s approach to military and strategic thinking. In turn, that hexagram has been linked to Hexagram 6, "Conflict." However, it is difficult, at least in English, to see the connection.

As mentioned previously, the Army Hexagram was commented on in the original *Zhouyi* and later, by the Han and their successors in the *Yijing*, who changed the meaning. Parts of both interpretations are given.

<sup>360</sup> *Go World*; Ishi Press; Jan-Feb 1979; no. 11; p. 40 Cho lost the game, however.



Richard Rutt wrote about Hexagram Seven as it appeared in *Guoyu*—speeches that were given in the Warring States period about eight Spring and Autumn period states which were compiled in the early Western Han [206 BC-9]) as they were interpreted by Gao Heng (1900-1986). Gao was a Manchurian who began teaching the *Zhouyi* in the 1930s in Canton and drew on philology, paleography and ancient literature to produce the only full commentary on the text.

*Hexagram 7: SHI*

*Hexagram 19: LIN*

*Oracle: Hexagram 7 Base Line:*

*The army moves according to orders.  
If they are not properly observed, disaster ensues.*

*Reconstructed xiang [i.e. "ritual" or "changeable"] numbers:  
55 - 43 = 12*

*The earldom of Zheng was a small buffer state between the great states of Jin to the north and Chu to the south, both of which were trying to control it. Chu was again on the move, and Jin sent troops to relieve Zheng. Xian Gu, second-in-command of the centre army of Jin, rashly crossed the Yellow River, contrary to his superior's decision.*

*Xun Shou, a staff officer of the third army of Jin, said, "This army is in danger. Here we have what is described by Zhouyi in the line of Shi (Hexagram 7) that changes to make Lin (Hexagram 19), where it says: An army proceeds according to orders, if they are not properly observed, disaster ensues. Discipline in action ensures success; otherwise there is failure. A divided army is weakened.*

*"When a stream (the lower trigram in Hexagram 7) is blocked, it collects in a pool of still water (the lower trigram in Hexagram 19). There are regulations, but everyone does as he will (i.e. the stream of concerted action cannot flow). Hence the warning about orders that are not properly observed. The orders come to nothing, like a pool that soaks away and dries out. Unless it is repaired, disaster will follow.*

*"Lin means 'coming to the brink' and is applied to work that is not carried through. The commander's orders have been disobeyed and we are most emphatically on the brink and in danger of not carrying the matter through. This tells us that an encounter now would mean defeat for us. Xian Gu will be responsible. Even if he escapes and returns home, he will be in dire trouble."*

*After further discussion, the rest of the army followed Xian Gu's section across the river, starting the train of events that led to the battle of Bi, in which Jin was defeated. Xian Gu survived the battle, returned to Jin, and was executed eighteen months later.*

*Divination is not mentioned: Zhouyi is appealed to as a moral authority. The constituent trigrams are used as a parable.*<sup>361</sup>

Rutt also translated Gao's comments on the Army Hexagram. The methods of casting the yarrow sticks are highly complex and partially unknown so only the text is given.

Shi "Army"

*Augury auspicious for a great man.  
NO MISFORTUNE.*

*Base (6) 1: The troops move off to battle bound,  
encouraged by the pitchpipes' sound.*

*Not good.*

*DISASTROUS.*

*(9) 2: Being among the troops.*

*AUSPICIOUS.  
NO MISFORTUNE.  
The king gives orders  
several times.*

*(6) 3: Some of the troops will cart the corpse.*

*DISASTROUS.*

*(6) 4: Encamped the troops stay  
to the left hand away.*

*NO MISFORTUNE.*

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<sup>361</sup> Rutt; pp. 185-6. In this passage, the methods of selecting the oracles is not clear since in the *Zuo Commentary* and according to the Nanjing rules, . . . *all the oracles are hexagram statements—none are line statements—and all involve the number 8 or 7.* He says that this is an unsolved problem. . . . *The interpretation of oracles, however, resembles the methods used in the Zuo Commentary stories.* Rutt; p. 198

6) 5: *There will be game for the hunt.*

*Favorable for  
interrogating captives.*

*NO MISFORTUNE.*

*"An elder son commands the troops,  
a younger son will cart the corpse."*

*Augury of DISASTER.*

*Top (6): A great prince has a mandate  
to found a state and a lineage.*

*Not for use with small men* <sup>362</sup>

Rutt's comments:

*(1) The indication seems to imply that if there is anything wrong with the music of the pitchpipes [or in ordered ranks in another interpretation of Yi lu] when an army sets out, that is a bad omen for the battle. . . .*

*Gao . . . takes the whole sentence to mean "An army must set off in good order, or even if it is strong, there will a disaster.*

*(2) Gao says the orders were rewards and promotions.*

*(3 and 5) Carting or carrying corpses could mean clearing the field at the end of a battle, but the expression used here also appears in Chuci (poems probably written in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC) where it is said that at the battle of Mu, where the Zhou army finally defeated Shang King Wu had the corpse of King Wen, (his father and the forefather of the Zhou dynasty . . .) borne into the battle. Some commentators have thought that it was not the corpse but the spirit tablet that was carried . . .*

*(4) The left hand may mean the east or the left bank of a river.*

*(5) There was a custom of conducting a hunt after victory in battle. Otherwise there may be reference here to collecting prisoners and cutting off ears. . . .*

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<sup>362</sup> Rutt; p. 230



*Prisoners due to be executed were first interrogated in a semblance of judicial procedure or 'war trial' before they were sentenced. This is mentioned in Ode 168.6:*

*. . . we have brought prisoners for questioning, caught the chieftains.*

*Also Ode 178.4:*

*. . . Fangshu was in command. He brought many prisoners for questioning.*

*Tian meaning "hunt" is also used in 32:4, 40:2 and 57:4. Ode 180 gives a lively description of hunting on auspicious days for deer, boar and rhinoceros, with a subsequent banquet for guests. . . .*

*(Top) No doubt this oracle is a reference to the establishment of the Zhou dynasty after victory at the field of Mu.* <sup>363</sup>

These passages can be compared with the Fifth Line of the Seventh Hexagram of the *Yijing* as the Western world knows it today, as mentioned, after nearly two thousand years of re-interpretations that followed the original work of the precocious Wang Bi (226-249) in the years following the demise of the Han dynasty. Note how young he was when he died.

The literal translation of the Chinese wording is given first. This is followed by the English translation from the German rendering of Richard Wilhelm (1873-1930) that followed decades of his association with the remaining classically-trained *literati* before they disappeared from history.

六 liù : six

五 wǔ : five

田 tián : (surname); field; farm

有 yǒu : to have; there is; there are; to exist; to be

禽 qín : birds; fowl

利 lì : advantage; benefit; profit; sharp

執 zhí : execute (a plan); grasp

言 yán : to speak; to say; talk

無 wú : not to have; no; none; not; to lack

咎 jiù : blame

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<sup>363</sup> Rutt; pp. 299-300

長 zhǎng : chief; head; elder; to grow; to develop

子 zǐ : (noun suff.)

帥 shuài : commander-in-chief; to command

師 shī : a division (milit.)

弟 dì : younger brother

子 zǐ : child

輿 yú : carriage; sedan chair

尸 shī : corpse

貞 zhēn : chaste

凶 xiōng : fierce; terrible; ominous<sup>364</sup>

*Six in the fifth place means:*

*There is game in the field.*

*It furthers one to catch it.*

*Without blame.*

*Let the eldest lead the army.*

*The younger transports corpses;*

*Then perseverance brings misfortune.*

The Commentary on the Fifth Line:

*Six in the fifth place means: There is game in the field—it has left its usual haunts in the forest and is devastating the fields. This points to an enemy invasion. Energetic combat and punishment are here thoroughly justified, but they must not degenerate into a wild melee in which everyone fends for himself. Despite the greatest degree of perseverance and bravery, this would lead to misfortune. The army must be directed by an experienced leader. It is a matter of waging war, not of permitting the mob to slaughter all who fall into their hands; if they do, defeat will be the result, and despite all perseverance there is danger of misfortune.*

And the Interpretation:

### **Shih /The Army**

*Above K'UN THE RECEPTIVE, EARTH*

*Below K'AN THE ABYSMAL, WATER*

*This hexagram is made up of the trigrams K'an, water, and K'un, earth, and thus it symbolizes the ground water stored up in the earth. In the same way military strength is stored up in the mass of the people—invisible in times of peace but always*

<sup>364</sup> <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?l=36ji&no=35>

*ready for use as a source of power. The attributes of the two trigrams are danger inside and obedience outside. This points to the nature of an army, which at the core is dangerous, while discipline and obedience must prevail outside.*

*Of the individual lines, the one that controls the hexagram is the strong nine in the second place, to which the other lines, all yielding, are subordinate. This line indicates a commander, because it stands in the middle of one of the two trigrams. But since it is in the lower rather than the upper trigram, it represents not the ruler but the efficient general, who maintains obedience in the army by his authority.*<sup>365</sup>

### **Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279): The Battle of Shunchang**

*1127 AD marked the fall of the Northern Song dynasty to the invading Jin forces and the formation of the Southern Song under Emperor Gaozong who then ruled for 35 years. However, rather than vigorously trying to retake his former territories, the emperor adopted a policy of reconciliation. After a peace treaty was signed in 1139 AD in which Song became a tributary state of Jin, he sent General Liu Qi north with 40,000 men in boats to proceed up river on the tributaries of the Yangtze to occupy the city of Bianliang. However, as they approached Shunchang, they heard that the Jin had torn up the treaty and had captured Bianliang. They also heard that Wuzhu, the Jin commander-in-chief, after strengthening the defenses of Bianliang, had dispatched some troops to march east toward Shunchang. Finding there was adequate food, Liu Qi, citing his duty, decided to defend the city and threatened to decapitate any of those who wanted to meekly return south.*

*After burning the boats, he put his family in a temple and piled firewood against the gate, ordering that if the defense was lost, they should be burned to protect their honor. Repairing the dilapidated defense works with cart wheels, planks and anything else that would serve, he also moved several thousand villagers who lived outside the walls into the city and burned their houses in order that the Jin would have to camp in the open. All this put the troops into the mood to fight.*

*When the first of the Jin arrived, Liu Qi surprised them with an ambush and captured two officers who were forced to reveal that a Jin general had stationed troops 30 li away. These were quickly attacked in a surprise maneuver and many were killed.*

*Next, after the main body of Jin troops arrived, Liu seemingly rashly opened the gates. Suspicious, the Jin approached but did not enter and then they were hit by a barrage of powerful crossbow arrows. In their retreat, Liu Qi had positioned a surprise force across the Ying river and when the Jin tried to cross, they were met by more arrows and many of them drowned.*

*Next, a lightning storm provided the background for an attack on a Jin camp by black-clothed soldiers who suddenly leaped up to fight every time the bolts flashed.*

*These defeats angered Wuzhu and he left Bianliang with a large force of infantry and cavalry. Arriving at Shunchang, he berated his officers and declared he would take*

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<sup>365</sup> <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?lang=en&l=Yijing&no=7>

*the city with "the tip of his boot!" But the officers replied that these men of Song were different than those they had fought in the past.*

*They certainly were. Sending an envoy, Liu Qi surprisingly challenged Wuzhu to a "real fight" before the town walls and even built a series of floating bridges over the Ying "so Wuzhu wouldn't be afraid to cross the river again." Liu Qi added that he hoped to see him the next day. An enraged Wuzhu promised to his men that he and they would take the city before sunset tomorrow.*

*Early the next morning Wuzhu marched his men twenty li in the early morning—not a very long distance—and crossed the bridges after checking for booby traps. The day was hot, however, and soon the men were drinking from the river and the horses were grazing on the grass, all of which had been poisoned and so many became sick to their stomachs. The orders were then that the rest of the men were forbidden to drink and had to go without water as they attacked under the scorching sun. However, with diminished strength and low morale, their assaults had little effect while Liu Qi's fought in relays, alternating defending the city gates and retiring to cool shelters to refresh themselves.*

*Finally the sun was overhead and, since the best Jin troops were dressed in metal armor, Liu Qi had one put out on the ground. When it was scalding to his touch, he decided it was time to attack.*

*Some officers felt that they should attack the main body, but Liu Qi said it was better to go after Wuzhu's own force. Once it was defeated, the rest of the army would be unable to fight back.*

*First he had a few hundred men march out of the western gate waving flags, beating drums and shouting loud battle cries. Then he sent 5,000 picked troops out of the southern gate, many of them carrying long axes and bamboo tubes filled with cooked peas. They charged straight at Wuzhu's forces which consisted of two wings of his crack 3,000 strong Nuzhen cavalrymen but also a central body of mostly captured Han foot soldiers who had been forced to fight. In previous battles, Wuzhu had used this central body to soften up the Song advances and then closed on them in a pincer formation with his cavalry. This had worked because most of the Song armies were infantry. Today, however, with his troops suffering from the heat and lack of water, this strategy had not worked, so he ordered his cavalry in early. At this, the men of Song opened the bamboo tubes and scattered out the cooked peas. Attracted by the fragrance of the peas, some horses stopped to eat which began to create chaos and confusion as other horses tripped over the tubes. Thus, the cavalry formation was broken up and the Song axmen went after the legs of the horses. Dressed in heavy armor, once down, the Nuzhen failed to get up and were finished off.*

*After the Jin army fled the battlefield and Wuzhu ordered a retreat to Bianliang, he found he had lost more than 70% of his cavalry so further hostilities were futile. However, Emperor Gaozong, anxious to preserve the peace after his fashion, ordered Liu Qi to withdraw from Shunchang and return to Song territory.<sup>366</sup>*

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<sup>366</sup> Adapted from Sun; pp. 320-7

## Advice for Beginners

The art of combining the correct order of *gote* and *sente* moves, especially in the endgame.

### 36. Run Away

This Strategy has been linked to the fourth line of the Army Hexagram.

六 *liù* : six

四 *sì* : four

師 *shī* : a *division* (*milit.*)

左 *zuǒ* : left

次 *cì* : *nth*; *number* (of *times*); *order*; *sequence*; *next*; *second(ary)*; (*measure word*)

無 *wú* : -*less*; not to *have*; no; *none*; not; to *lack*; un-

咎 *jiù* : *blame*<sup>367</sup>

*Six in the fourth place means:*

*The army retreats. No blame.*

*In the face of a superior enemy, with whom it would be hopeless to engage in battle, an orderly retreat is the only correct procedure, because it will save the army from defeat and disintegration. It is by no means a sign of courage or strength to insist upon engaging in a hopeless struggle regardless of circumstances.*<sup>368</sup>

### Spring and Autumn Period: The Art of Retreat at the Battle of Chengpu

A somewhat lengthy prelude is necessary to capture the intricate background of this great battle of 632 BC when Jin and Chu contended with each other for domination of the great Central Plain of China, (as was introduced in Strategy 31 "The Beauty Trap").

In this conflict, the largest of the Spring and Autumn period, the advice of 36<sup>th</sup> Strategy was used by the opposing sides, Jin and Chu, in three different ways, all of which were "unorthodox," although this was, of course, long before the concept appeared in the *Sunzi bingfa* and afterwards in the Strategies. The first use was deliberate, the second was part of a feint, and the third was a peaceful one that was highly unusual for those bellicose times.

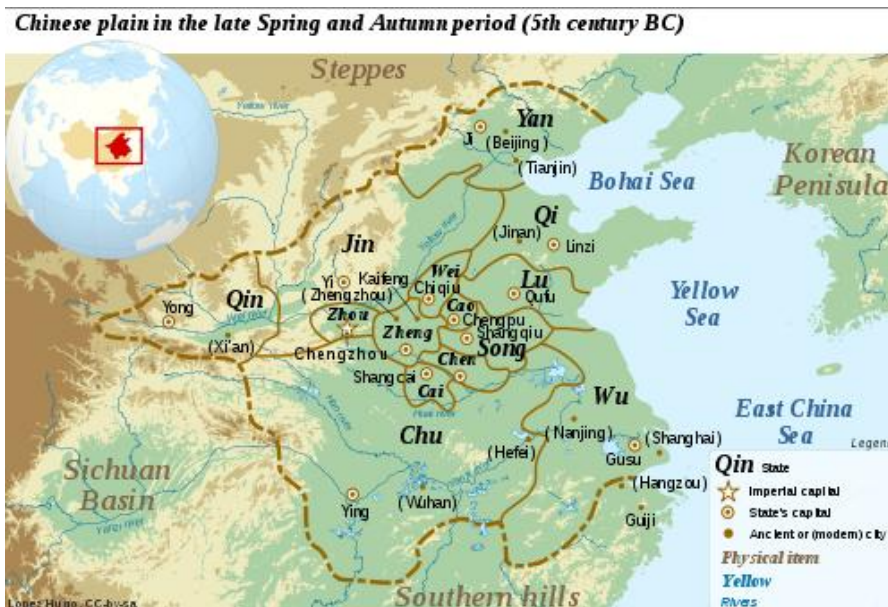
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<sup>367</sup> <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?lang=en&l=Yijing&no=7>

<sup>368</sup> <http://wengu.tartarie.com/wg/wengu.php?lang=en&l=Yijing&no=7>

A portion of this great battle was described in Strategy 20, “Muddy the Waters to Catch the Fish,” and what follows is an amalgamation and adaptation of several accounts and interpolations, since the original Chinese account in the *Zuozhuan* was only 167 characters.<sup>369</sup>

Jin was the leader of several more “sinified” (i.e. “civilized”) states and Chu led the less sinified (i.e. “barbarian, or at least “different”) southern states. Between them were a host of smaller states which made for a series of constantly shifting alliances, conquests and defeats, since the further they were away from their protector, the more vulnerable and capable of manipulation they were. Chengpu was the first great battle in this protracted conflict that was to last for centuries as this fifth century map indicates:



*Following an inheritance dispute and 19 years of exile—including a stay at the palace of the king of Chu who had been friendly with him—the ascension of Chong Er (“Double Ears”) who became Duke Wen of Jin in 636 BC with the assistance of Qin began a splendid new era for the state.*<sup>371</sup>

<sup>369</sup> Most of the content is from Kierman; pp. 17-56 as are the diagrams. Other material comes from the Wikipedia article on the battle and several commentaries in the topic “Cheng Pu Battle” of the China History Forum: <http://www.chinahistoryforum.com/index.php?/topic/4054-the-battle-of-cheng-pu-632-bc/>

<sup>370</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spring\\_and\\_Autumn\\_period](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spring_and_Autumn_period)

<sup>371</sup> According to some reports, apparently not wishing to rule Jin, Chong Er refused the entreaties of its leaders so they responded by using the methods of the first Strategy, “Fool the Emperor and Cross the Sea” (also long before it had been formulated), by getting him drunk and carrying him off to Jin. Once in Jin, he became Duke Wen, cast by future (Confucian) historians as kind and benevolent, without flaws, unlike Zi Yu, his rival in Chu, who is portrayed as willful and irrationally bent on destroying the Duke.

*Instituting many reforms, the Duke was a capable leader who had attracted many talented companions during his long roaming exile through many states and these became his most trusted aides. Raising the banner of "Honoring the King and Defending Against the Barbarians," the prestige of the state rose greatly and the Son of Heaven (King Xiang of the impotent Eastern Zhou dynasty, who was later restored after a coup by the Duke) was extremely grateful for the alliance.*

*But this attracted anger from Chu which had been steadily expanding northward, so, following Sunzi's (later) advice to "Attack the enemy's alliances before going to war," Duke Wen began a policy of isolating it by befriending Qin. Furthermore, in 634 BC, the state of Song declared the severance of ties to Chu and formed bonds with Jin instead. In 633 BC, Chu finally decided to act. King Cheng of Chu led the armies of Chu, Chen, Cai, Zheng and Xu and besieged the capital of Song at Shang Qiu, with the result that Song requested aid from Jin.*

*The Dafu (a feudal rank) of Jin, Xian Zhen (the Duke's chief strategist), was a strong proponent for the war. He said: "This war would be the chance to repay the kindness of Marquis Xiang of Song, who treated Duke Wen with great hospitality during his exile as well as establishing our hegemony amongst the feudal lords."*

*Dafu Hu Yan suggested: "We should first attack the states of Cao and Wei, forcing Chu to help these states militarily. Not only could we relieve the siege of Shang Qiu, we could also allow the state of Qi to reclaim their fortress of Gu which was occupied by the Chu."*

*Thus, Duke Wen started training his forces, and increased the Jin military to three armies, appointing marshals and vice marshals of each army. Two nobles became his charioteer and chariot companion.*

*In the first month of 632 BC Duke Wen led his army east, taking the states of Wu and Lu that, allied with Chu, refused to grant military access. After forging an alliance with Marquis Zhao of Qi, they marched against Wei and occupied it. From that the capital of Cao at Tao Qiu was besieged. By the 12th day of the third month the fortress was taken and Marquis Gong of Cao was captured (The marquis had, together with his harem, previously insulted the Duke when he was the peripatetic Chong Er by peeking at him bathing). But the Chu remained at Shang Qiu and pressed their assaults further.*

*To aggravate Chu further, Duke Wen gave the lands of Cao and Wei to Song and requested Qi and Qin to ask Chu to lift the siege of Shang Qiu. However, the Chu marshal Zi Yu (Cheng Decheng) angrily refused them, having been aggravated by the Duke's gifts to Song. (He had previously wanted to kill the Duke while he resided in Chu, however the king had rebuffed him). The emissaries of Qi and Qin returned insulted and angry and these two states agreed to stand by the side of Jin in the upcoming battle.*

*However, King Cheng of Chu knew of Duke Wen's competence well enough so he decided to avoid a direct confrontation and retreated to Shen Yi in Chu. But Zi Yu refused to retreat, and was eager to meet the Duke's forces. He submitted a declaration to the king, saying that he would face the Jin in battle, and if defeated he would fall upon his sword. King Cheng had mixed feelings about his commander, but nonetheless*



*sent the troops of Xi Guang, Dong Gong and Ruo Ao with about 6000 men and 180 chariots to reinforce Xi's troops.*

*Duke Wen saw that his plans of aggravation had not worked to the fullest, and so he promised to reestablish the states of Cao and Wei if these two states would sever their ties to Chu. This they did, and Zi Yu was furious and lifted the siege at Shang Qiu and marched forth to meet Duke Wen's forces stationed at Cao.*

*However, instead of meeting him at battle directly, the Duke ordered his troops to retreat in three marches for a total of 90 li (about 75 miles). Ostensibly, this was to fulfill a pledge he had made to King Cheng of Chu in return for his kindness, "should there ever be hostilities between us." However, it was likely there were other considerations:*

*1) The Chu forces were in high spirits.*

*2) This brought Chu even further into unfriendly territory.*

*3) It made the battle take place on a site not of Chu's choosing.*

*4) It enabled Jin to claim the moral high ground. Should Chu opt to pursue, it would reflect poorly on them, indicating their arrogance, their failure to pursue a better solution and undermining their course of action as a just one which was important in those times.*

*5) But perhaps most important of all, as things developed, the area he aimed for, (which he knew well), while being largely featureless, had trees, dusty soil and, at least according to one analysis, Yuxin, an abandoned temple probably on a hill and useful for observation.*

*All of these factors would be put to use.*

*On the other hand, Zi Yu was confident of the strength of the army he led and dismissed any significance or value to the unilateral retreat made by the Jin and ordered his army to give chase and the two met at Chengpu, on the border of Wei and Cao, although the exact location is unknown. Following an analysis of dreams and a song sung by the Jin troops and several rounds of persuasion, a letter came from Zi Yu inviting combat: "I beg to try my strength with your lordship's men, while you lean upon your chariot rail and watch them get into formation and prepare for battle." The Duke replied, "Look well to your chariots and reverence your lord's affairs for I shall see you at the crack of dawn."*

*The Jin army had 700 chariots, 52,500 armored infantry, and, together with the allied troops from the states of Qin, Qi and Song, was some 90,000 strong. These forces were divided into 3 divisions each.*

*The Duke led the Center Army whose right side consisted of an elite group of the sons of nobles and the sons of his traveling companions called the Kung Su that would later split off from the main Central Army with devastating effects. He had branches cut*



from the trees in the area to tie to the backs of chariots, and then he dressed the chariot horses of the Lower Army in tiger skins (this was before soldiers rode horses in barbarian style).



372

As for the forces of Chu, including their allies from the states of Chen, Cai, Zheng and Xu, their exact size is unknown but they probably enjoyed a numerical advantage. However only a third of them were natives of Chu.

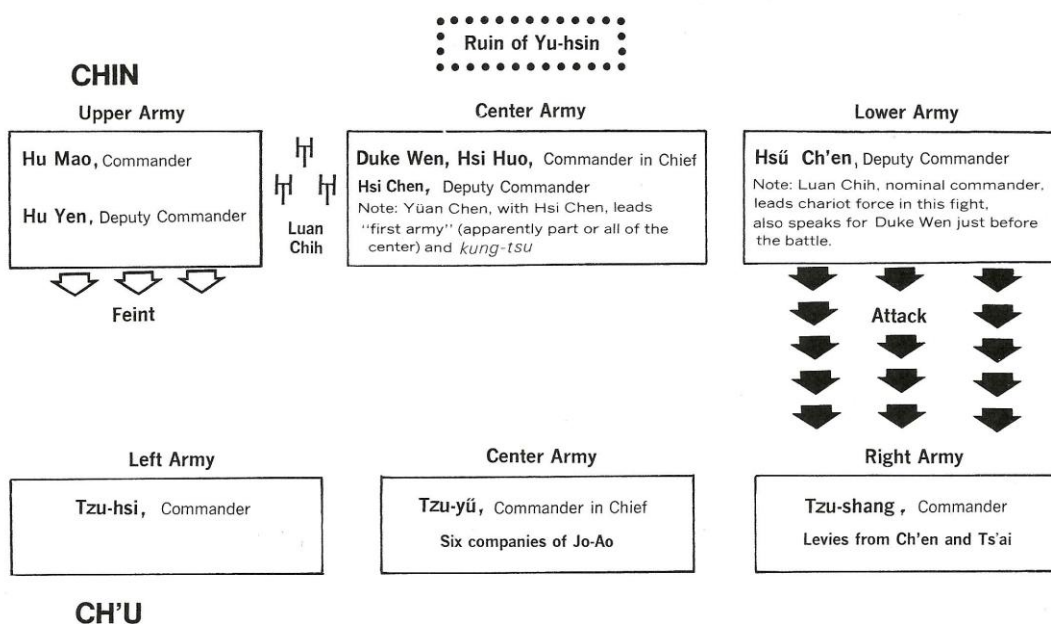
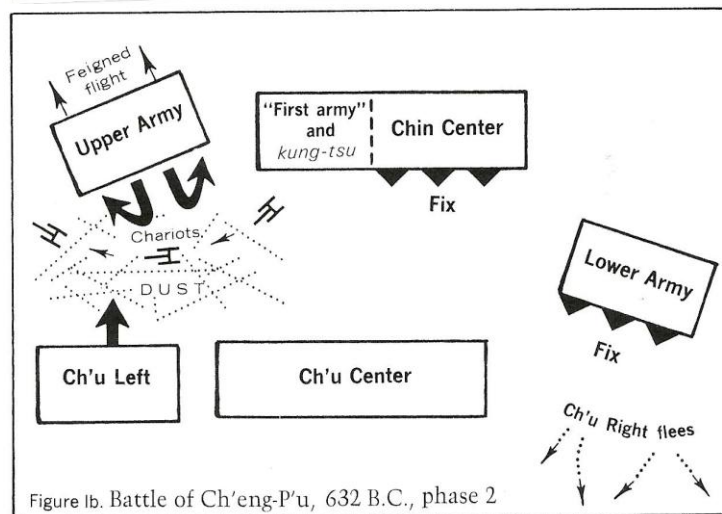
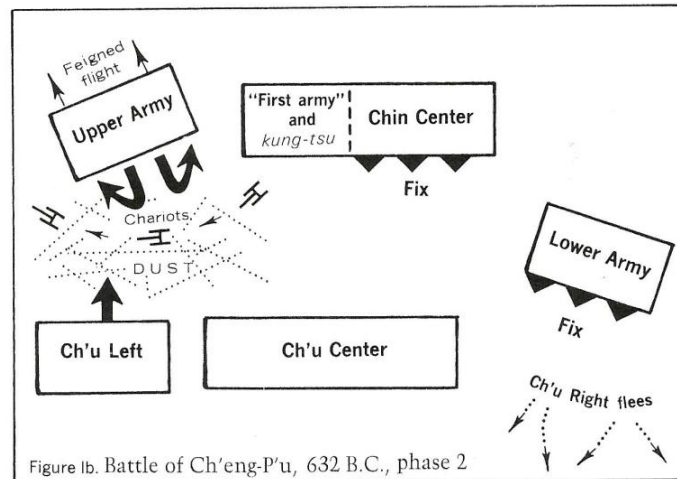


Figure 1a. Battle of Ch'eng-P'u, 632 B.C., Order of battle and phase 1

At dawn on April 4, 632 BC the battle began with the chariot race described in Strategy 20. Because they had previous knowledge from deserters of the Chu army, the Jin Lower Army suddenly went up against Chu's Right Army knowing it was composed wholly of troops from the allies Chen and Cai and hence were of dubious loyalty and courage. The tiger skin dressed chariot horses threw the opposing horses into a panic and after a single determined onslaught by the Jin, the Chu Right Army turned and fled.

<sup>372</sup> <http://history.cultural-china.com/en/34History2951.html>



*Next, the Lower Army turned to hold and fix the Chu Center to prevent it from coming to the aid of the Chu Left Army after what was about to happen. An intense whirlwind emanating from a nearby swamp and the convulsing of hot and cold air masses temporarily disrupted the Jin operations but not fatally.*

*Meanwhile, the Upper Army of Jin approached within bow shot, presumably flaunting, and probably took a few casualties before hastily retreating apparently in panic while carrying in disarray the two great banners of the Duke, falsely indicating his presence. All this while, the chariots with the attached branches that had been stationed between the Jin Center and the Lower Army swept across the front of the retreating forces, creating a great dust cloud that covered the movements and the quick regrouping of the apparently fleeing troops.*

*Zi Yu fell for the trick and ordered with drum beats that the commander of his Left Army, made up of the states of Shen and Xi, to pursue Jin's "fleeing" right wing. Their leader, who had been falsely informed that the Jin had lost on the right side, dutifully followed the orders and the troops, eager for booty from the nearby Jin camp, broke ranks while the movement had unwittingly exposed both flanks to the enemy.*

*The Jin Upper Army came out of the dust cloud hitting the left flank and the elite Kung Su peeled off from the Center and attacked the right side while the dust-creating chariots joined in the fray.*

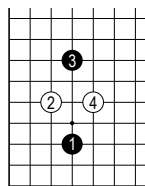
*Meanwhile, the fixed Central Army of the Chu was unable to provide reinforcement as it was blocked by the Jin strike force. Zi Yu could only watch helplessly as his Left Army was destroyed. Without his wings, Chu soon became encircled and cut up into pockets, though his elite force, the Jo-Ao, tried to hold things off. But seeing the great victory, the Duke ordered the troops to stop, saying that, "It is enough that we force the Chu out of Wei and Song. There is no need to kill any more to prevent the harming of the states' relations and dishonor the hospitality granted to me by the king of Chu," and so the defeated army made the long retreat back to Chu unharmed.*

*When Zi Yu reached home, he made a count: 60-70% of the Chu center remained. The left and right were completely shattered, with only 10-20% left. As he had promised his king, in shame he fell on his own sword, while his generals of the Right and Left put themselves into prison carts.*

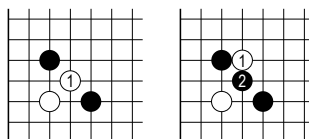
*However, this victory, which can also be seen as a victory of the Yellow River Valley states over the those of the Yangtze River's Valley, only staved off the northward advance of Chu for a generation.*

### Advice for Beginners

When your side is badly losing, there are only three choices remaining: surrender, compromise, or escape. Surrender is complete defeat, compromise is half defeat, but escape is not defeat. As long as you are not defeated, you still have a chance. Another way of looking at this Strategy is to always have a backup plan in case a complicated maneuver fails.



Still another way of looking at it is the proverb,  
"The one-space jump is never bad."



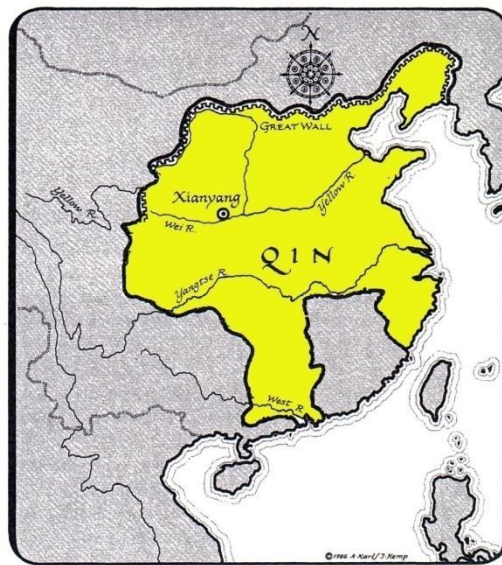
Escaping a double pincer in this way is often best. If it not done, as in the diagram on the right, there is a penalty for not paying attention to the proverb,

"Attaching to an opponent's stone will result in making it stronger because you will become weaker"

In other words, the wisdom of looking for peaceful solutions to turbulent situations is perhaps the first lesson that *weiqi* can teach the beginner.

# CODA

## AN ANTI-STRATEGY: HOW TO LOSE A "WON" GAME BY NOT CHANGING WITH THE CHANGING TIMES—THE FALL OF THE QIN DYNASTY



Qin Dynasty Empire (221–207 B.C.)

373

A.C. Graham wrote:

*The age of the warring states ended quite abruptly in 221 B.C., the final struggle of the seven remaining states ending in a few years with the victory of Ch'in. It was a unique situation; even the legendary Five Emperors before the Hsia, as his advisers told the King of Ch'in, had been suzerains of feudal lords whom they were helpless to control; now "within the four seas everywhere there are commanderies and counties, decrees issue from a single centre, something there has never been since the remotest past, which the Five Emperors never attained." In response to their proposals for a new Imperial title he announced "I shall be First Emperor (Shih-huang-ti), later reigns shall be counted from me, Second, Third, to the 10,000th, the transmission will never end."*

*Instead of declaring like the Chou that Heaven had called him to overthrow his*

<sup>373</sup> <http://qindynasty.blogspot.com/2011/02/map.html>

*unrighteous predecessors, the First Emperor ascribed his victory to the natural course of history according to Tsou Yen's application of the conquest cycle of the Five Potencies, by which Water prevails over the Fire which sustained Chou. Since Water correlates with winter, black, and the number 6, he shifted the New Year to the first of the tenth month, and ordered black robes and banners, and six horses for his chariot. The cosmic cycle justified not only his own power but the black and wintery policies of Legalism already imposed in Ch'in under Duke Hsiao (361-338 B.C.) by the reforms of Lord Shang. "Only a resolute harshness, deciding all things by law, incising and deleting without benevolence, generosity, mildness or righteousness, fits in with the numbers of the Five Potencies."*<sup>374</sup>

Lord Shang wrote:

*When agriculture is the sole source of energy (the single "gate") and warfare is its only outlet, the people will risk mutilation and death ("what they hate") to serve the state. . . . The effective ruler gets the people to "forget their lives for the sake of their superiors" and makes them "delight in war" so that they "act like hungry wolves on seeing meat."*<sup>375</sup>

The policies that resulted from this point of view that were outlined in Part One continued—the collectivization, the rewards and punishments, the system of laws that provided massive units of convict labor and so forth. But now control of these forces was made easier with the standardization and centralization not just of commands and laws, but of weights, measures, coinage, the sizes of pots, writing and even the width of chariot axles (so all could move along the same ruts). Even speculative thought was restricted and all the philosophical books of the contending schools except for Legalist texts were confiscated and access to the royal library (which was unfortunately burned by barbarians in 206 BC) was limited to "qualified" scholars.<sup>376</sup>

However, over-riding all of this, as Mark Lewis commented, was the dictum that:

*. . . the state organized for war, as analyzed in the Book of Lord Shang, . . . must always have another war to fight, another enemy to defeat. Ultimately, war was fought not for gain but for loss, to expend energies and wealth that would otherwise accumulate in the hands of those who, by virtue of their growing prosperity, would come to serve their own interests rather than those of the state.*

*Such a state sucks in more and more resources to be consumed in wars that no longer serve any purpose, save to keep the machine running. . . .*<sup>377</sup>

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<sup>374</sup> Graham; pp. 370-1

<sup>375</sup> Mark Lewis; *The Early China Empires: Qin and Han*; Belknap Press of Harvard University Press; 2007; p. 47

<sup>376</sup> However, there were no books burnings and scholars were not buried alive as is commonly thought.

<sup>377</sup> Lewis (2007); p. 50

In other words,

*. . . the "giant machine for extracting service had become a tool in search of a use.*

*To occupy these conscripts, the Qin state engaged in an orgy of expansion and building that had little logic except employing Warring States institutions that had been rendered obsolete by their own success. Armies were launched on massive, pointless expeditions to the south, north and northeast. Colossal programs [were initiated] to construct roads, a new capital and the First Emperor's tomb [and the Great Wall] . . . Qin wasted its strength—and alienated its newly conquered people—by fighting and expanding when there were no useful worlds to conquer.*<sup>378</sup>

Lewis summed it up while quoting from Sima Qian's *Shi Ji*:

*. . . From the beginning, writers described the First Emperor's restructuring of the world as an attempt to impose his will on Heaven and Earth, a veritable war with nature. Ja Yi describes how the First Emperor "cracked his long whip to drive the universe before him," "flogged the entire world," and "shook the four seas."*

*"He toppled the celebrated walls [that had divided the previous states], killed the local leaders, gathered the weapons of the world into Xiangyang where he melted them down into bells and to cast twelve statues of men in order to weaken the common people. Then he trod upon Mt. Hua as his city wall and used the Yellow River as his moat. Based on this towering wall he gazed down into the fathomless depths and thought that he was secure."*

*The First Emperor whips the world as his chariot, and turns mountains and rivers into his personal defences, just as he used hills and mountain peaks as gates and bases for his palaces.*<sup>379</sup>

Dying in 210 BC, Qin Shihuangdi had lived only 11 years as the First Emperor. Four years after his death, the empire collapsed in 207 BC.

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<sup>378</sup> Lewis (2007); p. 71

<sup>379</sup> Lewis (2006); p. 174