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The Maritime Strategy of China in the Asia-Pacific Region

Origins, Development and Impact

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to examine how and why a continental-oriented China has shifted its maritime strategic orientation and naval force structure from its coast toward the far seas in an era of interdependent international system. Generally, China is an ancient continental land power with an incomplete oceanic awareness. With the transformation after the Cold War of China's grand strategy from landward security to seaward security, maritime security interests have gradually become the most essential part of China's strategic rationale. Undoubtedly, the quest for sea power and sea rights has become Beijing's main maritime strategic issue. Given China's escalating maritime politico-economic-military leverage in the Asia-Pacific region, its desire to become a leading sea power embodying global strategic thinking means that it must expand its maritime strategy by developing its navy and preparing for armed confrontation in terms of international relations realism. Conversely, Beijing's maritime policy leads at the same time towards globalization, which involves multilateralism and strategic coexistence of a more pragmatic kind.

This research analyses Chinese maritime strategy in the Asia-Pacific by asking: 'Whither the Chinese maritime strategy in the ever changing Asia-Pacific security environment since the PRC was established in 1949?' In general**,** contemporary China's national security strategy is closely connected with its maritime strategy and with its comprehensive security plan for its economy, its energy supplies and its sovereignty. According to China's view of its security environment, the traditional territorial scramble is changing from control of the land to the control of territorial waters, of maritime strategic resources, and of critical sea lanes. As a result, maritime economic competition has become a key focus for many nations. Given this, it is understandable that China's maritime expansion from the coast to the high seas is part of its strategic approach. As a consequence, this study asks: 'In order to shape a Sino-centric maritime security environment for China's rising sea power, how has Beijing's approach to maritime strategic expansion shifted from one of military antagonism toward one of strategic coexistence in the region.'

In recent years, Beijing has, purposefully, changed its maritime strategic thinking from Maoist-style coastal defence activities to offshore defence and

ultimately a far sea defence. Importantly, this strategic aspiration is clear in China's recent national defence white papers. According to the 2004 Defence White Paper of China, Beijing clearly acknowledges a shift from China's traditional land power to a maritime power and its priority apropos the building of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) for winning command of the high sea and for conducting strategic counter-strikes. Meanwhile, according to China's 2006 Defence White Paper, Beijing clearly states that China's security concerns energy, resources, finance, information and international shipping routes are mounting. To achieve a comprehensive maritime capacity, the PLAN's mission is urgent. It is to extend China's offshore capabilities and to increase its maritime strategic depth. In the recent 2008 Defence White Paper, Beijing emphasizes that struggles for strategic resources, strategic locations, and strategic dominance have intensified. This implies that the PLA has shifted the focus of ground force operations from regional defence toward trans-regional mobility. This infers that the direction of maritime strategy must shift from offshore defence to far sea defence.

In a few words, maritime strategy is a grand-strategic opportunity, only littoral states are fortunate enough to have. China is one such state. With China's politico-economic-military use of the sea growing in recent years, the natural expansion of its maritime strategic ambitions and long-range power projection capabilities have generated much concern. Regarding the maritime security dilemma in the Asia-Pacific, undeniably, the crux of the problem is whether an emerging maritime China can play the role of a responsible stakeholder there.

Keywords: China's Maritime Strategy, Coastal Defence, Offshore Defence, Far Sea Defence, Maritime Cooperative Security

DECLARATION

This is to certify that

(i) the thesis comprises only my original work towards the Ph.D.,

(ii) due acknowledgment has been made in the text to all other material used,

(iii) the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

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Huang, An-hao (Paul)

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS i
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ii

Chapter 1 Introduction 1

1.1 Context Analysis 3
1.2 Question Statement 11
1.3 Research Proposition 13
1.4 Methodology 15
1.5 Comparison of Relevant Concepts 22
1.6 Definition of Terms 29

Chapter 2 Literature Review 34

2.1 Approaches of Chinese Strategic Studies: Structural Realism vs. Strategic Culture 34
2.2 Chinese Grand Strategy and Sea Power 40
2.3 China's Maritime Strategy and the PLA Navy 44
2.4 Summary 49

PART I ORIGINS 52

Chapter 3 Weltanschauung, Grand National Strategy, Strategic Culture and Nationalism 53

3.1 Chinese *Weltanschauung*: Past and Present 53
3.2 China's Grand National Strategy and Its Rising Sea Power 60
3.3 Chinese Strategic Culture and Military Theory toward the Sea 69
3.4 The Influence of China's Nationalism on Its Maritime Strategic Orientation 80
3.5 Summary 86

PART II DEVELOPMENT 88

Chapter 4 Coastal Defence 90

4.1 Political Analysis: Land-Oriented Grand Strategy and Coastal Defence 91
4.2 Economic Analysis: Maoist Economic Development and Self-Sufficiency 100
4.3 Socio-cultural Analysis: Party/Army Relations and Techno-Nationalism 109
4.4 Military Analysis: Capabilities and Operations of the PLAN 117
4.5 Summary: Strategic Appraisal of China's Coastal Defence 126

Chapter 5 Offshore Defence 129

5.1 Political Analysis: Emerging Sea-oriented Grand Strategy and Maritime Defence 130
5.2 Economic Analysis: China's Ocean Frontier and Its Rising Maritime Economy 140
5.3 Socio-cultural Analysis: Civil-Military Relations, Pragmatic Nationalism and Ocean Consciousness 148
5.4 Military Analysis: Offshore Active Defence, Capabilities and Operations of the PLAN 155
5.5 Summary: Strategic Appraisal of China's Offshore Active Defence 167

Chapter 6 Aspiration for Far Sea Defence 169

6.1 Political Analysis: China's Emerging Strategic Objective of Sea Power Status 170
6.2 Economic Analysis: The Top Strategic Priority of Economic Security 179
6.3 Socio-Cultural Analysis: Maritime Soft Power under China's Charm Offensive 189
6.4 Military Analysis: 'Aircraft-Carrier School' vs. 'Submarine School' 195
6.5 Summary: Appraisal of China's Blue-Water Maritime Strategic Ambition 208

PART III IMPACT 211

Chapter 7 The Impact of China's Expanding Maritime Strategy on Maritime Security in the Asia-Pacific 213

7.1 Determining the Changing Distribution of Regional Strategic Equilibrium 214
7.2 Potential Threat to Regional Maritime Economic Energy Security 223
7.3 Accelerating the Emergence of Potential Regional Navalism 229
7.4 Challenges to Maritime Security Building 238
7.5 Summary 248

Chapter 8 Conclusion 251

8.1 Succeeding Zheng He's Historical Voyages 252
8.2 Expanding China's Maritime Leverage 255

APPENDICES 260
Appendix A: The Map of China's Two-Island Strategy 260
Appendix B: The Location of Paracel and Spratly Islands in the South China Sea 260
Appendix C: The Location of Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands 261

Appendix D: The Map of China's Sea Routes.....261
Appendix E: China's Naval Units.....262
Appendix F: Countries Claiming Ownership in the South China Sea 263

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....264

ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURES

Figure 1: Research Framework of China's Maritime Strategy in the Asia-Pacific 20
Figure 2: China's Foreign Trade—Total Imports and Exports, 1990-2006 .. 183

TABLES

Table 1: Maritime Strategic Choices of China in Different Phases 18
Table 2: The Development of Maoist Economy, 1952-1975 (% growth per year) 103
Table 3: Gross Output Value of Agricultural Production, 1952-1978 (%) ... 104
Table 4: PLA Membership on CCP Central Committee and Politburo (%) 113
Table 5: The Development of Chinese Naval Capabilities for Coastal Defence 122
Table 6: The Comparison of China's Traditional and New Security Concepts 137
Table 7: Chinese Naval Visits Abroad (1985–2006) 139
Table 8: China's GDP and Defence Budget, 1980-1995 (100 million RMB) . 142
Table 9: The PLA Navy Share of Membership in the CCP's Central Committee, 1977-2002 151
Table 10: The Formation of 'Offshore Active Defence' in the 1980s 159
Table 11: The Force Structure of the PLAN for Offshore Defence, 1985-1996 161
Table 12: China's Economy and Defence Expenditure, 2000-2006 181
Table 13: Military Factions of the PLAN from Mao Zedong to Hu Jintao .. 198
Table 14: Numbers of Vessels and Personnel in 2008 and (in 1992) 231

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Finally, I dedicate this Ph.D. thesis to my father and the memory of my mother.

Huang, An-hao (Paul)
Parkville, Melbourne

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAW	Anti-Air Warfare
AEWCS	Airborne Early Warning and Control Systems
ARF	The ASEAN Regional Forum
ARF ISM MS/ISM	The ARF first Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASW	Anti-submarine Warfare
C4ISR	Command, Control, Communications, Computer, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
CBMs	Maritime Confidence-building Measures
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CNP	Comprehensive National Power
CSCAP	Council for Security Co-operation in Asia-Pacific
CSI	The Container Security Initiative
DDG	Guided Missile Destroyer
DMCs	Dangerous Maritime Cargoes
DWT	Dead Weight Tons
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
ELINT	Electronic Intelligence System
ICBM	Inter-continental Ballistics Missile
INS	The Indian Navy
JMSDF	The Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force
LCACs	Air Cushioned Landing Crafts
LCVPs	Vehicle Personnel Landing Crafts
LPD	Landing Platform Dock
LSD	Dock Landing Ship
MCBMs	Military Confidence-building Measures
NFP	Naval Forward Presence

PLA	People's Liberation Army
PLAAF	People's Liberation Army-Air Force
PLAN	People's Liberation Army-Navy
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSI	The Proliferation Security Initiative
RIMPAC	The Biennial Rim of the Pacific Exercise
RMA	Revolution of Military Affairs
RMN	The Malaysian Navy
RMSI	The Regional Maritime Security Initiative
RSN	The Singapore Navy
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SIGINT	Signals Intelligence
SLBM	Submarine-launched Ballistic Missiles
SLOCs	Sea-Lanes of Communication
SSBN	Nuclear-powered Ballistic Missile Submarines
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNCLOS III	The third conference of UNCLOS
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WPNS	Western Pacific Naval Symposium

Chapter 1
Introduction

'Asia-Pacific' is not simply a geographical term used to indicate the Asia-Pacific states on the rim of the Pacific Ocean. It is a vast politico-economic realm and a competitive maritime arena. This realpolitik domain is composed of many state actors, such as the United States, China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Singapore, India and Australia. These all play the game of enclosing territory at sea by developing the capability to project naval power abroad.[1] China is an ancient continental land power with incomplete oceanic consciousness. If it desires to become a leading power embodying global strategic thinking and able to win the game in the Asia-Pacific, it must develop sea power that has advanced maritime technology, that is, a highly developed navy.

Given the priority Chinese leaders have placed on China's long-term economic growth and the acquisition of maritime interests since the 1980s, it is possible to acknowledge how maritime strategic development under Deng Xiaoping (1978-1997) became much more significant than it was during the period of Mao Zedong (1949-1975). The People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) has gradually become a core pillar of China's sea-oriented economic security. Therefore, in the post-Deng era, China's leaders have become even more assertive about the military modernisation of the Chinese navy through the achievement of sophisticated weapons and the acquisition of equipment for maritime security border. There is now an indispensable connection between the build-up of the PLAN and China's national security in the Asia-Pacific. Although China takes the peaceful rise of its economy and military for granted, many Asia-Pacific countries still view China as a major challenge in many areas, such as in politics, the military and security. This has caused a security dilemma in the Asia-Pacific. For many littoral countries of the region, a rising maritime China amounts to growing regional insecurity. Implications include a regional naval arms

[1] Militarily, power projection means the capability to deliver coercive power beyond a state's boundaries. The greater the coercive power that can be delivered, the greater power the state can has. See David M. Lampton, *The Three Faces of Chinese Power: Might, Money, and Minds* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), pp. 54-55.

race, competition for maritime resources, and a struggle for the sovereignty of a number of islands.

Beijing's maritime strategic mission is to protect China's maritime security environment and the sovereignty of its territorial waters. The expansion of its naval force structure has become integral, therefore, to shaping its international status, its regional power and its economic security. With the process of the modernisation of the People's Liberation Army during Deng Xiaoping's era, Beijing changed its maritime strategy from Maoist coastal defence to offshore active defence and ultimately a capacity for a blue-water maritime offence. Thus, the direction of the Chinese maritime strategy has been to build-up of the PLAN from a brown-water navy to a green-water navy, and eventually a blue-water navy. This transformation has caused much international concern, since it represents a policy of maritime strategic regionalism. The rise of maritime China obviously challenges the security of the region. Examples include claims against Japan over the sovereignty of the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands, disputes over the Taiwan Strait, over the sovereignty of the Spratly and Paracel islands in the South China Sea, and over piracy in the Malacca Strait and in the Arabian Gulf.

According to the 2004 Defence White Paper of the People's Republic of China (PRC), Beijing clearly acknowledges a shift from China's traditional focus on land power to maritime power and to a priority on building a PLAN capable of winning command of the seas and conducting strategic counter-strikes.[2] According to China's 2006 Defence White Paper, Beijing clearly states that China's security is related to energy, resources, finance, information and international shipping routes. For a comprehensive form of maritime security, the PLAN's mission is to extend its offshore capabilities and to increase its maritime strategic depth.[3] In the most recent 2008 Defence White Paper, Beijing rays that 'struggles for strategic resources, strategic locations, and strategic dominance have intensified'.[4] This implies that the PLA will shift the focus of its ground force operations from regional defence toward trans-regional mobility, which also infers that the strategic direction of its maritime strategy will shift from offshore defence to far sea defence.

[2] *China's National Defence in 2004* (December 2004). Available from <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20041227/index.htm>. Accessed on 3 March 2006.
[3] *China's National Defence in 2006* (December 2006). Available from <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/194421.htm>. Accessed on 11 January 2007.
[4] *China's National Defence in 2008* (January 2009). Available from <http://www.china.org.cn/government/whitepaper/node_7060059.htm>. Accessed on 20 January 2009.

Briefly, the strength of maritime China is increasing. This has made a regional security issue in the field of international security studies. The direction of China's behaviour has become a vital security variable for the Asia-Pacific region. To understand China's maritime strategic behaviour, this research poses the question of China's maritime strategic orientation in the light of politico-economic purposes. It elucidates the maritime strategic rationale behind China's quest for a big navy. It examines the development of PLA maritime strategy in the different historical phases of China's history. And it analyses how a rising maritime China may affect the maritime security of the Asia-Pacific.

1.1 Context Analysis

The PRC's national strategic goals have shifted from the need to secure its survival during the state revolutionary period to the current state of protecting steady economic development. This transformation marks a full transition for China, changing from a closed country to a developing one that is irrevocably integrated with a politico-economic system of the world. Similarly, the more developed China becomes the greater its dependence grows not only on foreign trade, but also on external resources to fuel its economy. Hence, a guarantee of securing China's foreign trade and resources requires abundant military forces to shield its national interests at sea, since the national military power must go where a national economic interest lies. As to China's rise in economic and military power, the security concern of this phenomenon not only has induced a heated theoretical debate in the field of International Relations (IR) and strategic studies, but also has conditioned popular Chinese military and politico-economic studies in recent decades. This section aims at exploring some background problems related to the Chinese maritime strategic studies, including theoretical problems in Chinese strategic studies, problems in China's maritime strategic development, and problems of a rising maritime China and the implications for Asia-Pacific security.

1.1.1 Theoretical Problems in Chinese Strategic Studies

The international setting is always the decisive factor of IR theories and state strategic behaviour. China has increasingly conformed to the international norms of regional integration, multilateralism and globalisation. With its rising comprehensive national power, the PRC is more confident in world affairs. In China's engagement with other countries, although it learns the Western international norms, values and theories, it rejects others that it considers to be in conflict with its national interests through its own '*Weltanschauung*' (worldview).[5] It is important to note that China's perception of international politics is still strongly influenced by a Confucian worldview, traditional values, culture and the self-image of its position in global politics. According to international studies in China, there is a debate between two different IR schools in China's academia, including Anglophone bourgeois IR theory and Marxist-Leninist IR theory.[6] Nevertheless, the Western IR theories, such as realism and liberalism, in China still cannot be seen as the mainstream of Beijing's realpolitik thinking, because China's theory of IR is based on dialectical and historical materialism.[7] Namely, China's commitment to its version of Marxism rules out the open use of Anglophone IR concepts to assess the future security environment. For sound research, it is necessary to avoid the discourse of 'Orientalism' by understanding China's view of the world and its thinking about international relations. This is a *sine qua non* for accurately approaching China's national strategy.

For the Chinese strategic tradition, a great deal of research has been conducted into the approach of strategic culture, and it has been considered an important concept in explaining state strategic behaviour in recent years, especially in the field of PLA studies. In addition, some scholars tend to replace a realist approach by a culturalist approach in their strategic research, because they argue that the approach of strategic culture can explain state behaviour more accurately than a realist approach. As a result, this argument between realists and strategic culturalists has become a debatable

[5] The term '*Weltanschauung,*' or the so-called worldview, refers to a broad set of ideas and values that help to formulate basic perspective of societies and individuals. See Mary Evelyn Tucker, 'Religious dimensions of Confucianism: Cosmology and Cultivation,' *Philosophy East & West*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (January 1998), p. 8.
[6] Hu Weixing, Gerald Chan and Zha Daojiong, *China's International Relations in the 21st Century* (Lanham: University Press of America, Inc., 2000), pp. 18-19.
[7] Wang Shuzbong, 'The Post-War International System,' in Harish Kapur, ed., *As China Sees the World: Perceptions of Chinese Scholars* (London: Francis Pinter Publishers, 1987), p. 22.

theoretical problem, and it remains controversial in the research field of China's strategic reasoning and behaviour.

For PLA studies, China's maritime experience has been virtually ignored in this field. However, from Chinese historical maritime experiences, nobody can deny that there is a legacy of maritime tradition going back many centuries, and the period of Ming China (1368-1644) is a well known historical example. Simply speaking, in Ming China, the strength of the national economy, shipbuilding, voyage management and navigation technology were not only stronger than European capabilities at the same time, but also more powerful than any dynasties in the history of imperial China. Moreover, it was the first but the last time that Ming China developed its ocean-going fleets for undertaking oceanic expeditions. At that time, its naval ability could also reach as far as the Persian Gulf and the east coast of Africa.[8] From this historical perspective, China indeed not only was a maritime power in earlier times, but also experienced the culture of oceanic exploration.

Conversely, many scholars of strategic studies (such as Alistair I. Johnston, June T. Dreyer, Bernard D. Cole, etc.), explain China's military behaviour only by focusing on the cognition of China as a land power in Chinese strategic culture, since they still consider that the factor of continental strategic culture (including military values, beliefs, attitudes and thought) provides the guide to China's external behaviour. The maritime strategic direction and experience of China still have not been discussed as a part of Chinese strategic cultural studies. Nevertheless, it is an undeniable fact that due to the development of China's security environment, national economy and international relations, China today has been switching its national strategic orientation from that of a continental power to that of a maritime power and progressing to become a sea power.[9] In this respect, China is shaping its maritime strategic tradition and security setting for its national interests at sea. Although the

[8] Unfortunately, because of many domestic political and economic problems, and due to the invasion of Mongols from north China, Ming emperor deliberately ended the development of maritime activities once and for all. That is to say, according to the factor of international Realpolitik and the heavy burden of national economy, the only way for Ming China to survive from such a difficult situation was to switch its strategic direction from maritime expedition to continental defence, and to focus on its domestic politics by ending its national maritime exploration. See George Raudzens, 'Military Revolution or Maritime Evolution? Military Superiorities or Transportation Advantages as Main Causes of European Colonial Conquests to 1788,' *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 63, No. 3 (July 1999), pp. 631-42; Hideaki Kaneda, 'Chinese sea power is on the rise,' *Taipei Times* (14 September 2005), p. 8.

[9] James R. Holmes and Toshi Yoshihara, 'The Influence of Mahan upon China's Maritime Strategy,' *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (2005), pp. 23-24.

approach of strategic culture has drawn attention to the cultural elements in China's military studies, it has not played a major role in China's maritime strategic studies.

1.1.2 Problems in China's Maritime Strategic Development

Under China's traditional defensive-oriented military strategic thinking, whether or not the PLAN can develop blue-water capabilities to extend defensive depth and power projection for sea use, denial and control in the Asia-Pacific is a controversial problem of the PLA.[10] In Maoist China, the concept of maritime strategy was not the mainstream of national strategic thinking. The defensive effect of maritime strategy was quite limited at that time, because the Chinese Communist People's Liberation Army inherited neither a national maritime strategy, nor a naval tradition, when the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) came to power in 1949. Specifically, the military development of modern China at the beginning was almost affected by the former Soviet Union's national strategic thinking, such as Marxist-Leninist military philosophy, industrial development, personnel training, weapons systems, and even the maritime strategy of coastal defence.

Additionally, Mao's strategic thinking at that time was built on China's poor national socio-economic situation and a tight Sino-Soviet relationship. As a result, the maritime defence of Maoist China merely followed the former Soviet Union's continental strategic thinking of a light type coastal navy, including the establishment of torpedo boats, land-based naval aircraft and submarines for its coastal defence in the 1950s.[11] Specifically, the obvious character of Maoist maritime strategy was a land-oriented armed force for coastal defence with no visions of developing a wide-range oceanic strategy in the Asia-Pacific. The components of Maoist maritime strategic thinking originated with a weak national economy, the land-oriented military tradition of the PLA and the naval doctrine of the former Soviet Union.[12]

However, after Mao's death, significant changes occurred. For China's

[10] Naval power projection can be defined as a naval capacity, but 'not just the ability to land troops from the sea in a combat posture… it must include the capacity to supply them once ashore, and reinforce them if necessary. But it includes also the ability to bombard, from ships or aircraft, the opponent's land areas; and this ability may of course be used in support of amphibious forces, before, during, or after a landing.' See Rear Admiral J. R. Hill, *Arms Control at Sea* (London, Routledge, 1989), p. 138.
[11] You Ji, *The Armed Forces of China* (New York: I.B. Tauris Press, 1999), pp. 164-65.
[12] David G. Muller, Jr., *China as a Maritime Power* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1983), pp. 12-13.

economic and industrial development, a stable energy supply from outside its own borders was becoming the key driving force for national development. The CCP began to realise that the vast Asia-Pacific maritime region not only has many tremendous economic resources for its national development, but also has a great military strategic value for its power and security. Hence, the problems of Maoist maritime strategy started to emerge, because it did not correspond to the maritime strategic needs in Deng's era. In Dengist China, Beijing had considered that there were some national interests crucial for security, such as: (1) concern about encroachment into its territorial waters by other countries; (2) its natural maritime resources; (3) its prosperous littoral economy; (4) its foreign trade and the 'Sea Lanes of Communication' (SLOCs) that mainly connect China to the Middle East and Africa;[13] and (5) its thriving ocean fishing.[14] For these reasons, China's land-orientated national defence policy therefore started to shift its strategic focus from the land to the sea from the time of Deng's era.

Moreover, for rebuilding China after the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), Deng Xiaoping (1977-1997) started to emphasise the importance of national oceanic economy, to promote the modernisation of the PLA, to change the maritime strategy from coastal defence to offshore active defence, and to upgrade the weapons systems and equipment of the PLAN. In the post-Deng era, Chinese maritime strategy has gradually become the major part of its grand strategy and a vital national defence strategy for economic security and maritime power. From Hu Jintao's speech to a congress of the Navy's Communist Party branch on 27 December 2006, he clearly emphasised that China was a sea power, for the reason China had to build a powerful blue-water navy, be well prepared to protect its sovereignty, boundary security and maritime interests.[15] Obviously, the goal of building a stronger navy is still a major maritime ambition of China to date.

Undeniably, no discussion about China's maritime strategy is complete without looking at its thriving and influential maritime economy and maritime strategic value,

[13] Around 80 per cent of Chinese oil imports from the Middle East. See *Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2006*, the US Department of Defence, Office of the Secretary of Defence, Published in May 2006, p. 33. Available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2006/2006-prc-military-power.htm>. Accessed on 6 June 2006.
[14] You, *The Armed Forces of China*, pp. 161-63.
[15] 'Coming Over the Horizon: Why China Wants A Bigger Navy,' *The Economist* (6 January 2007), p. 34.

because economic development is not only the key determinant of national defence, but also the reflection of China's military strength.[16] Today, China's maritime economic activities have grown importantly, such as fishing, merchant shipping, shipbuilding and port development. As well as China's rise as a maritime power in the Asia-Pacific region, it was also the result of a prosperous and competitive Asia-Pacific maritime economy. Given the incentive of maritime economic interests, China's maritime ambitions might not only be concerned with neighbouring seas, but also extend further afield.

1.1.3 Problems of a Rising Maritime China and the Implications for Asia-Pacific Security

A particular challenge for regional security lies in the accommodation of not only a bigger PLAN, but also China is increasing its maritime leverage. In terms of the realist iron law of balance of power in an international anarchic system, it seems that there will be no room left for maritime cooperation and the maritime 'Confidence-Building Measures' (CBMs) but many conflicting national interests in this region. How to build a common mechanism for regional maritime security has become a vital and technical problem in this region, notwithstanding that the possibility of cooperation is quite limited.

From the perspective of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the rise of PRC maritime power with increasing naval activities in the Asia-Pacific region means that there will be higher risk in the region of incidents arising from contrary explanations of the freedom of navigation. However, there is a possibility that China might step back from some of the more restrictive interpretations of the law of the sea as the PLAN expands and comes to view navigational issues rather differently.

From the perspective of regional security, China's rapidly increasing military budget,[17] and naval expansion have become the most important concern. China's

[16] Keith Crane *et al*., *Modernization China's Military: Opportunities and Constraints* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2005), p. 9.
[17] China's military budget in 1950 was only 2.8 billion RMB (local currency). However, for 2006 has hit 283.8 billion RMB (about 35.1 billion US dollars). Besides, these figures did not contain funds allocated for acquisitions or research & development. Refer to 'China's defence budget to increase 14.7% in 2006.' *People's Daily Online* (05 March 2006). Available from <http://www.english.people.com.cn/200603/05/eng20060305_247883.html>. Accessed on 8 June 2006.

military expenditure has increased almost 300 per cent in the past decade and from 1.08 per cent of its GDP in 1995 to 1.55 per cent in 2005.[18] According to China's 2006 Defence White Paper, it shows about a fifteen per cent rise in military expenditure in the past year. Moreover, with the high growth of military spending, the PLAN is giving high priority to the development of a maritime information system and new naval equipment.[19] In respect of seaborne trade, the sea-lanes can be seen as the lifeline of modern China's economic growth for relying on imported oil and external trade. With the rapid growth of China's economy, China's dependence on global energy imports has been rapidly changing from a connection of relative dependence to one of absolute dependence. In the near future, China will not have enough natural resources to maintain its current participation in the global economy. Beijing's maritime strategic planning may assist in protecting China's sea-lanes and maritime natural resources for its developing economy.[20]

From the perspective of geographic setting (although international relations are usually conceptualised in a non-geographical fashion), China obviously is a great regional power with restricted global strategic interests. The setting of the Asia-Pacific is the only region in which all aspects of China's national interests are present. From the perspective of China's economic security at sea, China's territorial boundary indeed requires a broader concept of security. In recent years, China has effectively stabilised its land boundaries in the North (with Russia), the South (with India) and Central Asia (with Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan) and this situation can be seen as giving greater scope for China's maritime expansion for to protect its economic security and interests.[21] For this reason, China's security boundary today is much more broadly defined than its traditional border security. Therefore, how to face the expansion of China's maritime boundary for its national interests has become a very complicated problem for many littoral countries. In this situation, the concept of balance of power today seems to extend into a naval dimension in this region, i.e. many Asia-Pacific countries will continue to build and strengthen their naval forces as the salient instrument for securing their maritime

[18] Michael Elliott, 'The Chinese Century,' *Time*, No. 2, (22 January 2007), p. 26.
[19] *China's National Defence in 2006*, p. 11; p. 29.
[20] Brendan Nicholson, 'China navy may patrol sea lanes,' *The Age* (4 May 2007), p. 3.
[21] Christopher J. Pehrson, 'String of Pearls: Meeting the Challenge of China's Rising Power across the Asian Littoral,' this research paper was published by Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) of the US Army War College (July 2006), pp. 4-5. Available from <http://www.StrategicStudiesInstitute.army.mil/>. Accessed on 9 August 2006.

security and interests.

Further, in order to avoid war, and reduce the level of their military spending to the smallest amount needed for regional multilateral security cooperation, the mechanism of cooperative maritime security has become an important issue since the 1980s in the Asia-Pacific, for example through the Council for Security Co-operation in Asia-Pacific (CSCAP), the Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS), and some recent American maritime initiatives for anti-maritime terrorism. Regrettably, the military transparency of naval exercises is still difficult to achieve for many regional countries, because this issue involves much concern about military security for each of the states. For China, Beijing does not appreciate the significance of defence transparency as a security-enhancing measure, viewing foreign requests to improve it with suspicion.[22] Thus, the practice of maritime cooperation is narrow, and this security concept today stands just at the initial governmental level for maritime search and rescue, the exploration of maritime resources and banning pirates and terrorism. From Beijing's viewpoint of maritime cooperation, how to maintain at least a workable and cordial relationship with all major maritime powers for avoiding a containment alliance in this region is a vital task of its maritime strategy.

1.1.4 Summary

The policy of '*fu guo qiang bing*' (Rich Country, Strong Army) is always the goal of China's long-standing national strategy.[23] It not only means that a prosperous national economy can support the development of national military power, but also implies that a powerful military can secure the development of national economy. After Mao, China's national strategic goals have shifted from securing national survival through a military approach to protecting a stable economic development through a multi-faceted approach. This transition includes the comprehensive concern of politics, economy and military, which also deeply affects the construction of China's multi-dimensional national security.

Although China has become the economic hub of the Asia-Pacific economic system, its peaceful economic engagement with the region seemingly cannot

[22] David Shambaugh, 'China's Military views the World: Ambivalent Security,' *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Winter 1999/2000), p. 55.
[23] Yen Xuetong, *et al*., *Zhongguo Jueqi—Guoji Huanjing Pinggu* [International Environment for China's Rise] (Tianjin: Renmin Publisher, 1997), p. 138.

eliminate many potential politico-military disputes that revel in security dilemmas. Given the twenty-first century is the era of global economic interdependence, however, China's long-term maritime strategic plans may have less to do with armed confrontation, and more to do with a slow but sure construction of national sea power by other means, like politics, economy and culture. Namely, China's modern maritime strategy will apply a pragmatic and comprehensive approach to shape its maritime security environment, instead of merely concentrating on developing naval capabilities as its only main direction of maritime strategy.

In order to demystify the trend of China's maritime strategy, this research primarily tries to analyse the Chinese national security strategic reasoning, maritime strategic choice, and maritime strategic performance under the context of ever changing international relations between China and the Asia-Pacific.

1.2 Question Statement

Analytically, Beijing's worldview is rooted in traditional Chinese culture and history and embedded in the Communist ideological influence of class-centred Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Hence, IR studies in China reflect a myriad of influence of Chinese characteristics, which are different from power-centred Western realist theories. According to Beijing's worldview, the Western theories of international politics are equal to the capitalist or imperialist theories of international relations, and the authorities of Beijing have publicly rejected Western IR theories.[24] Due to the different perception of the world between the West and China, they have different cognition of the origin of war. In contrast with Western research that suggests the miscalculation and misperceptions of the international situation may be the main reason of war, Beijing asserts that the cause of war is struggling for sovereignty, limited economic resources and national security interests. Alternatively stated, considering the Chinese worldview of dialectical historical materialism, the economic

[24] Yang Zhen, 'Shixi guoji guanxixue de yanjiu duixiang wenti' [A tentative analysis of the object of the study of international relation], *Xiandai guoji guanxi* [Contemporary International Relations], Vol. 66, No. 4 (April 1995), pp. 59-63.

element is the initial origin of human warfare.[25] Different views of the world can lead to different strategic theories as well. Consequently, the way of China's strategic thinking must be different from the West's strategic logic.

According to Chinese naval history, the direction of coastal defence of PLA maritime strategy in Maoist era is only for the military purpose of national defence. However, during the period of Dengist China and after, the direction of China's maritime strategy has been starting to combine with the considerations of economic development and regionalism. In this respect, the PRC's maritime strategy of offshore defence no longer can be seen as a simple military strategy for its national security. While China's recent ambition is to structure a blue-water maritime strategy, it does not present a clear maritime strategic direction to the public. Expressly, that China's maritime strategic direction is to build a regional maritime power with a powerful navy for seizing command of the sea, or to develop into a Mahanian sea power with a global strategic ambition, is still far from clear.

This research analyses Chinese maritime strategy in the Asia-Pacific with an unsettled question to be addressed: 'Whither Chinese maritime strategy in the ever changing Asia-Pacific security environment since the PRC was established in 1949?' Accordingly, this research is organised around five sub-questions, which this thesis endeavours to answer in each chapter:

(1) What are the origins of Chinese maritime strategic expansion?

(2) What was the Maoist strategy of 'Coastal Defence' under the military rubric of 'People's War and Active Defence'? Was this maritime strategy integrated with the grand strategy of Maoist China?

(3) What is the Dengist strategy of 'Offshore Active Defence'? Why did Dengist China shift its landward coastal defence to seaward offshore defence?

(4) What kind of 'Far Sea Defence Strategy' together what kind of ocean-going PLAN will allow Beijing to execute its national strategies most effectively, thereby achieving its political, economic, cultural and military goals in the Asia-Pacific?

(5) What impact is China's rising maritime power having on the security of the Asia-Pacific region? How is the region responding to this?

[25] Liu Mingde, 'Changes in the Forms of War and Their Implication after the Disintegration of the Bipolar Pattern,' *International Strategic Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (June 1992), p. 9.

1.3 Research Proposition

Contemporary China's national security strategy is closely connected with maritime strategy for its comprehensive security of the economic development, energy supply and sovereignty.[26] According to China's view of its security environment, the traditional territorial scramble is changing from the land to the sea for controlling territorial waters, maritime strategic resources and its critical sea lanes. As a result, the maritime economic competition has become the scrambling focus among nations. Given this, it is understandable that China's maritime expansion from the coast to the high seas is an inevitable strategic approach. In regard to this Chinese approach, this study has a main research proposition to argue: 'In order to shape a Sino-centric maritime security environment for China's rising sea power, Beijing's approach to maritime strategic expansion has shifted from military antagonism (during the Cold War period) toward politico-economic coexistence or dominance (during the post-Cold War period) in the Asia-Pacific region'.[27] Likewise, there are three assumptions under this proposition for supporting this study:

(1) The origins of Beijing's maritime strategic reasoning are mainly conditioned by a Sino-centric worldview, national grand strategy, traditional strategic culture and contemporary nationalism. However, modern China's gradual engagement with the changeable and interdependent international system might limit and alter its strategic vision and development.

(2) Rising China will attempt to expand and transform its maritime strategic behaviour and naval structure from coastal defence via offshore defence to a far sea defence for protecting sovereignty, economy, sea routes and energy supply if the expected maritime strategic benefits or interests exceed the expected maritime strategic costs.

(3) China's maritime strategic performance might seek to dominate the Asia-Pacific maritime security environment through politico-economic, socio-culture

[26] Liu Jingpo, ed., *Chinese National Security Strategy in the Early 21st Century* (Beijing: Shishi Press, 2006), pp. 10-11.

[27] Coexistence means that states pursue their national interests as long as they do not jeopardise international stability. See Liselotte Odgaard, 'Perception, Pragmatism, and Political Will: Maritime Disputes and Balances in the Asia-Pacific,' *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (2002), pp. 113-43.

and military expansion until the marginal maritime strategic costs of further change exceed marginal maritime strategic benefits.

Further, it is worthwhile examining the proposition more closely through discussing China's strategic theory and maritime strategic conception, which were from its dearly held worldview about war and peace. Hence, its concept of pursuing sea power as a security border is different from the thought of Western sea power based on navalism and global hegemony. From this standpoint, Beijing's assessment of its maritime strategic direction must be different from the West's view. A great deal of effort has been made to applying the power-centred realist approach to examine China's sea power and maritime strategy by the West. What seem to be lacking, however, are China's worldview, culture and historical context.

Chinese language is rich in idioms from ancient statecraft, and Beijing's conception of its security setting would be difficult to comprehend without broad knowledge of the images of Chinese worldview and ancient statecraft. Ancient lessons from Chinese statecraft about dealing with maritime affairs and maritime powers are little known in the West, and there is no guide for the Western writers to the famous stories in Chinese traditional statecraft about sea power so well known to all Chinese writers. To avoid the potential for misunderstanding China's maritime strategy, it may be useful to look more closely at some of the more important features of China's beliefs about traditional statecraft and future.

Briefly, the emphasis throughout the thesis is mainly on exploring the construction of China's maritime security strategy under the ever-changing international politics of the Asia-Pacific. In this research, the Chinese perspective of international relations provides a starting point for a sound understanding of China's maritime strategic direction and ambition. From doing this, this research not only can concretely explain China's maritime strategic choice and behaviour, but also can precisely elucidate its maritime strategic orientation and impact on maritime power structure in the region.

1.4 Methodology

In Chinese strategic studies, David Shambaugh suggests a broad viewpoint that 'defence doctrine evolves and responds to several factors, including a nation's social and political culture, its military and strategic traditions, contemporary global military doctrine and the nature of warfare, and a nation's strategic environment'.[28] This perspective offers a very significant conception in strategic studies that the research of military strategy is not just a pure military-oriented study but also an integrated research under a certain historical cultural context. Therefore, it is necessary to research the formation and formulation of Chinese maritime strategy through a multi-dimensional approach, and then the conclusions of this research will become more evident and convincing. For a methodical strategic research, this section introduces IR system analysis and strategic choice approach with sectors of analysis for this thesis.

1.4.1 System Analysis and Variables

System theory is a mechanistic and abstract idea of political behaviour, influenced by cybernetics. At the level of international relations, the theory must always be indebted to historical background, since 'history is the great laboratory within which international actions occurs'.[29] Generally, the adaptation of system analysis to IR was primarily conceived by Morton A. Kaplan. He suggests that the existence of a system of action can be defined as 'a set of variables so related, in contradistinction to its environment, that describable behavioural regularities characterize the internal relationships of the variables to each other and the external relationships of the set of individual variables to combinations of external variables'.[30]

In simple terms, this behavioural approach to international relations (external setting) proposed that a state actor, as a system of action, could be seen as an organism with a set of related variables. Simplifying his systematic variables are input,

[28] David Shambaugh, 'The People's Liberation Army and the People's Republic at 50: Reform at Last,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 159 (September 1999), p. 661.
[29] Morton A. Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1957), p. 3.
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

process, output, and feedback.[31] An input of a state system may come from an outside environment or it may simply be a previous state of a system. Thus, national strategic reasoning is an input and strategic performance is an output, between which is the process of the development of strategic behaviour. In addition, when an output leads to a change in the relations of an actor and its environment, the feedback of the environment may operate in the direction opposite from that of input negatively or in the same direction as the input positively. This greatly affects the strategic development of an actor and the stability of the international environment.

This thesis mainly applies the input-output model as a conceptual structure for analysing the maritime strategy of China in the Asia-Pacific region by arguing that the international security environment of the Asia-Pacific is a main international background of China's maritime strategic evolution, in which the maritime strategy of China as a maritime actor is shaped and generated. This study also applies the three related variables as three significant parts in this research: (1) China's strategic origins—input; (2) strategic development—the process of maritime strategic choice; and (3) strategic impact—output. In the end, this thesis will focus on the response of the Asia-Pacific as the feedback to China's maritime strategy.

To the three parts, first, this study assumes that the independent variables of China's maritime strategic origins are China's worldview, grand strategy and its various national interests. These origins will be examined through an historical-cultural approach. Secondly, this study sees the part of China's maritime strategic development as the intervening variable, in which China's strategic choices of different naval strategies in different periods will be carefully analysed. Finally, this research views the impact of Chinese maritime strategy as a dependent variable and a strategic performance in the Asia-Pacific. In this section, this research accounts for the issue of the challenge of China's mounting maritime domination to maritime security affairs, such as the balance of maritime power, naval conflict and maritime cooperation in the region.

[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 4-6, and refer to George Modelski, 'Agraria and Industria: Two Models of the International System,' in Klaus Knorr and Sidney Verba, eds, *The International System: Theoretical Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 121-122.

1.4.2 Strategic-choice Approach with Sectors of Analysis

This research also applies a strategic-choice approach with sectoral analysis to examine the maritime strategic development of the PRC. This approach begins with a simple insight and focuses on explaining the strategic decisions of state actors in the international system. It assumes:

(1) Actors are purposive and they pursue their goals as best they can.

(2) At the centre of the approach is a vision of international politics as the interactions of actors.

(3) Actors and their environments are the two elements for national rational decision.[32]

(4) The strategic decision-making of actors combines the new information of the setting with old memories of strategic tradition.[33]

This rational-actor approach, which is the dominant and usually implicit analytical model for analysing and predicting strategic and military behaviour, seeks to explain national strategic decisions as the outcome of a rational leadership. Importantly, this approach can assist this research to present what national goal the PRC was pursing when it acted, and how the maritime strategic behaviour was a reasonable choice, given China's objectives. Under the approach, this research primarily sees politics, economy, social culture, and the military as the four significant analytic sectors for assessing China's maritime ambition, which are also the four necessary conditions of the development of China's maritime strategy.

According to Chinese military theory, the relationship between material produce, science and war of the CCP's military ideology is an important part of the establishment of the PLA. Generally, the theory of Communism considers that all phenomena of warfare are related to the situation of current socio-material production; besides, the development of these phenomena is connected to the different ways of material produce and the changing politico-social structure in different phases.[34] For tracing Chinese maritime strategic evolution, this research divides China's strategic development roughly into three different phases for analysis: (1) coastal defence

[32] David A. Lake and Robert Powell, eds, *Strategic Choice and International Relations*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 3-9.
[33] Karl W. Deutsch, *The Analysis of International Relations*, 2nd edition (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978), pp.85-86.
[34] Shufan Ding, *Zhonggong junshi sixiang de fazhan* [The Development of Chinese Communist Military Thought] (Taipei: Tangshan Press, 1996), pp. 29-30.

strategy; (2) offshore defence strategy; and (3) the ambition of a blue-water maritime strategy. According to the aforementioned different conditions and different phases, Table 1 helps to define the outline of China's maritime strategic choices in different periods for this research.

Table 1: Maritime Strategic Choices of China in Different Phases

Periods / Conditions	**Maoist China (1949-1976)**	**Dengist-Jiangist China (1977-2003)**	**Hu-Wen China (2004-)**
Politics	Domestic political upheaval under tense Cold War period.	Stable autocracy under alleviative Cold War period.	Steady authoritarian political system under post-Cold War period.
Economy	Agricultural economy with limited maritime interests.	Economic open-door policy with huge maritime interests.	Continuing economic reformation with rising economic-energy interests.
Socio-culture	Social disorderliness and cultural revolution.	Social reconstruction with a weak ocean consciousness.	The quest for China's sea power under a strong oceanic consciousness.
Military	The military doctrine of people's war and guerrilla warfare with a weak and large PLA ground force.	People's war under modern conditions and limited War. Request for a modernised PLA.	Local war under high-tech and informationalised conditions. Request for an advanced PLA.
Appraisal of maritime strategic choices and naval build-up			
Maritime strategy	Coastal defence with the concept of people's war at sea.	Offshore active defence with the two-island chain strategy.	Far sea defence with blue-water maritime capabilities.
Naval build-up	A brown-water navy with the power projection range of below 200 sea miles from the coast.	A green-water navy with the power projection range of over 200 sea miles from the coast.	A blue-water navy with the power projection range of over 400 sea miles from the coast.[35]

[35] There is no strict definition between green water and brown water. The range of both waters is based on the law of the sea. Refer to Göran Larsbrink, 'Anti Submarine Warfare in Shallow Waters,' *Naval Forces*, 1/2000, pp. 66-67.

1.4.3 Research Limitations

There are three limitations in this research. The first limitation is the obstacle of translating Chinese language and culture. Some words of concern are necessary to people who are not fluent in Chinese language or familiar with Chinese governmental documents and literature to understand. In general, it is simple to interpret the English words with which Chinese analysts in official research institutes have described the future security environment. Nevertheless, it is more difficult to attain a true understanding of the Chinese cultural background and what specific words actually signify to the Chinese. For example, Chinese literature on the revolution in military affairs, so-called RMA, often use three Chinese ideographs to indicate 'something' that can be used in warfare for surprising and defeating the enemy. The 'something' is three Chinese words '*sha shou jian*', which means a concept of victory in warfare by possessing secret weapons that can strike the enemy's most vulnerable point precisely.[36] There is nothing wrong in translating the Chinese words as 'assassin's mace' or 'magic weapon,' but none captures the full Chinese strategic connotation from Chinese military tradition.[37]

The second limitation is selection preference. This research only selects the development of China's maritime strategy and the PLAN since 1949 until today; this means perhaps downplaying some irrelevant but important parts, such as China's nuclear strategy, foreign policies, and military administration. Likewise, this research topic can be selected as an object in this study not only because the study of this subject can contribute to the understanding of Chinese maritime strategic behaviour and the security of the Asia-Pacific, but also because it can test complementary Anglophone realist theories in the field of strategic studies.

Thirdly, there is the limitation of research sources. Since this research refers to the field of Chinese military affairs and the decision-making system of Chinese defence, access to materials is denied to researchers. However, scholar You Ji suggests that although getting the first hand sources of Chinese military affairs is very difficult for Chinese military research, the many publications from the PLA and the PRC governmental publishers can be the useful and important tools for studies. The

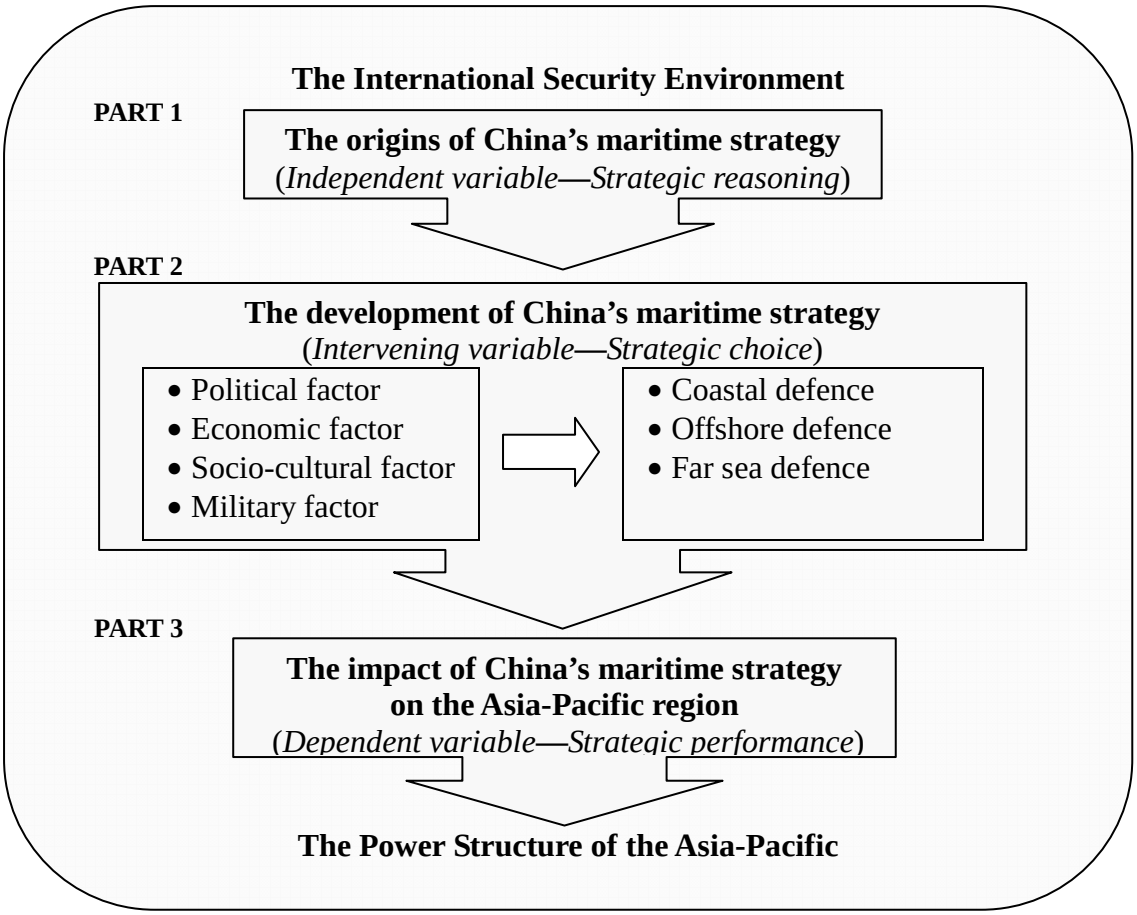
[36] Michael Pillsbury, *China Debates the Future Security Environment* (Washington DC: National Defence University Press, 2000), pp. xviii-xix.
[37] Pan Junfeng, 'Dui xin junshi de jidian kanfa' [Several views on new military affairs], *Zhongguo junshi kexue* [Chinese Military Science], Vol. 35, No. 2 (Summer 1996), p. 111.

reason is that many authors are key Chinese policy advisers to the military leadership and they like to publish papers to present their thinking.[38] Given the dearth of direct access to PLA officers, the reading of PLA publications and Beijing issued relevant documents is essential to understanding the view of China's national strategy; this material is a major part of the sources for this research.

1.4.4 Research Framework

This section presents a conceptual research schema for this strategic research (see Figure 1). The structure of this study falls into three main parts in terms of the previously mentioned input-output model.

Figure 1: Research Framework of China's Maritime Strategy in the Asia-Pacific



The first part attempts to explore the origins of China's maritime strategic origins and

[38] You, 'Introduction' in *The Armed Forces of China*, pp. 21-23.

reasoning from China's worldview, grand strategy and its current nationalism. Following the examination of the origins of China's maritime strategy, the second part goes on with the analysis of Chinese maritime strategic development and choice from coastal defence, offshore defence to the ambition of a far sea defence for blue-water maritime strategy. In addition, each of the aforementioned maritime strategies will be examined by sectoral analysis and strategic-choice assessment. Further, the third part of this study approaches the impact of the rising Chinese maritime influence on the maritime security of the Asia-Pacific, and appraises the future maritime conflicts, cooperation and coexistence of the region.

1.4.5 Chapter Design

This research begins by analysing China's worldview and its theory of international relations and ends by examining China's impact of maritime strategic development upon the maritime security of the Asia-Pacific. With the aim of clearly explaining China as a rising maritime power and regional security in Asia-Pacific, this thesis includes eight chapters. Chapter One introduces the problem statements, research questions, research propositions, methodology, and the definition of terms for this research. Chapter Two provides critical reviews of some important relevant research about China's maritime strategy in three directions, including approaches of Chinese strategic studies, Chinese grand strategy and sea power, and the integration of the maritime strategy and the PLAN. Chapter One and Two aside, the main discourse of this thesis includes three parts. Part One is presented in Chapter Three, and is an examination of China's maritime strategic origins, including Chinese grand strategy, strategic culture and nationalism (patriotism). Part Two includes three chapters examining China's growing capabilities in naval power from 1949 to the present through analysing three vital steps of maritime strategy from coastal defence in Chapter Four, offshore active defence in Chapter Five, and then toward developing blue-water aspirations in Chapter Six. The purpose of the second part is to approach the connection of the Chinese grand strategy, strategic tradition, different maritime strategic stages, maritime strategic development, and the build-up of PLAN for understanding China's comprehensive maritime strategic behaviour. Part Three, including Chapter Seven, investigates the impact of China's maritime strategic expansion on the security environment of the Asia-Pacific. Chapter Eight provides the

conclusion of this research through appraising the maritime strategic direction of the PRC and giving some recommendations for further relevant Chinese maritime strategic orientation. The logic of this thesis links the past, the present and the future of the growth of China's maritime power. The aim of this thesis is to provide the reader with a better understanding of how Beijing views its sea power, maritime strategy, maritime threats and how it reacts to them, and may manage the most intractable of them, the crises in the South China Sea, the Taiwan Strait and the Malacca Strait particularly.

1.5 Comparison of Relevant Concepts

1.5.1 Anglophone 'Realism' vs. Chinese 'Confucianism'

Using realism to explain contemporary international affairs and national strategy today is regarded as the mainstream in IR research and military strategic studies.[39] Realism not only provided a systematic proposition that all states in the anarchic environment of interstate relations are confronted by a security dilemma, but also constructed a better designed theoretical foundation for structural realism from that proposition. In explaining state behaviour, realism also assumes that state behaviour is generated from an anarchical setting, in which a state must seek power to ensure its security. From this standpoint, regularity in state behaviour is said to be one of the restrictions forced on states by the structure of the international environment.

According to 'Structural Realism' by Kenneth Waltz, the ordering principle of international setting is anarchy where states are the only significant actors, military force was the dominant instrument, and national security was the primary goal.[40] In the discourse of structural realism, an anarchic international structure can condition the interstate relations and conflicts are a constant possibility. In this realist imaginary

[39] The term 'Structural Realism' is used by Robert O. Keohane, and the 'Neorealism' is used by Richard K. Ashley. See Robert O. Keohane, 'Realism, Neorealism and the Studies of World Politics,' and Richard K. Ashley, 'The Poverty of Neorealism,' in Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 17; p. 257.
[40] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Relations* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979), pp. 88-93.

anarchic world, Waltz argues that 'internal efforts and external efforts'[41] are the two means of states for attending security purpose. Moreover, on the basis of the anarchic worldview of realism, the idea of balance of power is a pattern that can recur in different international situations, and 'Balance-of-Power politics prevail wherever two, and only two, requirements are met: that the order be anarchic and that it be populated by units wishing to survive'.[42]

Even though the approach of realism has a higher position in Western IR studies, it does not mean that there are no limits in this paradigm for all studies of international politics. For the West's realism, its worldview is built on the assumption that human nature is flawed, the law of the anarchic world is survival of the fittest, and wars among nations are inevitable. Chinese in the mainstream Confucian tradition, in contrast, hold human nature is good (or neutral); through the process of education, humanity not only can avoid warfare, but also can bring the world into harmony.[43] Consequently, the limit to realism is that it cannot sufficiently explain China's worldview and strategic thinking about war and peace.

Realism seems to give Westerners a reasonable explanation for China's continuing rise toward the status of a great power in today's international setting. Likewise, the realist discourse of China's international security environment seems to provide Westerners a good description of China's strategic behaviour. In realist research into China's strategic behaviour, however, less attention has been given to how Beijing views its own security environment and how China's worldview guides its state behaviour. Therefore, it is difficult to gain a satisfactory understanding of China's international relations and national strategy from Waltzian realism. In fact, the relationship between China and the outside world is mainly built on Sino-centric Confucianism. However, this cultural dimension is not adequately discussed in realist China studies.

Historically, the tribute system of the Middle Kingdom is not only rooted in the politico-economic power structure, but also founded on the cultural influence of Confucianism. For the multi-state structure of ancient China, the tribute system can be seen as a system of thought and institutions regulating Imperial China's international

[41] The 'internal efforts' means to increase economic capability, to increase military strength, to develop clever strategies, and the 'external efforts' means to strength and enlarge one's own alliance or weaken and shrink an opposing one. Refer to Waltz, *Theory of International Relations*, pp. 118-19.
[42] *Ibid*., p. 121.
[43] John Wilson Lewis and Xue Litai, *Imaged Enemies: China Prepare For Uncertain War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), p. 24-25.

relations, which emerged in the heartland of the Chinese civilisation and never expanded beyond the realm—*tian xia* under Confucianism.[44] Even though Imperial China was to become the history of modern China, the memory of Confucianism is still affecting Beijing's worldview and its own theory of international relations. For instance, from Deng Xiaoping's discourse of 'Peace and Development are the Two Outstanding Issues in the World Today,'[45] Jiang Zemin's claim of 'Mutual Trust, Mutual Benefit, Equality and Coordination among Nations'[46] and Hu Jintao's idea of a 'Harmonious World,'[47] the conclusion can be drawn that their thoughts are rooted in the Confucian concept of cosmic harmony. These examples also show that China, with the rapid growth of its comprehensive national power in the world, is confident of expressing its ambition of building a Sino-centric world order.

1.5.2 'Western Strategic Culture' vs. 'Chinese Strategic Culture'

In the 1970s, some Western scholars of IR, such as Jack Snyder, Carl Jacobsen, Colin S. Gray, initially developed the term 'strategic culture' for strategic studies. Their purpose was to address the apparent military cultural differences between the nuclear strategies of the United States (US) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) during the post-Cold War period.[48] In this period, Jack Snyder was the first person who introduced the phrase of strategic culture to the field of strategic and military studies.[49] He considers that the definition of strategic culture can refer to 'the sum total of ideas, conditional emotional responses and patterns of behaviour that members of a national strategic community achieved through instruction and imitation with each other with regard to nuclear strategy'.[50] Meanwhile, these scholars of this

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[44] Yongjin Zhang, 'System, empire and state in Chinese international relations,' *Review of International Studies*, No. 27 (2001), pp. 46-47.
[45] Deng Xiaoping, 'Peace and Development are the Two Outstanding Issues in the World Today,' *People's Daily Online* (Beijing), 4 March 1985. Available from <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/dengxp/vol3/text/c1330.html>. Accessed on 24 May 2006.
[46] Liu, ed., *Chinese National Security Strategy*, p. 23.
[47] Hu Jintao, 'Build Towards a Harmonious World of Lasting Peace and Common Prosperity,' Speech by Hu Jintao at the UN Summit (New York), September 15, 2005. Available from <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/ceun/eng/zt/shnh60/t212915.htm>. Accessed on 2 July 2006.
[48] In this period, the well known writings such as Jack Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Nuclear Options* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1990); Carl Jacobsen, ed., *Strategic Power: USA/USSR* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990); Colin S. Gray, *Nuclear Strategy and National Style* (London: Hamilton Press, 1982).
[49] Ken Booth and Russell Trood, eds, *Strategic Cultures in the Asia-Pacific Region* (London: Macmillan Press, 1999), p. 4.
[50] Jack Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Nuclear Options* (Santa Monica: RAND,

period all believed that strategic culture and state behaviour are a collective and strategic culture in the context that can surround and give meaning to state strategic behaviour.

Similarly, Alastair I. Johnston argues that strategic culture is 'an integrated system of symbols (e.g. argumentation structures, languages, analogies, metaphors) which acts to establish pervasive and long lasting preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs'.[51] He also indicates that this system 'embodies assumptions about what the security problematique is, and about how to best deal with it'.[52] For Johnston, the most important value of strategic culture is that it not only can provide empirical predictions about strategic choice, but also can be traced back to its evolution over time.[53] Explicitly, strategic culture 'allows the researcher to investigate how the formative experiences of the state and its evolving cultural characteristics shape strategic interests'.[54] In Johnston's study on China's grand strategy, he methodically separated Chinese strategic culture from Chinese national behaviour, assuming that strategic culture is a main independent variable and strategic behaviour is a dependent variable in military-strategic studies. Reflecting Johnston's research, however, Gray argues that it is a mistake to distinguish culture from behaviour in the research of strategic culture, because 'strategic behaviour is cultural behaviour'.[55] He argues that only seeing strategic culture as a context (the accumulation of historical experiences) can provide meaning for explaining state strategic behaviour,[56] and strategic culture is just one dimension for analysing strategic beliefs, attitudes and behaviour in strategic studies.[57]

Conversely, the development of Chinese strategic-cultural study is later than the research of Western strategic culture, and there is a cognitive gap of the definition of strategic culture between the West and China. Most Western research on strategic

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1990), p. 8.
[51] Alastair I. Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Ming China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 46.
[52] *Ibid*., p. 39.
[53] *Ibid*., p. 39-40.
[54] Stuart Poore, 'Strategic Culture,' in John Glenn, Darryl Howlett and Stuart Poore, eds, *Neorealism versus Strategic Culture* (Burlington: Ashgate Press, 2004), pp. 45-46.
[55] Gray, *Modern Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 129.
[56] *Ibid*., pp. 129-30.
[57] *Ibid*., p. 28; p. 131. In Gray's eyes, human beings who cannot help but be cultural agents affect all strategic behaviour and there is no conceptual room for explanation of state strategic behaviour beyond strategic culture.

culture is through the analysis of psychological levels and defining that is a system of symbol or value, and Johnston's work is an example. In contrast, China's study of strategic culture is based on a macroscopic analysis of national history and tradition. From the Chinese viewpoint, strategic culture is not only a traditional strategic thought (or theory), but also an origin of national strategy.[58] At the Chinese strategic level, the leading Chinese philosophy of Confucianism created a strategic culture that is characterised by 'strong secularism, weak religiousness,' 'strong inclusiveness, weak exclusiveness' and 'strong conservatism, weak aggressiveness'.[59] These features of China's strategic culture led to the conclusion that peace claims precedence. Moreover, Confucian pacificism is also present in Chinese military classics, such as *Sun Tzu Bing Fa* (Sun Tzu's *Art of War*). Sun Tzu, as an ancient Chinese strategist, claims that war among nations can be prevented, winning a battle with a minimum force is a good strategy, subduing an enemy's army without fighting is the acme of skill, but the worst policy is to attack the enemy and its cities.[60] To the PRC, from Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and today's Hu Jintao, the concept of peace is invoked to give reason for diplomatic strategy and strategic thinking. Explicitly, the Confucian notion of peace or harmony in the field of Chinese strategy is the concept of defence. Accordingly, Chinese strategic culture can be seen as a defensive strategic culture under Confucianism.

1.5.3 'Western Sea Power' vs. 'Chinese Sea Power'

When it comes to Alfred Thayer Mahan, nobody can deny that his name is synonymous with 'sea power'. His great contribution to the thought of modern Western military strategy is that he developed a philosophy of sea power that won recognition and acceptance throughout the world whether it was in military circles or in the non-military area.[61] According to Mahan, the supreme importance of sea power for a maritime state is that it can shape national destiny such as economic growth, prosperity and security. In general, Mahan's work provides some fundamental

[58] Jijun Li, *Junshi zhanlue siwei* [Thinking of Military Strategy] (Beijing: Military Science Press, 1998), pp. 239-239. General Li is the former vice president of the PLA Academy of Military Science.
[59] John Wilson Lewis and Xue Litai, *Imaged Enemies*, p. 21.
[60] Mark McNeilly, *Sun Tzu and the Art of Modern Warfare* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 18-19.
[61] Edward M. Earle, Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert, eds, *Makers of modern strategy: military thought from Machiavelli to Hitler* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), pp. 417-419.

elements of sea power for investigation, naming fundamental factors that could affect its development:[62] geographical position, physical conformation, extent of territory, population, national character and governmental institutions. Still, Mahan argues that the factor of geographical position of a maritime state is the decisive one, because it can decide where a state can create and develop its history, culture and sea power. Further, Mahan maintains that in supporting the development of sea power, a powerful naval force is a necessary instrument, and when a state owned or seized naval 'command of the sea' from other states,[63] it can protect its maritime commerce, sea resources and communication for developing its sea power. Thus, it seems reasonable to conclude that Mahanian sea power is a realist sea power.

From the definition of Mahanian sea power, a significant argument that should be mentioned here is that the concept of 'sea power' is not equal to the concept of 'naval power.'[64] A state with a strong naval force for command of the sea does not mean that this state is a sea power. Conversely, a state of sea power must be a naval power with the strong command of the sea and a clear maritime direction in its grand strategy. From those two concepts, the competition of the US versus the former USSR on the sea during the Cold War period is a good example for understanding the difference between sea power and naval power. For the US, its long history of sea power is founded on geographical position, sea dependence, economic strength, oceanic culture and its powerful navy. In contrast, the concept of the development of sea power for the former USSR was very late and it did not focus on the build-up of a large ocean fleet until the 1950s. At the beginning, the former Soviet leader Josef Stalin believed that based on the USSR is nuclear strategic purpose and its economic situation, the build-up of a dominant geopolitical naval power for coastal boundaries was enough, mimicking the Americans was unnecessary.[65] However, the lessons of the Korean War (1950-1953) shocked Stalin (and Mao Zedong) because these lessons

[62] Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783* (Boston: Little Brown, 1918), pp. 28-29; pp. 33-34. Although Mahan's elements of sea power were the requirements of studying sea power, these ideas have gone out of date. However, in order to cautiously examine modern sea power, Eric Grove has corrected Mahan's six factors of sea power and argues that the new factors of contemporary sea power are economic strength, technological prowess, social-political culture, geographical position, sea dependence, government policy and perception. See Eric Grove, *The Future of Sea Power* (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 221-30.
[63] *Ibid*, p. 183; pp. 287-88.
[64] Generally, the level of grand strategy is higher than military strategy. In Strategic studies, sea power belongs to the level of grand strategy, but the command of the sea merely belongs to the level of military strategy.
[65] Natalia I. Yegorova, 'Stalin's Conception of Maritime Power: Revelations from the Russian Archives,' *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (April 2005), pp.162-63.

concerned the considerable superiority of the power of the US Navy, as shown frequently in many combat operations. After the Korean War, Stalin began to think about naval modernisation and a new shipbuilding program.[66] After Stalin's death in 1953, the former USSR did not abandon Stalin's thinking about a naval build-up. Instead, Admiral Sergei G. Gorshkov led the development of the USSR Navy to an unprecedented level.

During Gorshkov's leadership, the Soviet Navy completely transformed from a coastal navy fulfilling only limited local operations to a strategic nuclear blue-water navy, which became a strategic asset influencing world politics.[67] Even though the development of the Soviet Navy was later than the growth of US Navy, the capability of the USSR Navy almost threatened the US Navy in 1975.[68] Through mimicking the sea power of the US by building a balanced navy, the USSR started to invest in the considerable costs of naval building in the Gorshkov era.[69] Nevertheless, a blemish in an otherwise perfect situation was that Gorshkov overlooked the most significant economic capacity of sea power. As a result, Gorshkov's navalism actually precipitated the collapse of the USSR.[70] From this example, it proved that a state that owned a powerful navy for command of the sea does not mean this state is a sea power but just a powerful maritime power such as the former USSR.

The development of sea power has determined the destiny of nations, and China is no exception. Due to the rapid growth of the Chinese maritime economy, the littoral area of China has become the centre of Chinese economic development. For the security of China's sea rights of the coastal area, territorial waters, maritime natural resources, the SLOCs and the 'Exclusive Economic Zone' (EEZ),[71] China's desire for sea power is no longer simply a notion of the command of the sea, but a concept of national comprehensive power. In addition, the Soviet model of maritime strategy must be unsuitable for Chinese maritime strategy and PLAN, because China's worldview, the direction of military thinking, national maritime interests and the security setting are different from the former Soviet Union. Therefore, it is difficult to

[66] *Ibid*., pp. 166-69.
[67] Sergei Chernyavskii, 'The Era of Gorshkov: Triumph and Contradictions,' *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (April 2005), pp. 289-290.
[68] *Ibid*., pp. 292-294.
[69] George E. Hudson, 'Soviet Naval Doctrine and Soviet Politics, 1953-1975,' *World Politics*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (October 1976), pp. 104-13.
[70] Chernyavskii, 'The Era of Gorshkov,' pp. 305-6.
[71] Yann-huei Billy Song, 'China's Ocean Policy: EEZ and Maritime Fisheries,' *Asian Survey*, Vol. 29, No. 10 (October 1989), pp. 983-998.

apply entire naval experiences of the former Soviet Union and the US to examine China's sea power, maritime strategic direction and naval build-up.

The traditional concept of Mahanian sea power is a national offensive capability to control the sea by seizing the command of the sea, while the Chinese notion of sea power is a connection of the notion of equal sea rights and sea power.[72] For China, sea rights (national interests at sea) are the natural extension of the concept of national sovereignty, such as the Continental Shelf and EEZ; and then sea power is the means to achieve the goal of protecting sea rights. It is obvious that the idea of China's sea power is to safeguard China's maritime rights and interests. Regarding the limits of China's sea power, finally, Beijing considers that the Taiwan problem is not only related to China's sovereignty, but also involves China's sea power and sea rights. In Beijing's viewpoint, the struggle for sea power is like playing *Wei-chi* (the ancient Chinese game of strategy).[73] If China loses Taiwan, it will consequently lose the sovereignty of islands in the South China Sea, which will involve the fate of China's economic development and national security.[74] That is to say, if Taiwan and other islands are not under China's control, China will not be able to protect its maritime security environment, and this is the main reason for China wanting to develop further its sea power and sea rights through its maritime strategy.

1.6 Definition of Terms

1.6.1 Sea Power

The notion of sea power is a major consideration in national strategic thought and there have been many dimensions of sea power as contrasted with land power, for example, sea power means a country with a maritime orientation in its strategic

[72] Wenmu Zhang, 'Sea Power and China's Strategic Choices,' *China Security*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Summer 2006), pp. 23-24.
[73] The game consists of three basic factors, including territorial expansion, attacking and defending, and the primary goal is to obtain the most territory. In addition, the game pits two opponents against on another on a chessboard with a 19-by-19-line grid representing unconquered territory. Each player put stones on the grid intersections in a struggle to control the most territory and the winner is the one who possesses the most territory. Refer to George S. Capen, 'Wei-chi: the Game of War,' *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 125, No. 8 (August 1999), pp. 60-64.
[74] Zhang, 'Sea Power and China's Strategic Choices,' pp. 25-26.

outlook. In Mahan's view, the concept of sea power involves a capability to use the seas by national politico-economic development and to win command of the seas from potential enemies. Thus, sea power is not synonymous with naval warfare. It is the ability to use the seas for commercial and military purposes, and it identifies an instrument of state policy for maritime activities and military operations.[75] Hence, the concept of sea power can be considered as the performance of comprehensive national power (CNP) at sea, including the control of international trade and commerce, the utilisation of oceanic resources, the operations of navies in wartime, and the use of navies as instruments of diplomacy, deterrence and political influence in peacetime.[76]

1.6.2 Command of the Sea

Command of the sea is the so-called military sea power. Mahan's explanation of this term is 'that overbearing power on the sea which drives the enemy's flag from it, or allows it to appear only as a fugitive; and which, by controlling the great common, closes the highway by which commerce moves to and fro from the enemy's shores'.[77] Nevertheless, Julian Corbett argues that this term 'means nothing but the control of maritime communication, whether for commercial or military purposes'.[78] However, Gray redefined this term and argued that it is a military ability to build zones of maritime control whenever and wherever. It also 'refers to a more or less geographically extensive and porous working control of relevant sea routes'.[79] These definitions show that the command of the sea is an ability to build maritime zones to control maritime communications and to deny enemies for national security and development.

1.6.3 Comprehensive National Power

A vital aspect of assessing the security setting is said to be determining the rank order of the power held by the various warring states. Although China's concept of

[75] Colin S. Gray, *The Leverage of Sea Power* (New York: The Free Press, 1992), pp. 3-4; pp. 6-7.
[76] John Baylis *et al*., *Strategy in the Contemporary World: An Introduction to Strategic Studies* (London: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 114-15.
[77] Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, p. 138.
[78] Julian Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1988; first published in 1911), p. 94.
[79] Gray, *The Leverage of Sea Power*, p. 5; pp. 9-10.

comprehensive national power was invented in the early 1980s, it initially stemmed from Ancient China's traditional military strategic philosophy. For instance, Sun Tzu identified 'Five Fundamentals'[80] and 'Seven Stratagems'[81] that are the significant factors of national power, and they simply are the epitome of today's concept of the CNP.[82] In China's definition, the CNP means the total sum of the powers and strengths of a country in the area of the economy, military affairs, technology, education, resources, and international influences.[83] The CNP is a combination of all national powers for the national survival and development of a sovereign state, including some significant factors like politics, economics, culture and military.

1.6.4 National Grand Strategy

Grand strategy or so-called 'strategy of national development,' is an important part of a nation's overall strategy, and it must not be viewed as something independent from the overall strategy for a nation. The well known strategist Carl von Clausewitz once defined the grand strategy as the use of political, economic and military actions to achieve a state's goals.[84] The term grand strategy is not merely a military strategy, but a non-military strategy for national development. The national political leadership normally decides it. In brief, the grand strategy is the highest strategic level of a nation, and means a national strategic collective of military and non-military factors for promoting national interests and guiding other national strategies,[85] such as defence, economic, political and diplomatic strategies in wartime and peacetime.

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[80] The five fundamentals are the way, the weather, the terrain, the leadership, and discipline.
[81] The seven stratagems are seven assessments of war, including which political leadership has the way? Which general has ability? Who has the better climate and terrain? Whose discipline is effective? Whose troops are the stronger? Whose officers and soldiers are the better trained? Whose system of rewards and punishments is clearer?
[82] Pillsbury, *China Debates the Future Security Environment*, p. xxxvii.
[83] Refer to Huang Suofeng, *Comprehensive National Power Studies* (Beijing: Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Press, 1992), pp. 102, 164-165. Hu Angang and Men Honghua, 'The Rising of Modern China: Comprehensive National Power and Grand Strategy,' *Strategy & Management*, No. 3 (2002), pp. 1-35.
[84] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1976), p. 128.
[85] Paul Kennedy, 'Grand Strategy in War and Peace: Toward a Broader Definition,' in Paul Kennedy, ed., *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), p. 5; and see Thomas M. Kane, *Ancient China on Postmodern War* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 3.

1.6.5 National Defence Strategy

National defence strategy is the plan of organising the nation's armed forces for securing national interests and preparing for future war in the international environment, including the strategies of ground force, maritime force and air force.[86] For China, there are three steps in its development of military strategy. The first step is the 'people's war' from 1949 to the late 1970s. It has been described as 'a military strategy designed to turn weakness into strength by utilising China's vast size and manpower to wage a war of attrition against an invader'.[87] The second step is 'people's war under modern conditions' from 1978 to 1984. The strategic adjustment from the first step to the second step was due to the threat of the Soviet Union to China's northern border and the insufficiency of Mao's 'people's war.' The third step is 'local (limited) war under high-tech conditions' since 1990. During the period of the post-Cold war, Chinese leadership considered that a total war and a nuclear war were beyond the bounds of possibility;[88] the PLA should focus on local war. From the lesson of the Gulf War in 1991, the high-tech condition had been regarded as the most important part in the concept of local war to date.

1.6.6 Maritime Strategy

Colin S. Gray once said, 'Man lives on the land, not on the sea, and conflict at sea has strategic meaning only with reference to what its outcome enables, or implies, for the course of events on land'.[89] Maritime strategy has a significant meaning for a grand strategy of a maritime state. It is a sub-set of grand strategy, a long-term plan of action designed to attain a special maritime goal and a connection between military power and politico-economic intention at sea. On the contrary, naval strategy means nothing more than the use of military forces to obtain, or deny, command of the sea. Winning sea command is the objective of the side that needs the sea in order to project naval capabilities onto the rival's territory. The side that only requires avoiding the

[86] Mark Burles and Abram N. Shulsky, *Patterns in China's Use of Force: Evidence from History and Doctrinal Writings* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000), pp. 21-22.
[87] John Garver, *Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1993), p. 257.
[88] Burles and Shulsky, *Patterns in China's Use of Force*, pp. 26-29.
[89] Colin S. Gray, 'Seapower and Landpower,' in Colin S. Gray and Roger W. Barnet, eds, *Seapower and Landpower* (Annapolis: US Naval Institute, 1989), p. 4.

projection of antagonistic power from the sea can be satisfied with a strategy of sea denial.[90] In general, the terms of maritime strategy and naval strategy are often used interchangeably, but both terms are actually not the same. In a few words, the former is a seaward opportunity of grand strategy, shaped by geo-strategic setting, and determined by national leadership on what to control, for what purpose, and to what degree.[91] However, the latter is only the ocean-going military tactic and is the strategic thinking of admirals.

1.6.7 Military Doctrine

Briefly, the military doctrine is a belief system of viewpoints of war and preparations for combat, defined by the leadership of the nation for the strategic purpose of national security.[92] In reference to this term, Chinese military doctrine can be divided into four levels for analysis. Beginning from the highest level of thinking, they are military thought, strategy, campaigns and tactics.[93] Specifically, it is not only a military-force-oriented version, but also the level of military planning between military strategy and military operational tactics. It includes national military objectives, the military mission of the armed service, and the concept of military performance, the concern of military mission, the presentation of military thought and military historical experiences.[94]

[90] Jan S. Breemer, 'Naval Strategy Is Dead,' *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 120, No. 2 (1994), pp. 49-53.
[91] John B. Hattendorf, *The Evolution of the U.S. Navy's Maritime Strategy*, 1977-1986 (Newport: Naval War College, 2004), pp. 5-6.
[92] *Ibid*., p. 340.
[93] David Shambaugh, *Modernizing China's Military: Process, Problems, and Prospects* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 58-59.
[94] Julian Lider, *Military Theory: Concept, Structure, Problems* (Aldershot: Gower, 1983), pp. 307-308.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

That China's emergence is closely linked with the Asia-Pacific security system is an obvious phenomenon. The academic field of China studies has definitely become a very popular academic research field, which reveals China's affairs from many different dimensions and related writings. The study of China's national strategy is no exception. However, there are only a few works on China's maritime strategic issues. The interaction of Beijing's military strategic direction and the international security environment also has been strangely neglected in published analyses of the PLAN. As a result, it is not possible to see the whole landscape of China's maritime strategy in the incomplete area of PLA studies. This is why this thesis focuses on a study of the PRC's maritime strategy.

For understanding China's maritime strategy, filling gaps in the field and exploring China's maritime strategic behaviour conceptually, this section reviews important scholarly literature through an inductive-comparative perspective. Specifically, this section reviews three closely related research realms: (1) Approaches of Chinese strategic studies, (2) Chinese grand strategy and sea power, and (3) Chinese maritime strategy and the PLA Navy.

2.1 Approaches of Chinese Strategic Studies: Structural Realism vs. Strategic Culture

Generally, structural realism and strategic culture are the two significant approaches in Chinese strategic studies in recent years. Both research approaches have been updating their research hypotheses by generating new analyses of the goal of falsifiability in the study of international politics. Due to the changing trend of these theories in the field of IR, the study of China's strategic behaviour has also been directly affected by this tendency. For Chinese strategic studies, some analysts apply

structural realism to study the military strategic behaviour of China, considering that the reason for China's strategic behaviour is the external anarchic international system. On the contrary, some scholars examine China's military performance by approaching its strategic culture, considering that the understanding of Chinese internal strategic tradition is the best way to appreciate China's strategic development.

2.1.1 Structural Realism

Realism has been considered a foremost theory in the IR for a long time. However, from its recent development, it is not just a theory, but also a paradigm. In the realist family, Morgenthau's classical realism argues that state struggle for power and peace is produced from human biological impulses or so-called human will,[1] while Waltz's structural realism ignores human nature, arguing that a state dynamic for its survival is generated from an anarchic self-help international system.[2] In relation to the aspect of offensive-defensive realism, Mearsheimer's offensive realism argues that great powers lust for maximising their national security by maximising their national power,[3] while Waltz's defensive realism argues that great powers merely maximise their power to defend a situation of status quo or balance of power for national security.

Structural realism mainly concentrates on causal-effect relationships between actors and an anarchic international system, believing that the system can shape state behaviour, with the state being the essential unit of IR analysis.[4] The research of Waltz and Mearsheimer has the same hypotheses that states are: (1) the major actors in international relations; (2) anarchy is the main feature of the international environment; (3) states seek to maximise their power or security for survival; and (4) states always rely on their military-economic power to reach their objectives. However, an apparent difference between their works is that Waltz argues that power balancing is the best guarantee of state security, and states will pursue their power and

[1] Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 15th ed. (New York: Knopf, 1978), p. 30.
[2] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Relations* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979), p. 105.
[3] John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001), pp. 20-21.
[4] Waltz, *Theory of International Relations*, pp. 93-94; Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 10-11.

security in an international system until they reach a balance-of-power status.[5] Conversely, Mearsheimer argues that balance of power is just one of the strategies of great powers for their survival, and they will keep pursuing their power until they attain the goal of a regional hegemon in the system.[6] While both scholars share much in common about the discourse of structural realism, they pay little attention to the essential factor of many varied histories and cultures among nations in research on state behaviour.

Structural realism has already effectively analysed the development of Chinese strategic behaviour. Waltz and Mearsheimer argue that Chinese strategic behaviour is definitely based on the structure of the international system.[7] Even though their argument seems persuasive, it must be remembered that Chinese culture and history are also the key factors for studying China's external behaviour. Explicitly, it is inadequate to research China's military strategic behaviour without investigating the national strategic development of China from the Chinese strategic tradition.

From realist strategic studies, there is a significant problem as to whether China as a defensive power that prefers power equilibrium, or an offensive power that desires to be a hegemon in the Asia-Pacific. Mearsheimer and Yuan-Kang Wang examine China's military strategic tradition from Chinese history, arguing that China's strategic behaviour is offensive.[8] They both provide crucial evidence for research on China's military behaviour, but Wang's PhD thesis offers more solid Chinese historical evidence to the reader than Mearsheimer's research. Wang's research mainly examines two major periods in Chinese history, the Song Dynasty (AD 960-1279) and the Ming Dynasty (AD 1368-1644), for exploring China's military behaviour.[9] His research illustrates two arguments that China's external behaviour originated from the structure of the security environment, and only the structural realist approach can adequately explain China's external aggressive behaviour.

[5] Waltz, *Theory of International Relations*, p. 117.
[6] Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 20-22.
[7] Waltz, *Theory of International Relations*, pp. 115-116; Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, pp. 396-402.
[8] About China's external strategic behaviour, Mearsheimer argues, 'A wealthy China would not be a status quo power but an aggressive state determined to achieve regional hegemony. This is not because a rich China would have wicked motives, but because the best way for any state to maximise its prospects for survival is to be the hegemon in his region of the world.' Refer to Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 402.
[9] Wang's central question in his thesis is 'to what extent does culture influence the aggressive behaviours of states?' See Yuan-Kang Wang, 'Power Politics of Confucian China,' Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, USA, 2001, p. 4.

However, Mearsheimer and Wang fail to explain why Chinese military strategic thinking usually presents a defensive direction and has less to do with armed confrontation. Therefore, the realist research of Chinese military strategy has scope to include Chinese strategic history and culture.

2.1.2 Strategic Culture

Reflecting on the unsatisfactory explanation of structural realism in China's strategic studies, some scholars have begun to investigate China's inner strategic tradition. For example, Alastair I. Johnston, Andrew Scobell and Tiejun Zhang have begun to challenge the realist approach by pursuing a new cultural factor for the research of state strategic behavioural studies in terms of strategic culture in recent years. In his book *Cultural Realism*, Johnston attempts to build a rigorous theory for strategic culture through a carefully inductive method to select some related strategic cultural variables from Chinese military literature. With the aim of testing his assumption that state external behaviour originates from cultural elements, he not only uses Ming China for his case study, but also focuses on the thought of Confucian-Mencian (Confucianism) and some related Chinese traditional military classics.[10] Moreover, Johnston concludes his research with a statement that the culture of China's external behaviour is a *Parabellum* strategic culture;[11] also known as an offensive strategic culture. However, a misleading conception in Johnston's argument is that he sees culture is a static notion, ignoring the dynamic factor of culture between strategic culture and the security setting in China's history. He fails to mention that the strategic thinking of China's leadership also played an important role in imperial China's decision-making system, which could guide China's military behaviour in the era of the tribute system.

After Johnston, Zhang and Scobell continued to focus on the field and present the same assumptions about Chinese strategic cultural studies, which is similar to Johnston's work. However, the obvious differences are that Zhang, a Chinese scholar, prefers using positive terms to depict Chinese strategic culture, and argues that it is a

[10] Alastair I. Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Ming China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 40-49.
[11] For Johnson, the *Parabellum* strategic culture of China is the military culture of preparing to war. See Johnson, *Ibid*., pp. 248-51. The word of *parabellum* comes from a maxim '*si pacem parabellum*,' it means 'if you want peace, prepare for war.' Refer to Peter Howarth, *China's Rising Sea Power: The PLA Navy's Submarine Challenge* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 149.

defensive culture.[12] Scobell, a US scholar, prefers applying a comparative method for studying Chinese strategic culture.[13]

In 'Chinese Strategic Culture', Zhang opposes Johnston's argument that Chinese strategic culture is offensive, through arguing that China's strategic culture is a cultural moralism or non-violent culture. He considers that Chinese strategic culture is not only closely related to the geopolitics and self-sufficient economy of China, but is also directly related to the tribute system of ancient China under Confucian-Mencian elements.[14] Zhang argues that there is no reason for China to expand its military behaviour to invade other states for the needs of national economy, because Chinese strategic culture is rooted in an independent economic system and Confucian pacifism.[15] Even if his work attempts to explain that China's strategic culture is defensive in nature by analysing Confucian-Mencian thought, he lacks sufficient empirical support to explain whether China was reluctant to use force to settle disputes culturally in history.

In contrast, the Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) report of 'China and Strategic Culture' by Scobell argues that the PRC military strategic behaviour is influenced not only by elites' cognition of Chinese strategic tradition, but also by their comprehension of other states' strategic cultures.[16] While he still believes that strategic culture is the origin of state behaviour, he puts strategic culture in a new light by defining 'as the fundamental and enduring assumptions about the role of war in human affairs and the efficacy of applying force held by political and military elites in a country'.[17] Additionally, he goes on to point out that Chinese strategic culture is the presentation of interaction between Confucian-Mencian elements and an international system.[18] Indeed, Scobell's work has mentioned a significant direction on strategic cultural studies in the IR field, but he does not argue how China can still keep cultural norms in its strategic planning and military operations in the current international system. From his report, it is still somewhat difficult to see how the Chinese

[12] Tiejun Zhang, 'Chinese Strategic Culture: Traditional and Present Features,' *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (2002), pp. 73-90.
[13] Andrew Scobell, 'China and Strategic Culture,' The Report of Strategic Studies Institute (SSI), (Carlisle: US Army War College, May 2002), pp. 1-20.
[14] Zhang, 'Chinese Strategic Culture: Traditional and Present Features,' pp. 74-76; 81-82.
[15] Compared to West military expansionism in the 18th Century, Zhang argues that Chinese strategic culture is a defensive strategic culture, including: a set of virtue (*de*), benevolence (*ren*), righteousness (*yi*), the way of legitimate kings (*wand dao*) and justified war (*yi zhan*).
[16] Scobell, 'China and Strategic Culture,' pp.13-14.
[17] *Ibid*., p. 2.
[18] *Ibid*., p. 3.

worldview and strategic tradition interact with international Realpolitik.

2.1.3 Strategic Culture Supplements or Supplants Structural Realism?

In strategic studies, it is very difficult to find out an intersection point between the aforementioned two approaches, because the structural realist approach analysing state external behaviour is through the observation of the external international system. On the contrary, the strategic culturalist approach explaining state external behaviour is by exploring the internal state strategic tradition. For realist theory, strategic culture is an immature approach in the area of IR for analysing the international security issue. Its basic proposition is that the state culture of using force can affect state external military behaviour. As its inside-out proposition is different from realist theory, it caused a methodological debate and this debate includes several controversial problems.

For example, in reference to strategic culture, Johnston argues that it is an integrated system of symbols, guiding a direction of state external behaviour.[19] Nevertheless, the book *Modern Strategy* by Colin S. Gray argues that strategic culture just could be regarded as a context of strategic research for analysing state strategic behaviour, and it does not mean that strategic culture is the main origin of state behaviour, but a dimension of strategic research.[20] In addition, Michael C. Desch, in his article 'Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies,' argues that the research variables of strategic culture are hard to define operationally.[21] However, the article 'Isms and Schisms: Culturalism versus Realism in Security Studies' by John Glenn *et al*. argues that the problem of selecting suitable research variables sometimes is also difficult to define for explaining and predicting international phenomena in realist theory.[22] In respect to the problem of whether strategic culture could supplement or supplant realist theory, almost no scholars argue strategic culture could supplant realist theory today, but they all agree that these two

[19] Johnston, *Cultural Realism*, p. 46.
[20] Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 129-30; refer also to Gray, 'Strategic culture as context: the first generation of theory strikes back,' *Review of International Studies* (1999), Vol. 25, pp. 49-69
[21] Michael C. Desch, 'Culture Clash: Assessing the Importance of Ideas in Security Studies,' *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Summer 1998), p. 150.
[22] John S. Duffield *et al.*, 'Isms and Schisms: Culturalism versus Realism in Security Studies,' *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 1999), pp. 157-59.

theories need a middle path and can be mutually reinforcing for explaining state external behaviour.[23] Briefly, the middle approach is to see state's strategic behaviour as an outcome of the interaction between its own inside worldview and the outside international security environment.

2.2 Chinese Grand Strategy and Sea Power

With the open-door policy since 1978, the direction of China's national oceanic development is becoming more and more obvious than it was in the past. Thus, it is a significant task to explore what the concept of Chinese sea power is from studying its grand strategy. In order to understand the relations of the Chinese grand strategy and sea power in this maritime strategic study, this section carefully reviews these two essential concepts from related writings.

2.2.1 The Chinese Grand Strategy

A grand strategy is a national comprehensive strategy, including mutually connected political, economic, military and diplomatic strategies. No national sub-strategies can be separated from the guide of the grand strategy. Theoretically, in Chinese maritime strategic study, maritime strategy must build on the connection of grand strategy and sea power. Namely, only when a state grand strategy has a clear strategic direction for pursuing sea power can a state develop a well designed maritime strategy and a balanced navy for maritime power and security. Even if numerous attempts have been made by scholars to study China's grand strategy, it has not been widely used as a general notion or theory for strategic studies. For this problem, the research of Alastair Iain Johnston and Avery Goldstein attempts to examine state external behaviour by constructing China's grand strategy, but they differ widely in their methods and arguments.

Johnston's work on Chinese grand strategy and strategic culture provides a theoretically critical assessment of Chinese grand strategy, but he does not provide a

[23] John Glenn *et al.*, *Neorealism versus Strategic Culture* (Burlington: Ashgate Press, 2004), pp. 11-12.

full-vision theoretical frame of grand strategy to the reader, because his work chiefly focuses on the construction of methodology for strategic culture from the history of China. In contrast, Goldstein's work offers the view that the formation of China's grand strategy derives from the leadership's strategic logic and the perception of international security.[24] Goldstein's work elaborates on the causal relationship of China's grand strategy and the international security setting, but his work does not account for the aspect of China's military strategy. To the study of PLA maritime strategy, Goldstein's work represents a significant direction to investigate what China's sea power is from the oceanic dimension of China's grand strategy.

2.2.2 The Chinese Concept of Sea Power

In regards to the concept of sea power, it must be a part of a grand strategy in theory. Today, much effort has been expended on the research of China's sea power but in different ways. Some scholars, generally, explore the concept of Chinese sea power from history, such as the research on China's sea power by Louise Levathes and John W. Lewis and Litai Xue.[25] However, some scholars analyse China's sea power simply through the Mahanian theory, and examples are 'The Influence of Mahan upon China's Maritime Strategy' and 'China and the Commons: Angell or Mahan?' by James Holmes and Toshi Yoshihara.

Levathes's work on Ming China's sea power demonstrates a significant historical and cultural account for the growth of Chinese sea power offering an explanation that the expansion of Chinese sea power was based on the strategic

[24] Avery Goldstein, *Rising to the Challenge: China's Grand Strategy and International Security* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), pp. 17-20.

[25] Levathes's work mainly explores China's sea power from the ancient history of Ming China; she argues that Ming China's maritime expeditions (1405-1433) from China wast to the east of Africa were earlier than Columbus's expedition in the 16th Century. Moreover, she offers fruitful historical evidence that within the period of Ming China, the technology of navigation, shipbuilding, and naval training was superior to any western states at the same time, and could be a sea power in the world. Besides, she argues that because of politico-economic problems, the Ming emperor Yong Lo finally stopped all maritime expeditions at the end of the Ming Dynasty. From her work, thus, it could be realised that China was indeed a sea power in earlier times. See Louise Levathes, *When China Ruled the Seas: The Treasure Fleet of The Dragon Throne 1405-1433* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994). The research by Lewis and Xue is to analyse China's sea power from the dimension of the military in modern Chinese history, in which they examine the development of submarine, missile, and strategy of China's military sea power through analysing Sino-Soviet military relations and Chinese leaders' strategic thinking. Refer to John W. Lewis and Litai Xue, *China's Strategic Seapower: The Politics of Force Modernization in the Nuclear Age* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

consideration of the Ming emperor and the needs of its tribute system.[26] This research also indicates that the concept of China's sea power was strongly rooted in its continental strategic thinking and geographical features. Added to this, what seems to be lacking is that Levathes does not build a systematic notion of China's sea power in her historical research of Chinese sea power. However, her historical work suggests two important and useful viewpoints for further studies. First, she claims that China indeed experienced an exploration of sea power in its history. Second, she argues that China's traditional sea power under the tribute system was different to the West's sea power of colonialism.

Unlike Levathes, Lewis and Xue examine China's sea power since 1949, and mainly focus on the development of PLAN in the Mao and Deng periods. They argue that as the result of the Sino-Soviet break and the withdrawal of Soviet naval assistance to China in the 1950s, China started to develop its own naval force and military modernisation by self-reliance in 1958. Even if their work carefully focuses on the many dimensions of Chinese naval development, such as submarines, nuclear technology and ballistic missiles, their work barely discusses PRC maritime strategy and downplays the Soviet influence on China's maritime strategic thinking in the 1950s and 1970s.[27] Their work seems to conclude that the nuclear power of the PLAN, with a great deal of historical evidence about PLA naval building, is the same as China's strategic sea power.[28] Nevertheless, their research just could be seen as a study of Chinese naval build-up in the nuclear era.

Holmes and Yoshihara argue that Mahanian sea power today is shaping China's maritime aspirations, including maritime commerce, naval strategy, naval shipping,

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[26] Levathes, *When China Ruled the Seas*, pp. 124-135.

[27] In relation to Soviet maritime strategic thought, there were two naval schools involved before the 1960s. The first is the 'Old School' in the early 1920s, which focused on the build-up of major combatants, such as battleships and cruisers. Nevertheless, due to the weak economy of the USSR at that time, this school was restricted. 'Young School' maritime strategy was a defensive strategy, which focused on the build-up of a coastal defence navy, including coastal craft, submarines, and torpedo boats after WWI. However, after WW II, Stalin began to turn away from the Young School for national strategic needs, and because of the former Soviet Union Admiral Gorshkov's promotion of an ocean-going navy, hence, after the Korean War (1950-1953), the USSR started to adjust the maritime strategic thinking of the 'Young School' to Gorshkov's navalism. Namely, Gorshkov's strategic thinking not only guided the development of the Soviet navy from a coastal defence navy to an ocean-going navy, but also affected the development of China's maritime strategy and PLAN after the 1970s. Refer to Sergei Chernyavskii, 'The Era of Gorshkov: Triumph and Contradictions,' *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (April 2005); Sergey G. Gorshkov, *The Sea Power of the State* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1979).

[28] John W. Lewis and Litai Xue, *China's Strategic Seapower: The Politics of Force Modernization in the Nuclear Age* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), pp. 231-242.

strategic doctrine, maritime strategic interests and security.[29] They point out that many scholars regard geo-politics as an outdated approach for examining the influence of geopolitics on China's maritime strategic thinking, but the PRC still seriously views geopolitics as a main element of Chinese maritime strategy.[30] Their research seems to misinterpret the original concept of Mahanian sea power in Chinese maritime strategic research.

According to Mahan's thought, sea power is the concept of grand strategy of a maritime state. Thus, it is neither merely the performance of naval force, nor just the command of the sea. Nonetheless, both authors do not examine maritime strategy under China's grand strategy by applying Mahan's whole idea of sea power, but partially by applying the conception of command of the sea to analyse it. Their work is an unsatisfactory discourse on China's sea power.

2.2.3 China's Grand Strategy and Maritime Strategy

Due to the limited literature on China's maritime strategy as an aspect of grand strategy, the research of Chunguang Wu and Thomas M. Kane has become an important source for this part of the review. Both scholars seem to have the same method to analyse Beijing's maritime strategic problems through the explanation of China's grand strategy. Wu's work directly attributes many important aspects of oceanic strategic thinking to national development, such as China's oceanic consciousness, maritime strategic interests, maritime commerce, offshore sovereignty, maritime security, and naval strategy. However, his work does not directly offer any argument about the framework of China's grand strategy. Moreover, Wu's work is largely based on some aspects of China's maritime interests, security and threats with an inductive approach, by arguing that China really needs a powerful navy for solving the maritime problems of sovereignty, resources, the SLOCs, and international relations in the Asia-Pacific.[31] Wu's work is a broad review about China's oceanic strategic problems, but there are faults in his book, such as he putting too many personal views in arguing about Beijing's defence policy, and he does not include any

[29] James R. Holmes and Toshi Yoshihara, 'The Influence of Mahan upon China's Maritime Strategy,' *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 2005), pp. 23-33; Holmes and Yoshihara, 'China and the Commons: Angell or Mahan?' *World Affairs*, Vol. 168, No. 4 (Spring 2006), pp. 173-74.
[30] Holmes and Yoshihara, 'China and the Commons: Angell or Mahan?' pp. 172-73.
[31] Chunguang Wu, *The Contest at the Pacific Ocean: the Contemporary Oceanic Strategic Problems of China* (Beijing: Jinri Zhongguo Press, 1998).

citations.

Kane in *Chinese Grand Strategy and Maritime Power* generally addresses a significant contemporary topic on China's maritime power and its naval potential ability through the analysis of Chinese grand strategy.[32] He assumes that if China wishes to be a global power, it must establish its power upon maritime expansion.[33] In addition, he examines China's maritime history by using Mahan's principles and international relations, arguing that China has the potential to be a sea power in the future. However, like Wu, Kane's work also does not offer the readers an obvious Chinese grand strategy that connects with Chinese maritime power. Consequently, it is obvious that this book presents just a summation of some significant maritime elements of China's sea power, but not an insightful argument. Despite the fact that his research is insufficient, Kane has made the important point that the way to study China's maritime strategy is through analysing the maritime strategic direction of China's grand strategy.

2.3 China's Maritime Strategy and the PLA Navy

This section reviews some relevant studies on the integration of the build-up of the PLAN and the development of Chinese maritime strategy by making an argument that the maritime strategic performance of China is the trinity of national strategic thinking, maritime strategy and naval build-up.

2.3.1 China's National Defence Strategy and Maritime Strategy

Strategically, national defence policy is a military strategic plan to guide continental, maritime, and air military strategic directions and operations for protecting national strategic interests and security. Regarding the issue of Chinese national defence policy, Mark Burles and Abram N. Shulsky's research mainly focuses on examining Beijing's perception of future war and military doctrines through an historical

[32] Thomas M. Kane, *Chinese Grand Strategy and Maritime Power* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), pp. 2-11.
[33] *Ibid*., p. 139.

approach. They consider that it is a main factor in guiding China's preparation for war.[34] David M. Finkelstein argues that studying Chinese national defence must include three strategic components: ends, ways and means. In particular, he provides a serious formula for analysing the PRC's national military strategy: 'National Military Strategy = National Military Objectives + National Strategic Concepts + National Military Resources.'[35] He argues that the concept of China's national military strategy was generated from its perceptions of sovereignty, modernity and stability.[36] In respect to the importance of maritime strategic orientation, he considers that because of the reasoning of maritime economic interests and offshore sovereignty, the maritime imperative in Beijing's thinking of shaping its security setting is becoming a major part of its national defence strategy.[37] Indeed, Finkelstein's work offers a clear approach to understand PRC national military strategy toward the sea, but he pays less attention to discussing it.

The work of Burles and Shulsky argues that Chinese national military strategy is mostly defined by different generations of the PRC elites' strategic thinking. Their work provides a very clear explanation of the development of China's national military strategy from the Maoist 'People's War' to the Dengist 'People's War under Modern Conditions' and then to today's 'Local War under High-Tech Conditions.' They also argue that China's strategic development presents a strong desire for modernised PLA armed forces.[38] Like Finkelstein's work, Burles and Shulsky's work has the same restricted demonstration about the connection between China's national defence strategy and maritime strategy, although these authors all consider that maritime strategy is an inseparable part of national defence.

For a thorough understanding of the relations of maritime strategy and the Chinese navy in depth, the journal article 'China's Maritime Strategy' by Bernard D. Cole and the book *The Command of the Sea and Strategic Employment of Naval Forces* by Liu Yijing are important sources. Cole applies historical methods to address the development of China's maritime strategy under its national defence

[34] Burles and Shulsky, 'Chinese National Military Strategy' in *Patterns in China's Use of Force: Evidence from History and Doctrinal Writings* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000), pp. 21-22.
[35] David M. Finkelstein, 'China's National Military Strategy' in James C. Mulvenon and Richard H. Yang, eds, *The People's Liberation Army in the Information Age* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1999), p. 102.
[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 103-4. David's work mainly focuses on the analysis of the reports of Chinese Communist Party Congresses and the conceptual structure of national military strategy.
[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 117-18.
[38] Burles and Shulsky, 'Chinese National Military Strategy,' p. 28.

strategy, arguing that China's perception of security at sea could affect its development of a national defence strategy. He argues that the change of PRC elites' maritime strategic thinking would promote the change of maritime strategy.[39] Similarly, strategic studies must analyse the three most important strategic dimensions, including ends, ways and means. Cole's work provides many original Chinese naval documents from Chinese texts for understanding maritime strategic ends, and offers many viewpoints of China's leadership about maritime strategic ways to the readers.[40] However, Cole fails to present a clear account for the maritime strategic means (the PLAN). Thus, his article certainly leaves an obvious vacuum for further research of the interdependent connection between maritime strategy and the PLAN.

Liu considers that a well designed maritime strategy with a strong naval force is the guarantee of China's economic development, security and interests. For an understanding of China's maritime strategy, he argues that the best way is to realise the basic concept of '*zi hai quan*' (command of the sea) and its elements.[41] Liu's work focuses on three dimensions: (1) the explanation of the theories of command of the sea from China's ancient history to modern history; (2) the struggle of the command of the sea in a local war during a nuclear age; and (3) the revolution of maritime military affairs. Liu also proposes three arguments about China's maritime strategy to the readers: (1) the development of a maritime strategy and naval capability must accord with the grand strategy; (2) the purpose of a national military strategy is to shape a stable maritime environment; and (3) the operation of a maritime strategy is to avoid threats from the sea. He keeps arguing that the basis of China's maritime strategy is to develop a balanced navy for seizing the command of the sea in the northwest Pacific Ocean and a part of the Indian Ocean in terms of China's maritime security.[42] From Liu's work, Beijing's endeavours to build up an ocean-going navy for winning maritime command can be appreciated.

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[39] Bernard D. Cole, 'China's Maritime Strategy' in *Hampton Roads International Security Quarterly* (Summer 2002), pp. 140-141. For example, Cole's work argues that due to the change in the USSR's concept of future war from global nuclear war to local limited war on islands or sea areas in 1985. At that time, China also has felt the threat from the USSR; the PRC therefore not only shifted its national defence strategic direction from land to maritime areas for security, but also promoted its expansion of maritime strategy and modernization of the PLAN.

[40] *Ibid*., pp. 151-62. Generally, Beijing's maritime strategic ends are the sovereignty of territorial waters and islands, maritime economic interests and strategic interests. Moreover, its maritime strategic ways are to promote military modernization, to extend power projection, and to improve naval technology and equipments.

[41] Yijing Liu, *Zi hai quan yu hai jun zhan lue* [The Command of the Sea and Strategic Employment of Naval Forces] (Beijing: The University of National Defence Press, 2000), pp. 1-3.

[42] *Ibid*., pp.230-40.

2.3.2 China's Maritime Strategy and the Development of the PLAN

China as a Maritime Power by David G. Muller could be seen as an earlier study of China's maritime power. Muller's research argues that China's maritime power cannot be limited to an explanation of the PLAN, just because Chinese naval history, naval strategic thinking, naval politics, maritime economics, and maritime foreign relations can directly or indirectly motivate the growth of China's maritime power. Muller's work gives many useful historical viewpoints about China's maritime elements, but he does not supply the reader with a clear picture of the development of China's maritime strategy and its relationship with the build-up of the PLAN, because the delimitations of different naval historical periods in his work are too vague to understand. Moreover, he divides China's naval strategy under Maoist China into these three periods for analysis,[43] but he does not show any different development of Maoist maritime strategy in these three parts. Strictly speaking, Muller's work really provides related historical aspects for the origins of the development of China's maritime power, but his work can merely be seen as a historical research based on Chinese navy in the 1980s.

Both Bernard D. Cole and Srikanth Kondapalli agree with Muller's main argument that China is no longer a traditional continental power. Both scholars have a great deal in common, for example, their research studies the PLAN by focusing on an analysis of China's history, geography, maritime interests, naval training and maritime strategy. Cole's work considers that the dynamics of the PLAN establishment are maritime offshore territorial sovereignty, economic interests and energy security, and which could affect the development of China's maritime strategy.[44] However, his work neither offers the reader a depiction of the development of the PLAN under China's maritime strategy, nor provides a discussion of whether or not maritime strategy and the PLAN are mutually integrated. This deficiency has become an obvious shortcoming in his work, although he endeavours to make his discourse convincing. Kondapalli argues that the direct inner dynamic of the build-up of the PLAN is China's leadership. For example, he argues that the maritime strategic

[43] David G. Muller, *China as a Maritime Power* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1983), pp. 44-56; 111-16; 168-177.
[44] Bernard D. Cole, *The Great Wall at Sea: China's Navy Enters the 21st Century* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2001), pp. 30-45; pp. 169-72.

thinking of Deng Xiaoping can be the direct factor to decide naval strategic direction of offshore active defence, and it can guide the development of the Chinese navy from a coastal defence one to an offshore defence one.[45] However, a fault in Kondapalli's work is that he confuses maritime and naval strategies.

In PLAN studies, You Ji and Paul Dodge have some common arguments. First, China's naval capability of sea control still cannot reach the goal of a second island chain under its maritime strategy of offshore active defence. The capability of the PLAN does not integrate with its maritime strategy. Second, the design of China's maritime strategy today is still inheriting the maritime-layered defence of the Soviet model. Third, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US navy has replaced the Soviet navy and has been seen as China's main imaginary enemy at sea. Fourth, they both emphasise that China's maritime strategy is a vague defensive-offensive strategy.

In contrast, You's work argues that the conception of sea control in Beijing's maritime strategy is different from the Western strategic idea that is based on navalism to protect maritime freedom from enemies. In contrast, China's notion is to emphasise 'building temporary and area tactical naval superiority through concentrated usage of combat facilities and the exploitation of geographic advantage'.[46] He argues that the development of the PLAN's capability is quite slow, so that China must adopt a missile strategy to supplement its layered defensive maritime strategy for asymmetric warfare.[47]

In comparison with You's study, Dodge's work mainly focuses on the use of nuclear weapons of China's maritime strategy. He argues that the PRC has a well designed maritime strategy of layered defence or so-called two-island chain defence but the PLAN is still too weak to integrate with the strategic planning for the advanced strategic missions of sea control and sea denial in maritime defence.[48] (Refer to Appendix A) Moreover, for winning warfare at sea, China's maritime strategy today has combined with the tactic of nuclear deterrence in its maritime

[45] Srikanth Kondapalli, *China's Naval Power* (New Delhi: Knowledge World Press, 2001), pp. 9-11.
[46] You Ji, 'The Evolution of China's Maritime Combat Doctrines and Models: 1949-2001,' in Working Paper No. 22, (Singapore: Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Nanyang Technological University, 2002), pp. 21-22.
[47] *Ibid*., pp. 24-26.
[48] For the strategic purpose of sea denial, the first island chain starts from Japan to Liuqu Islands and to Taiwan and the Philippines archipelago; the second island chain starts from Ugasawara-Gunto Islands and the Mariana Islands of Japan to Indonesia. See *Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2006*, the US Dept. of Defence, Office of the Secretary of Defence (May 2006), p. 15. Available at <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2006/2006-prc-military-power.htm>. Accessed on 25 September 2006.

defence.[49] He also argues that China currently still characterises its maritime strategy as defensive, but the direction of its naval building is toward an offensive orientation.[50] For instance, China purchased offensive Sovremmeny-class destroyers, the Kilo-class submarines, and Sukhoi(Su)-27, -30 fighters from Russia for reinforcing its naval projection.

In general, the factors of maritime military strategy not only include the armed forces, the national interests and leaders' strategic thinking, but also contain the consideration of the international security environment. From these texts, both authors indeed offer many convincing arguments with solid cases about that by arguing that the direction of Chinese maritime strategy and the capability of the PLAN are not well integrated with each other. Their research definitely provides many useful arguments about the build-up of China's naval capabilities and its current strategic problems, which also leaves a direction for further studies on Beijing's maritime strategic arrangement.

2.4 Summary

Since the late 1980s, academic literature on Chinese military strategic studies has benefited from many dimensions of studies on China that have examined Chinese civil-military relations, military theory, strategic tradition, military institutions and military services. From the literature review in this chapter, is understandable that the field of Chinese maritime strategic study is still unsatisfactory. It is quite difficult to gain a systematic and theoretical understanding of China's maritime strategic logic and behaviour from the aforementioned literature.

On the subject of Chinese strategic behaviour, some scholars undertaking this research base their work on Western realism. However, other scholars primarily focus on the approach of strategic culture. Irrespective of whether they are realists or culturalists, most of them ignore two essential influences on Chinese assessments: China's worldview and Marxist-Leninist doctrine. Therefore, some scholars, educated

[49] Paul Dodge, 'China's Naval Strategy and Nuclear Weapons: The Risks of International and Inadvertent Nuclear Escalation' *Comparative Strategy* (2005), Vol. 24, No. 5, pp. 415-16.
[50] *Ibid*., pp. 424-25.

in the West, incorrectly believe that Chinese views reflect a mirror image of their own, and it is the discourse of the so-called Orientalism of China studies. Conversely, Beijing's assessments of its strategic direction may substantially differ from Western assessments, because China has its own unique perceptions, which may be hard to understand.

With the intention of realising China's maritime strategy and its future path of the PLAN in the Asia-Pacific, this research views a set of China's worldview, national interests and grand strategy as a vital driving power for explaining patterns of external Chinese maritime strategic development under the international system. Besides, this research explores the enduring puzzle in Beijing's maritime strategic reasoning and behaviour by analysing China's security circumstances, strategic thinking, national economy and military doctrine. To the concept of Chinese strategic culture, it is not only a controversial term, but also a complex conception. Although it is a very important dimension in strategic studies, it is not easy to define its scope for research. In this research, it can be seen as a background of PRC leaders' strategic decision-making for supporting this research.

The perspective of grand strategy is the map for pursuing national comprehensive development. Thus, it is not sufficient to conduct a maritime strategic study without exploring the oceanic direction of a grand strategy from the strategic thought of China's leadership. For China, with over 60 years of development, the weight of ocean-oriented strategic interests has changed Beijing's grand strategic orientation from the land to the sea, which has undeniably guided the expansion of its maritime strategy for fulfilling its offshore operational missions of protecting its security border, of national interests and economic development. For these reasons, the evolution of the PRC's maritime strength has become a significant index of regional maritime security studies. In this light, the maritime direction of grand strategy is a key dimension of China's ambition for pursuing sea power, and that could not be separated from research on China's maritime strategy.

Although many related studies have offered useful ideas on the research of Chinese maritime strategic behaviour and growth of the PLAN, the reader still cannot get a thorough landscape of Beijing's maritime strategic impact on the Asia-Pacific from those studies. Given this unsatisfactory situation, this research focuses on the relations between Chinese maritime strategy, naval expansion, and the maritime security of the Asia-Pacific, because this is an important problem in the Asia-Pacific

maritime security requiring attention.

PART I
ORIGINS

Maritime strategy is an important national plan of disposing various maritime security affairs for national development. Many littoral states view the ocean as a vital base in striving for development, even seeing the use of the sea as an essential national policy of developing 'Comprehensive National Power' (CNP). Under the situation of a gradually transforming multilateral global system, most countries with littoral borders try to develop sea power for maritime benefits according to their international security environment, limited continental resources, and strategic reasoning. In this, China is no exception.

In the Asia-Pacific today, the struggle of maritime interests among littoral nations has caused the seas to become 'New Command Fields' in international competition, and this trend also catalyses the formation of a multilateral maritime security structure. Therefore, contending maritime interests between states are no less important than fighting conflicts on land. The issue of war and peace at sea has become the main theme of the twenty-first century. Undeniably, China is the largest Asian country with a rising economic powerhouse in the world. Militarily, what kind of maritime strategic behaviour will such a country bring to the Asia-Pacific region? This question has caused much global concern. In addition, it is important to realise what the origins of Chinese maritime strategy are.

In order to explore the origins of China's maritime strategy, this thesis begins with an argument about Chinese *Weltanschauung*, which is the starting place of China's maritime strategic behaviour. It then constructs a historical-cultural analysis of the other roots of China's maritime strategic evolution by examining three interrelated strategic origins; they are Chinese grand strategy, traditional strategic culture, and current nationalism.

Chapter 3
Weltanschauung, Grand National Strategy, Strategic Culture and Nationalism

With the incredible pace of its growth in politico-economic strength, the rise of modern China has been one of the most remarkable transformations the world has ever seen. Today, it is upgrading its politico-military influence for remaking its traditional Sino-centric Confucianism. Hence, Beijing's current strategic behaviour can be seen as a combination of its worldview, traditional Sino-centric system (Sino-centrism), comprehensive national power, and international realpolitik. For identifying with this viewpoint, this section explores the question: 'What are the driving origins of Chinese maritime strategic expansion?' In order to provide a broader vision in China's military strategy studies, this chapter attempts to explain an argument that the evolution of Beijing's maritime strategic behaviour derived from the origins (strategic reasoning) of its *Weltanschauung*, grand strategy, strategic culture and nationalism. Importantly, this study also tries to avoid the discourse of orientalism by bringing China's vision of its national strategic development back in to this research.

3.1 Chinese *Weltanschauung*: Past and Present

While the analysis of the international environment is always an important dimension for examining China's national behaviour, Chinese philosophical thinking has deep cultural and historical roots affecting its worldview and strategic behaviour. Concerning the philosophical roots of China's strategic beliefs, it is necessary to seek the historical roots of the different philosophical beliefs. Historically, the Warring States Period of China (*zhanquo shidai*, 463-221 BC) was the era when the major political institutions defining China's state system were established. The establishment of the ancient state system was accompanied by the emergence of

diversified schools of philosophy among Confucianism,[1] which showed the harmonious philosophy of Confucian-Mencian cosmopolitism—'*tian xia*'.[2] It not only was the most dominant school influencing the Chinese worldview, but it also guided China's thinking about military strategy and its conduct of international relations in East Asia.

Ancient China's experience of the system of intra-states during the Spring and Autumn Era (*chunqiu shidai*, 772-481 BC) and the Warring State Era is challenging, as it evolved wholly independently of Western influence. When the Qin (221-206 BC) defeated other states and succeeded finally in unifying China, the transformation of the inter-state system of Ancient China into a universal empire was accomplished. Importantly, the Chinese tribute system was established and operational until the Qin Dynasty ended the Warring States Period and unified China. After the Warring States Period, Imperial China presided over a long-term politico-social order, which was an international system of a sort nestled within a unique Confucian civilisation in the region of East Asia.[3] Confucianism in Ancient and Imperial China was an important cultural component, in which Confucian ideas, amorphous, adaptable, and various as they were,[4] were used for the design of education system, social relations, military strategy, imperial institutions, and governing systems. More concretely, within the Confucian worldview of imperial inter-state relations, the position of Chinese civilisation was at the apex of the world order—*Tian Xia*, offering an intellectual and bureaucratic model of governance for the Middle Kingdom and its peripheral states.

3.1.1 The Worldview of Sino-centric Confucianism

From the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD) on, Confucianism decisively became the dominant national philosophy. Han emperors initiated a movement to get rid of other schools of thought and only respect the Confucian thought, which can be called Imperial Confucianism in this period, which became the prevailing ideology and the

[1] The cosmology of Confucianism mainly emphasises on a world harmonious notion of non-violence, defensive and righteous war. See Hu Chuo-yun, 'Applying Confucius Ethics to International Relations,' *Journal of Ethics and International Affairs*, Vol. 5 (March-April 1991), pp. 15-31.
[2] Daniel A. Bell, "War, Peace, and China's Soft Power: A Confucian Approach," *Diogenes*, No. 221 (2009), pp. 29-31.
[3] Yongjin Zhang, 'System, Empire and State in Chinese International Relations,' *Review of International Studies*, No. 27 (2001), pp. 44-45.
[4] Martin White, *International Theory: The Three Traditions* (edited by Gabriele White and Brian Porter), (London: Leicester University Press, 1991), p 66.

major foundation of the Chinese worldview.[5] In Imperial China, Confucianism also contributed to the unique Chinese political system, tribute system, and the world order of the Pax Sinica, which were different from the Westphalian view of equal sovereignty among states.[6] In the Confucian worldview, strategically, the tribute system was a sub-system of international politics and had important politico-military functions for keeping peace with China's peripheral states and maintaining a stable tributary relationship. It also can be seen as a sub-economic cultural system in terms of Sino-civilization and international commerce, affecting many non-Chinese states on the periphery of 'the Middle Kingdom.'[7]

The Han Dynasty is an important period, during which Confucianism won in the philosophical struggle against many different schools of thought and reflected the aspiration of harmony. Further, the hierarchical ruling promoted by Confucianism had vast appeal for political leaders. A final point is that Confucianism remained a domestically focused ruling philosophy. In the development of Confucian-Mencian philosophy at that time, all corpuses of thought were associated with Sino-centric beliefs—and more recently with the highly state-centric variants of 'Communism' and 'Nationalism' advocated by contemporary China.[8]

Although the traditional *Weltanschauung* of China under Confucianism was generated from the Warring State Period of about 2,500 years ago, it still reminds Chinese leaders never to overlook the importance of the soft power of traditional culture. The culture of Confucianism under the Mao Zedong era once was regarded as a backward symbol of Imperial China's feudalism and conservatism and was replaced by Marxism-Leninism and anti-traditionalism during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). However, in the Deng Xiaoping era, China started to bring Confucianism back in, giving it a high position in the fields of academia and society. In recent years, Beijing also used the culture of Confucianism as a form of international soft power to

[5] Huiyun Feng, *Chinese Strategic Culture and Foreign Policy Decision-Making: Confucianism, Leadership and War* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 20-21.
[6] The Chinese dominated East Asian order is distinct from the Westphalian system. In the Chinese case, the *pax sinica* is not based on the principles of equal sovereignty among states, but built on Confucian civilization and culture. See Zhang, 'System, empire and state in Chinese international relations,' p. 45; and Yong Deng, 'The Chinese Conception of National Interests in International Relations,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 154 (June 1998), p. 325.
[7] The translation of the Chinese term for 'China' literally means 'Middle Kingdom.' Namely, China's vision kept it at the centre of the world with all of the states on its periphery paying tribute to China's emperor, or so-called '*tain zi*' (the son of heaven).
[8] Michael D. Swaine and Ashely J. Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy: Past, Present, and Future* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000), p. 12.

fight against Chinese threat theory by promoting China's peaceful rising; setting up the Confucius Institute around the world was an example.[9]

China did not discard its Sino-centric world order of traditional Confucian philosophy, and by the early 1990s, the PRC ruling elites had effectively adopted a new national grand strategy; its goal was to create a modern version of a tribute system for an unchallenged domination by China in the area of East Asia.[10] Ross Munro observed that China still seems to categorise its peripheral neighbours into two groups: tributary states that acknowledge Beijing's hegemony and potential enemies that tend to contain rising China.[11] Due to the high growth of Chinese politico-military power with strong economic muscle to match and because of the perceived decline of comprehensive national power of the United States,[12] PRC leaders assertively started to pursue the domination of the Asia-Pacific region. Based on China is rising politico-economic strength, this goal was not the mere idealism from its historical heyday but was something attainable in the near future.

3.1.2 The Modern Worldviews of Multi-polarisation

The concept of 'multipolar world order' is an important ingredient of modern China's worldview. Despite rapid globalisation, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has retained an almost unchanging appraisal of a global multi-polarisation since the end of the twentieth century.[13] This assessment of the world system of the PRC can be regarded as the result of the mixture of Confucianism, Mao Zedong's thought, and Marxism-Leninism. It is because in Beijing's thinking, '*ba quan*' (a world hegemon), a capitalist American hegemony especially, is the main source of war, and only a multipolar system with no hegemon can maintain a situation of world peace.

[9] I-Pin Yang, 'The Relation between of the Culture of Confucianism and China's Soft Power: Take Confucius Institute as an Example,' *Prospective & Exploration*, Vol. 5, No. 7 (2007), p. 23-24.
[10] Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China* (New York: Knopf, 1997), p. 4; pp. 53-54.
[11] Ross, H. Munro, 'Eavesdropping on the Chinese Military: Where it Expects War—Where it doesn't,' *Orbis*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (Summer 1994), pp. 1-17.
[12] Michael Pillsbury, *China Debates the Future Security Environment* (Washington DC: National Defence University Press, 2000), pp. 63-105. After the 1990s, there were many Chinese authors making the common claim that the tendency of global multi-polarization is quickening, and this phenomenon prevents the US from achieving world dominance. They also argue that the comprehensive national power of the US is declining relatively; thus creating a single-pole world for the US is difficult.
[13] Richard Kuglar, *Toward a Dangerous World: U.S. National Security for the Coming Turbulence* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1995), pp. 101-60.

Additionally, this assessment sees that the CNP of the US is relatively declining,[14] so that the world will be in a situation of multi-polarisation, similar to that of the Warring State Period of Ancient China. Significantly, Beijing considers that the idea of China's '*hexie shijie*' (Harmonious World),[15] formerly the '*hepin gongchu wu yuanze*' (the five principles of peaceful coexistence) in the 1950s,[16] will become the standard of this multipolar system in the future, a formulation which in this research is called 'the modern worldview of China.' Paradoxically, although the Beijing regime today sees US hegemony as an unstable factor of the current multi-polar world, Beijing still regards the existence of a dominating power as a *sine qua non* in the world. In this sense, according to the Chinese Sino-centric worldview, if there is to be a 'leading country'[17] in the Asia-Pacific, then it should be China, not the US.

The outlook of a coming multi-polarisation for modern China is a key point of its conception of international relations, and PRC leadership believes that the age of multi-polarisation is around the corner. For China, the current world structure is composed of so-called '*yi chao duo qiang*' (multiple powers with one superpower),[18] in which the US is still the sole superpower in the world, while the Beijing regime believes that the national power of the US is relatively decreasing. Beijing considers that US domination of this age is the result of its economic and technological superiority and because the other great powers (poles) do not have enough strength to stand up to the US independently. To China, however, the international system of today is just at the period of transition from 'multiple powers with one superpower' to 'the world multi-polarisation,' and many Chinese authors still argue that the rise of China will bring regional stability, helping to end this transitional stage toward world multi-polarity.[19]

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[14] Steven W. Mosher, *Hegemon: China's Plan to Dominate Asia and the World* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2000), p. 144.
[15] Liu Jingpo, ed., *Chinese National Security Strategy in the Early 21st Century* (Beijing: Shishi Press, 2006), pp. 26-27. The idea of 'Harmonious World' is from the 'Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence,' which was the official agreement between China and India in 1954, including mutual respect for territorial integrity, nonaggression, non-interference, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.
[16] Yong Deng and Fei-Ling Wang, eds, *In the Eyes of the Dragon: China Views the World* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), pp. 51-52.
[17] Susan L. Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 106.
[18] Wang Zhuxun, 'Effects of Kosovo on Global Security,' *Liao Wang*, No. 20 (17 May 1999), pp. 8-10.
[19] Pillsbury, *China Debates the future Security Environment*, pp. 25-33.

3.1.3 China's View of the World Order and Its Role in the World

China has gradually conformed to the modern international norms of regional integration, multilateralism, and globalisation, but it is still important to keep an eye on its conceptualisation of international relations, which is strongly influenced by its self-image in the world. According to China's historical assessments of world politics, there are four types of '*shijie geju*' (world structure) in history, and each structure is based on the international relations amongst great powers in the world. The first is the Vienna System (1854-1871), as established by the winning states of Russia, Austria, Prussia, and Britain, which defeated France under Napoleon.[20] The second structure was a transition system established by four industrialised countries from the late 1890s: Japan, Italy, Germany and the US.[21] The third world structure was the result of World War I (WWI) and composed by the US, Britain, France, Italy and Japan. In China's view, this structure broke the pattern of the world ruled by imperialism, and this structure is called the Versailles-Washington System (1920-1945) because it was guided by the US after WWI. The fourth world structure is the Yalta System (1945-1991), and it was constructed by the US, the UK, and the Soviet Union at the Yalta Summit in 1945. For China, the feature of this structure is that it actually carved out the spheres of influence in Europe and Asia for the US and the Soviet Union. Moreover, the Yalta Summit built a bipolar structure, in which the interaction between the US and the former USSR principally determined world politics during the Cold War period, but this structure ended in 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed.

The Yalta System for China is very important, because Communist China in this period began to pursue its role between the former Soviet Union and the US in the Asia-Pacific. During the Cold-War period, Beijing's worldview in this system was greatly influenced by the former Soviet Union's thought of the dichotomous view of two camps in the world: socialist and imperialist.[22] Under the Soviet threat after the Sino-Soviet split, China started to present its communist worldview with class

[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36. This world structure of four powers was centred completely on Europe, and its main feature was applying spheres of influence to maintain the stability of this structure.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 35. Due to these countries' rapid national development, such as the development of capitalism in the US, Japan's Meiji Restoration, Italy's political unification and Germany's defeat of France in 1871, the original proportions and distributions of power therefore were destroyed by this new structure, which still was centred on Europe.
[22] David Shambaugh, 'The Soviet Influence on China's Worldview,' *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, No. 27 (January 1992), pp. 151-55.

analysis, such as Maoist internationalism of '*zhongjian didai*' (the intermediate-zones theory),[23] '*san ge shijie*' (the three-world theory),[24] and '*heping gongchun*' (principles of peaceful coexistence).[25] After the Maoist era, Deng Xiaoping in the mid-1980s summarised a series of major conflicts in four parts of the world that might cause war in four Chinese characters: '*dong, xi, nan, bei*' (east, west, south, and north),[26] and claimed the theory of '*heping yu fazhan*' (peace and development) was the theme of the current era.[27] After the Yalta System fell down in 1991, Beijing viewed the contemporary world as changing gradually from a bipolar system towards a multipolar system, regarding the world now as at the stage of transition between the world structure of US domination and the world multilateralism of today.

Briefly, rapidly growing economic capability is making China a rising major power in the Asia-Pacific. This phenomenon indeed strengthens Beijing's self-image as having world power status and increases Chinese self-confidence among ruling elites for dealing with foreign affairs. Worldview is an indispensable factor in the development of national behaviour; China's national behaviour under its own worldview presents its world role and strategic ambition with the Sino-centric notion of Confucianism and the class theory of Marxism-Leninism. This worldview is the vital basis of its theory of international relations and the major direction of China's grand strategy for its development. For a grand strategy, it is not merely a military strategy *per se*, but includes several dimensions—for example, national politics, economy, society, and military strategy. A Chinese worldview certainly influences Beijing leaders' beliefs of national development by shaping strategic preference in their mind, and then China's grand strategy can be regarded as the arrangement of the security environment of PRC leaders and how they should reply generally.

[23] Mao's theory of the Intermediate-Zones includes two factors. The first factor was made up of those countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The second factor comprised all industrialised capitalistic states excepting the US. See O. Edmund Clubb, *China and Russia: The 'Great Game'* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 467.
[24] Herbert S. Lee, 'The Three World Theory and Post-Mao China's Global Strategy,' *International Affairs*, Vol. 59, No. 2 (Spring 1983), pp. 239-49.
[25] Weixing Hu, Gerald Chan and Daojiong Zha, *China's International Relations in the 21st Century* (Lanham: University Press of America, Inc. 2000), pp. 19-20.
[26] Pillsbury, *China Debates the future Security Environment*, pp. 53-54.
[27] Hu *et al*., *China's International Relations*, p. 19.

3.2 China's Grand National Strategy and Its Rising Sea Power

National grand strategy is the national plan for security and development, including using political, economic, and military actions to achieve national goals of security and development, despite the fact that China's idea of grand strategy has not ever been clearly presented in any comprehensive way by its leadership. The previously mentioned analysis of its worldview indicates that Beijing certainly has an ambition for pursuing a strategy of national development conditioned substantially through its historical-cultural experience, its view of international relations, and its geographic setting. Accordingly, the thread of China's current grand strategy is obviously rooted in several basic features of its security setting,[28] such as a long geographically vulnerable boundary, the presence of many potential threats from the land and the sea, a domestic political system marked by the high levels of internecine conflict between elites, and its self-image as a great power. Meanwhile, under the direction of Chinese grand strategy, Beijing aspires to achieve two essential national goals, which are that China should emerge as a dominant power in East Asia and that it should emerge as a major player in managing global affairs according to traditional Sino-centric worldview.

The concept of national security is the core element of grand strategy in the imperial and modern eras of China. In the Chinese imperial era, the primary security threat to China's territory was posed by an array of nearby nomadic tribes that are principally located in China's northern and north-western boundaries. Nevertheless, at the end of imperial China in the eighteenth century, under the Manchu Ch'ing Dynasty (1644-1911 BC), because of the intrusion of Western industrial maritime powers from China's east shoreline, China then started to be aware of the importance of its maritime defence and the weakness of national power.[29] Traditionally, China is a continental power with a vision of Sino-centric civilisation. Its past security strategy was based on the strategic idea that 'continental defence is superior to maritime defence,' but with its rising maritime power and economic capability from the Dengist

[28] Swaine and Tellis, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy: Past, Present, and Future*, p. 9.
[29] Huang Shunli, *Haiyang misi: zongguo haiyangguan de chuantong yu bianqian* [The Myth of Ocean: the Tradition and Transition of Chinese Oceanic View] (Nanchang: Jiangxi Gaoxiao Press, 1999), pp. 208-18.

era, the strategic gravity of national security of modern Communist China has been gradually switching from a single continental direction to both maritime and continental directions. This phenomenon of grand strategic transition also contributes to Beijing's strategic framework of domination in the Asia-Pacific. Just as Samuel P. Huntington has enunciated, 'China's history, culture, traditions, size, economic dynamism, and self-image all drive it to assure a hegemonic position in East Asia.'[30]

3.2.1 China and Asia-Pacific Geopolitics

It is easy to discover China's rising influence on the Asia-Pacific, as China's CNP grows more influential in the Asia-Pacific region, in terms of its strategic goal of pursuing major power status. Explicitly, the growing CNP of China is the basis of its expansion, although the Beijing regime always says that China will never seek hegemony in the world. Concerning China's strategic ambition, it is an ascendant great regional power with the politico-military capacity to threaten its Asian neighbours for limited strategic interests in terms of its grand strategy. From the perspective of geo-politics, China's Asia-Pacific grand strategic map can be seen as a modern Sino-centric grand strategy, which can fall into five nearby sub-systems of the Asia-Pacific for analysis as follows.

(1) East Asia. Geographically, Chinese grand strategy places its top priority strategic focus and strategic concerns on its national security in the region of East Asia. In this region, Beijing's strategic goals are to gain sovereignty over Taiwan, to control the territorial waters of the South China Sea by expanding its naval power, to fill the strategic vacuum of the Soviet Union's collapse, to keep Japan in a situation of strategic subordination, and to weaken the international system dominated by the US in this region.[31] Regarding Taiwan, it is still one of the major conflicting issues between China and the US since the 1950s. The origin of Sino-US conflict is rooted in the fact that:

> The PRC believed that the US was using Taiwan as part of a strategy for encircling and thereby weakening China. The US believed that China had

[30] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and The Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), p. 229.
[31] Derek McDougall, *Asia Pacific in World Politics* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007), pp. 66-67.

aggressive intentions in the region, and that the PRC's policy toward Taiwan was part of its expansionist design.[32]

In terms of energy supply, the Taiwan Strait at present is an important channel for China's industrial energy imports, because China today highly relies on energy imports and needs to guarantee the security of delivery of supplies from the Persian Gulf via the Malacca Strait to its south-eastern littoral area. In the case of a conflict in the Taiwan Strait, the US and its allies could disrupt China's energy supplies.[33] However, the rapid expansion in China's military power not only threatens Taiwan for claiming its sovereignty and territorial waters but US allies throughout the Asia-Pacific. The *2005 Report to Congress* of the US-China Commission (USCC) pointed out, 'China is in the midst of an extensive force modernization program aimed at increasing its force projection capabilities and confronting US and allied forces in the region'.[34] In this respect, China's grand strategy in East Asia is acquiring the means to project power far beyond Taiwan and China's waters.

(2) Southeast Asia. The region of Southeast Asia is a potential international maritime security flashpoint, stemming principally from a number of significant disputes concerning territorial waters between several countries of the area. Historically, China views the area as its own traditional sphere of influence and strategic backyard that hosts sizeable Chinese emigrant societies who have fuelled China's economic growth, through which a hostile outside power could disrupt its development. Moreover, this area has China's main sea-lanes of communication from its southeast coast to South Asia and the Middle East for energy imports. For the security of sea-lanes in this region, China has developed close ties to the military regime in Burma in which China is building maritime facilities, such as radar stations, naval reconnaissance facilities and signals intelligence (SIGINT), in the Great Coco Island and the Hainggyi Island near the Malacca Strait for securing around eighty per cent of China's imported oil passes.[35] In fact, China signed a military cooperation agreement with Cambodia in 2003, and Cambodia is helping China to build a railway from southern China to the sea. Meanwhile, in Thailand, China is considering funding

[32] *Ibid*., pp. 165-66.
[33] Russell Ong, *China's Security Interests in the 21st Century* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 48-49.
[34] 2005 Report to Congress, *U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission*, p. 9. Available from <http://www.uscc.gov/annual_report/2005/annual_report_full_05.pdf>. Accessed on 25 June 2007.
[35] Andrew Selth, 'Chinese Military Bases in Burma: The Explosion of a Myth,' Regional Outlook Paper No. 10 (2007), Griffith Asia Institute, pp. 7-15.

construction of a canal across the Kra Isthmus that would allow Chinese ships to bypass the Malacca Strait.[36] Additionally, China's grand strategy in maritime Southeast Asia also focuses on this regional economic interdependence on China, and its looming intention is to link its island occupations with a strategy and military build-up,[37] intended to project and extend its power to Southeast Asia and beyond. To date, China strategically still views this region in terms of economic contributions for establishing a greater Chinese co-prosperity sphere in the future.

(3) South Asia. Historically, Sino-Indian relations in South Asia deteriorated due to the dispute that caused boundary clashes in 1962. In the 1980s, the world situation was shifting from tension to relaxation, which made a favourable environment for improving Sino-India relations to date. Nevertheless, there still exist two unsolved problems between the two countries. The first is the problem of their boundaries. Although the two sides have worked out the agreements to be obeyed in addressing their border problem, they still differ on the line of actual control as well as on the operation of the borderline.[38] Another problem concerns Tibet. Although the Indian government acknowledged that Tibet is an autonomous region of China, some Tibetans in India still support secessionism against Beijing authorities, and this situation is harmful to the development of Sino-Indian relations. Facing India's rising power, China's grand strategy is to build military cooperation agreements with Pakistan and Bangladesh, including the possibility of establishing naval facilities in Burma at Kyaukphyu and Pakistan at Gwadar for containing India's growing power and protecting China's critical SLOCs.[39] In brief, Beijing's strategic behaviour shows that an influential India will challenge China's grand strategy of emerging as the single hegemon in Asia in the future.

(4) Central Asia. The fall of the USSR reduced a major security threat to China. The dissolution of the Soviet Union hastened trends toward multi-polarity, successfully eliminated China's long-term security threat to the north, and built a politico-economic connection between China and Central Asia. Chinese grand strategy in Central Asia is not only to sustain its border stability with Central Asian

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[36] *Ibid*.
[37] David G. Wiencek, 'South China Sea Flashpoint,' *China Brief*, Vol. 1, Iss. 2 (24 July 2001), p. 11.
[38] Wang Hogyu, 'Sino-Indian Relations: Present and Future,' *Asian Survey*, Vol. 35, No. 6 (June 1995), pp. 552-54.
[39] Urvashi Aneja, 'Pakistan-China Relations: Recent Development (January-May 2006),' *IPCS Special Report 26* (June 2006), pp. 1-11. Available from <http://www.ipcs.org/IPCS-Special-Report-26-pdf>. Accessed onJune 30, 2007.

countries, but also to maintain the stabilisation of its autonomous region (Ningxia, Xinjiang, and Tibet).[40] Since the end of the Cold War, China has made progress with respect to territorial integrity, and it has successfully stabilised its land borders in North and Central Asia. China is becoming more influential in Central Asia under the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), whose members consist of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, along with the official observer members of India, Pakistan, Iran and Mongolia in 2005.[41] Conversely, even though the SCO was formed to cope with boundary disputes, terrorism and separatist threats, it has become a means for China to fill the strategic vacuum left by the dissolution of the USSR and to maintain energy security from northwest China; therefore, the matter of energy cooperation has emerged as SCO's primary goal.

(5) The Middle East. With China's booming economy, its Middle East strategy has taken on new importance, and its economic ties with the Middle East countries have been rapidly strengthened in the past few years. The most important aspect of China's relations with this area is its rapidly growing energy and economic interactions with Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Iraq—the countries the US seems to have increasing difficulties with in recent years.[42] Currently, the volume of China's oil imports has exceeded fifty per cent of its total oil imports since 1996,[43] and Iran, as the world's fourth-largest oil exporter, is equally keen to develop stronger relations with China, providing almost twelve per cent of China's total oil import in 2006.[44] To date, Iranian and Saudi exports together also represent around two-thirds of China's Middle East oil imports.[45] This region for China is not only an area of importing oil, but also a region of exporting weapons and military cooperation, such as selling CSS-2 intermediate-range ballistic missiles to Saudi Arabia, selling M-9 ballistic missiles to Iraq, and developing F-10 Fighter aircraft with Israel.[46] Thus, there is every reason

[40] J. Richard Walsh, 'China and the New Geopolitics of Central Asia,' *Asian Survey*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (March 1993), pp. 273-75.
[41] John Keefer Douglas *et al*., 'Rising in the Gulf: How China's Energy Demands Are Transforming the Middle East,' *Al Nakhlah* (The Fletcher School Journal for issues related to Southwest Asia and Islamic Civilization, Spring 2007), p. 5.
[42] Wenran Jiang, 'China's Growing Energy Relations with the Middle East,' *China Brief*, Vol. 7, Iss. 14 (11 July 2007), p. 13.
[43] Jin Liangxiang, 'Energy First: China and the Middle East,' *Middle East Quarterly* (Spring 2005). Available from <http://www.meforum.org/article/694>. Accessed on July 3, 2007.
[44] Jiang, 'China's Growing Energy Relations with the Middle East.'
[45] John Keefer Douglas *et al*., p. 2.
[46] Flynt Leverett and Jeffry Bader, 'Managing China-US Energy Competition in the Middle East,' *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Winter 2005-06), p. 188-89; and John Calabrese, 'Peaceful or Dangerous Collaborators? China's Relations with the Gulf Countries,' *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 65, No. 4

to predict that China will continue and even strengthen its emphasis on the Middle East as part of its energy security strategy. More importantly, Chinese grand strategy in the Middle East is to use this region as a balanced point against the US in relation to the issues of Taiwan and East Asia. In summary, its strategic goals in this region are to win Islamic support to counter domestic Islamic threats in Xinjiang[47] and to secure oil imports for the rising demands of the Chinese economy.

From the analysis of Chinese grand strategy, as briefly stated above, China, no longer regarded as a continental power, is now a rising maritime power in the Asia-Pacific, in which most of its national strategic goals, activities, and interests under its grand strategy are related to the seas. Therefore, the maritime strategic direction in the grand strategy of China is clear. China traditionally is a country with a self-sufficient economy, and there is no reason for it to develop sea power for maritime security and interests. Conversely, in this age of global economy, China is given top priority to develop its ports under its 11th Five Year Plan,[48] and to establish powerful naval capabilities under its recent Defence White Papers for securing maritime interests and rapid economic growth. Viewed in this light, this phenomenon can be regarded as a necessary approach for the development of Chinese sea power. Moreover, China's increasing maritime interests, geo-political influence, and military presence from the South China Sea via the Malacca Strait, the Indian Ocean, and then to the Arabian Gulf has been described as the US named 'String of Pearls' strategy. The latter is a developing maritime strategic element of China's grand strategy more than a military strategy or a regional strategy. Essentially, China is adopting a 'string-of-pearl' strategy of bases and diplomatic ties stretching from southern China to the Middle East.[49] Significantly, this revival of China's national power also indicates China's traditional ambition to maintain autonomy, strategic centrality, and hegemonic status in Asia.

(Winter 1992-93), pp. 481-84.

[47] Calabrese, 'Peaceful or Dangerous Collaborators?' pp. 477-80.

[48] Nazery Khalid, 'Port Development Boom in China,' *China Brief*, Vol. 6, Iss. 7 (29 March 2006), pp. 6-7.

[49] Booz Allen Hamilton is the first person who used 'String of Pearls' for describing China's emerging maritime strategy and its expanding naval influence in a report titled 'Energy Futures in Asia.' The US Department of Defence's Office of Net Assessment commissioned this report in 2005. In this report, the 'pearl' of the 'String of Pearls' means the connection of China's geopolitical and military influence. See Christopher J. Pehrson, *String of Pearls: Meeting the Challenge of China's Rising Power across the Asian Littoral* (Carlisle: SSI, U.S. Army War College, June 2006), pp. 3-4. Available from <http://*www.StrategicStudiesInstitute.army.mil/*>. Accessed on July 10, 2007.

3.2.2 The Strategic Direction of Chinese Sea Power and Maritime Security Interests

Broadly speaking, sea power is the culmination and the physical expression of a set of geographical and sociological conditions. Physically, China's littoral borders adjoin the Yellow Sea, the East China Sea and the South China Sea. China, indeed, has an advantageous set of natural features to develop its oceanic culture and become a sea power. However, due to the continental culture of Sino-centrism and its high level of economic self-sufficiency,[50] China's politico-social system historically was almost isolated by this land-based worldview. Sino-centrism can be seen as the great barrier between China and the ocean, although China once was built a transitory sea power with the largest fleet in the world and experienced oceanic exploration in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644),[51] showing national power and maintaining a tribute system in the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. With the increase of Chinese maritime economic interests, Beijing's maritime strategic direction is becoming clearer in its grand strategy. Hence, the route of Chinese sea power is the map of its maritime interests.

The development of sea power is the process of the growth of an oceanic economy, closely linking to national interests at sea. From this light, national interest can be regarded as the beginning of national strategy. Generally, the concept of 'national interest' is often referred to as national ambitions for political, economic, cultural, and military goals; the primary one is state survival and security. Conversely, this concept in China has two different meanings in terms of Marxist theory; they are the national interests in domestic politics and the national interests in international politics. The former refers to the interests of the state that belong to the ruling class; the latter refers to national interests that belong to the nation as a collective and are enjoyed by both rulers and the people.[52] In China's modern IR theory, notably, it tends to apply the second definition of national interest.

Due to the factors of the Cold War situation, a fragile economy, and a backward

[50] The Sino-centric system was a Chinese hierarchical system of international relations that prevailed in East Asia before the acceptance of the Westphalian system in modern times.
[51] A Ming fleet of over two hundred and fifty treasure ships, so called '*Paochuan*,' each with capacity for five hundred men. See Jung-Pang Lo, 'The Emergence of China as a Sea Power during the Last Sung and Early Yuan Periods,' *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, Vol. 14, No. 4 (August 1955), pp. 493-94.
[52] Yan Xuetong, *Zhongguo guojia liyi fenxi* [The Analysis of China's National Interests] (Tianjin: Tianjin Remin Press, 1996), pp. 4-11.

military in the Maoist era, China's national strategic weight was concentrated on its security border with the former Soviet Union and its land-oriented economy. Thus, maritime security interests at that moment were ambiguous. However, there have been many changes after Mao's death; because of the growth of comprehensive national power and an open-door policy under Dengist China after 1978, China started to expand and protect its own national interests and security at sea. For China, national maritime interest in international politics is becoming a salient one that today is the highest principle guiding Beijing's national behaviour and a fundamental factor influencing Chinese sea power. According to the maritime security direction of Chinese grand strategy, its maritime national interests can be classified into three main gradations: core maritime interests, decisive maritime interests, and important maritime interests. These three levels of China's national maritime interests can be analysed as follows.

(1) China's core national maritime interests. The core maritime interest of China is related to the matter of national survival and reunification, or so-called national long-term interest, including sea rights, the sovereignty of territorial waters, national security, and development. In current China's perspective, its sea right is not only related to '*haiyang guoto*' (national territorial waters), but also related to its '*shencun kongjian*' (survival space).[53] More concretely, sea right is a national right that can be exercised according to international law, and sea power is the capability to secure sea rights. Control over the sea might hold the equilibrium regarding the survival of a nation. In this respect, China still has many disputes with its neighbours. For example, China and Korea naturally have the same continental shelf, but have different demarcations. The dispute of the Diaoyu Islands aside, China and Japan have the problem of maritime demarcation as well. In the South China Sea, China also has many sovereignty disputes in the Spratly and Paracel Islands with Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines.[54] (Refer to Appendix B) For the Taiwan issue, China always considers that this issue is directly linked to the sovereignty of territorial waters and the development of its sea power; hence, Taiwanese secessionism is a serious challenge to the authorities of Beijing. Additionally, Beijing realises that secessionism has the potential to trigger a chain reaction of other secessionist actions affecting its

[53] Qin Tain and Huo Xiaoyoug, *Zhonghua haiquan shilun* [A Study on Chinese Sea Power] (Beijing: National Defence University Press, 2000), pp. 314-23.
[54] Yan Xuetong *et al*., *Zhongguo jueqi: guoji huanjing pingu* [International Environment for China's rise] (Tianjin: Tianjin Remin Press, 1998), pp. 237-38.

security and stability,[55] particularly affecting Xinjiang, Tibet, and Inner Mongolia.

(2) China's decisive national maritime interests. The decisive maritime interest is the middle-term national interest that can support core national interests, affecting national economic development and political stability. It includes three mutually related dimensions: maritime economic security, the protection of SLOCs, and regional stability.[56] Securing these interests, China not only enhances the development of military modernisation, but also promotes the 'Revolution of Military Affairs' (RMA) for its naval power projection. The RMA School stresses that the importance of the strategic role of naval capability is increasing, and the submarine, smart weapons and the ability of long-range strikes at sea will become the main maritime forces in the future maritime warfare.[57] Conversely, the rapid development of China's economy causes huge energy consumption; hence, foreign energy imports have become the vital basis of its prosperous economy. For example, the recent growth of Chinese oil imports from the Middle East has exceeded fifty per cent of its total energy imports.[58] Therefore, protecting sea-lanes from the Middle East to China is becoming the main strategic goal of the 'string-of-pearl' strategy for national economic security.

(3) China's peripheral national maritime interests. The range of China's peripheral maritime interests is quite large, including the peaceful solution of maritime disputes, practising maritime humanitarian rescue, counter-maritime crimes, promoting maritime security cooperation, maritime 'Confidence-Building Measures' (CBMs) and regional multilateralism, which all belong to Beijing's short-term national interests. Although maritime cooperation is often used as a possible means of reducing naval competitions and tensions, the participation of the Chinese navy remains at the lower level of cooperation such as ship visits, personal exchanges and multilateral naval conferences.[59] In short, China is opposed to exploring further the potential of advanced naval cooperation, because China is concerned that the norm of maritime cooperation could limit its claimed national interests and sovereignty at sea.

Consequently, the national interests of security and power in China's perspective are the two main goals of its grand strategy for preserving domestic stability, national

[55] Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower*, pp. 181-82.
[56] Liu, *Chinese National Security Strategy in the Early 21st Century*, pp. 49-50.
[57] Pillsbury, *China Debates the Future Security Environment*, pp. 278-79.
[58] Jin, 'Energy First.'
[59] Russ Swinnerton, 'Confidence-Building Measures at Sea: the Challenge Ahead in Southeast Asia,' *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (1995), p. 328.

well being, and deterring external threats to China's territory, which are mutually related. Namely, the fortification of domestic stability and national welfare is viewed as the main thing for the defence of China's territory against outside threats. From the vision of China's national interests, its grand strategy is a realistic view of the world, and the evolution of its sea power can be seen as the result of the growth of Sino-centrism and nationalism in modern realpolitik. While the concept of sea power for the West is an old idea, it is a new concept to modern China since the 1980s. Like Western sea powers, the factors of oceanic economy and maritime security interests indeed guide the development of Chinese sea power. Furthermore, historically, Western sea powers have also proved that the demand for oceanic economy and security is the driving force of the expansion of sea power, which is the road to world power. Unquestionably, modern China is walking on this route with its own characteristics, which are strategic culture and military theory.

3.3 Chinese Strategic Culture and Military Theory toward the Sea

The evolution of national strategic thinking is affected by politico-social culture, the tradition of military strategy, the character of contemporary military thought, and the strategic environment. Culture and tradition not only influence the policymaker's cognition of subjective value but also affect the thinking of national military strategy. Meanwhile, the security environment of a state also can obviously limit the strategic choice of policymakers. Generally, the CNP and technological level are the two undeniable essential factors of national strategy for China, even though the formation of military strategy was affected by its war fighting experiences, rising national power, and international security setting. Moreover, the most influential factor of China's military strategy is its tradition of strategic culture—for instance, the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism and the military thought of Mao Zedong.

3.3.1 Chinese Strategic Culture under Confucianism

Strategic culture is often ignored in military strategic planning and policymaking,

because by its very nature, culture is largely hidden from everyday consciousness in terms of China's historical context. It is nonetheless omnipresent, subconsciously guiding state behaviour, strategic choices, and interactions of its constituent members. One of the remarkable features of Chinese culture is that it is based on the oldest continuing cultural tradition in the world. John K. Fairbank observed, 'distinctive features of Chinese life today, such as autocratic government, come down directly from pre-historic times'.[60] These distinctive features were the cultural basis and patterns of politico-social relations that developed during China's early period in the figure of a collective, highly structured social system of Confucianism that solved the problem of how best to govern and maintain the national security and prosperity of a large Asian state. Broadly speaking, the phrase strategic culture means an ideation of military strategic beliefs, symbols, attitudes, and patterns of behaviour, which give special meaning to military behaviour according to Chinese historical context. It also means a strategic pattern of attitude and behaviour in relation to the threats and use of military force for pursuing national security and power. In the process of strategic policymaking, remarkably, the inputs of strategic culture have a connection with the outputs of strategic policies and activities.

Therefore, it would be better to say that the foundation of national strategy is traditional culture, and its characteristics are the continuity of history, the relation of civilisation, and the guide of strategic value. In history, Chinese strategic culture is related to the culture of Confucian Sino-centrism, which generated from the basis of early China as a self-sufficient continental power with relatively incomplete oceanic tradition and culture. In other words, China traditionally possesses a continental culture that emphasises Confucian civilisation, whereas most Western maritime states, such as Portugal, Spain, Holland, British, and the US have oceanic culture that emphasises courage, strength and technology.[61] In a historical-cultural light, China's strategic tradition has the following basic features.

National security is the base of Chinese strategic culture. Chinese philosophical thought has a profound traditional and cultural foundation influencing China's strategic behaviour. When it comes to traditional Chinese military thinking, China's military classics are the sources of understanding its strategic culture. While there are

[60] John K. Fairbank, *China: A New History* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1992), p. 25.
[61] Andrew Scobell, 'China and Strategic Culture,' the Report of SSI (Carlisle: US Army War College, 2002), p. 7.

'*wu jing qi shu*' (Seven Military Classics) in Chinese military tradition, *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu represents the major stream among others. According to Confucianism, the Chinese view of the world is harmonious. Even the strategic philosophy of the well known military strategist Sun Tzu claimed the preferred national strategic goal is '*bu zhan er qu ren zhi bin*' (to win warfare without fighting), and force is only to be used as the final option. National strategy to China is designed for serving the national security interest in terms of the military strategic philosophy of Sun Tzu. For instance, as the first sentence of *The Art of War* states, 'Military affairs are a country's vital political concerns,' and 'the lands that are lethal or safe and the ways that cause existence or destruction must never be taken lightly'.[62] In order words, in traditional Chinese strategic thinking, the national security interest is the essential motivation of China's strategic thinking and the highest guideline of its national development.

Moreover, there are many views in *The Art of War* that reflect the Confucian harmonious thinking, like the ideas of '*ren*' (benevolence), '*yi*' (righteousness) and '*de*' (virtue). Militarily, Sun Tzu mainly stresses the '*yi zhan*' (righteous war) and the use of force as the last resort in terms of benevolence. For instance, when having to fight, Sun Tzu provided a hierarchy of three gradations for strategic actions: 'the best military strategy is to crush their plans, following this is to crush their diplomacy,' and the last 'is to crush their forces'.[63] This traditional strategic thinking also can explain why Beijing always claims that China is reluctant to use force first to solve international disputes. However, it does not mean that Beijing is reluctant to use force when facing outside invasions or potential threats. According to the top principle of national security interest, China will use defensive force to survive. For example, in the Korean War (1950-1953), Mao despatched volunteer troops to support Communist North Korea for the security concern that the US was approaching the periphery of north-eastern China. In the Sino-Indian War (1962), the PLA withdrew from the border of India after victory. In the Sino-Vietnamese War (1979), China despatched the PLA to punish Vietnam and withdrew after victory as well.[64] These examples all show that China's strategic tradition is toward the defensive and prizes victory not protraction, while the quite limited logistics of the backward PLA at that time were a serious military problem.

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[62] J. H. Huang, *Sun Tzu*: *The New Translation* (New York: William Morrow & Co. 1993), p. 37.
[63] *Ibid*., p. 49.
[64] Wu Wei, 'A Study on the Transformation of the Thinking of China's Military Strategy,' *Guofang zachi* [Defence Journal], Vol. 20, No. 7 (July 2005), p. 77.

Further, although China still sees the origin of war as an economic problem, China regards the formation of war as changing. Therefore, in Chinese strategic culture, the traditional thinking of victory without war does not mean that there is no warfare at all; China in the modern world must face political, diplomatic, economic, cultural and technological wars, while the might of the military is still a vital factor. For Beijing, the nature of modern war is the competition of CNP, which was first proposed by the CCP, and a similar idea of this has been mentioned by Sun Tzu, but in different spheres. Therefore, Chinese strategic culture can be seen as a dynamic notion of the combination of past military tradition and a modern ever-changing international environment.

Active defence is offensive defence. The military defensive feature in Chinese strategic culture is not the concept of passive defence, but active defence. Mao first used the phrase 'Active Defence' in the revolutionary period, during China's civil war between the Nationalists (Kuomintang, KMT) and Communists, and the core of it was emphasised on eliminating the enemy forces instead of guarding territories.[65] In Maoist China, this idea was the main strategic doctrine when Beijing faced a threat of national security from the former Soviet Union from the late 1960s, and the goal of active defence at this time was to stop the enemy on China's boundaries and outside. Likewise, the feature of active defence focuses on '*hou fa zhi ren*' (counter-attacking and defeating the enemy after being attacked). As Mao Zedong said, 'we will never attack unless we are attacked; however if we are attacked, we will certainly counterattack'.[66] Importantly, this notion of defensive deterrence is still applied by the present PLA military strategy.

Chinese active defence, accordingly, seems to be an offensive military tradition, but its work has a pre-condition that when national security suffered from outside military attacks and security threats. It is effective in protecting related core national interests, country's territory, sovereignty, the safety of SLOCs and so on. For China, its economic and industrial centres are mostly along the littoral area of its south-eastern area. The defensive nature of present China's security strategy is demonstrated by the words of counter attacking and defeating the enemy after being attacked, and by the actions of military modernisation and the revolution of military affairs.

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[65] Zhang Wannian, ed., *Dongdai shijie junshi yu zhongguo guofang* [Contemporary World Military and Chinese National Defence] (Beijing: Military Science Press, 1999), pp. 172-73.
[66] Jijun Li, 'Lun zhanlue wenhua' [A study on strategic culture], *Zongguo junshi kexue* [Chinese Military Science], No. 1 (January 1997), p. 10.

Added to this, for the security of China's economic centres in littoral areas and territorial waters, China has enlarged its traditional strategic thinking of active defence from Maoist coastal defence to the 'Two-Island Chain' defence at sea for its maritime national security. While the PLA Navy is a large naval force in terms of its numbers in the Asia-Pacific and its submarine fleet especially, the quality of the PLAN is still backward compared with some Western maritime powers. Nevertheless, due to Beijing's focus on primarily the maritime economic security sphere in its pursuit of CNP, building blue water naval capability for extending China's maritime security border in the Asia-Pacific region has become an undeniable strategic orientation.

The strategic culture limits China's strategic thinking. China's strategic view under its tradition of strategic culture includes three related factors as follows.

(1) The cognition of the strategic environment. Different cultures generally have different comprehensions of the world, and different strategic cultures provide different cognitive maps to different state leaders. Similarly, China's view of the world is through certain cultural patterns of traditional Sino-centric Confucianism. The salient meaning of China's strategic culture is that it offers a basic cognition map of the security environment under Sino-centrism to Beijing's political elites. From this Confucian view of the world, China's strategic culture tends toward world integration and interdependence. Therefore, the presentation of China's worldview in its strategic culture is the perception of harmonious multi-polarisation. In addition, China's traditional centrism will emerge with the growth of its comprehensive national power and self-image in its predicted multilateral global system.

(2) The confirmation of national strategic goals. The development of national strategic direction frequently is guided by national goals for achieving national interests. Namely, where there is a national interest, there is a national strategic goal. According to different state strategic goals, states can fall into two categories: expansionism (offensive states) and non-expansionism (defensive states), which are generated from different strategic cultures under international realpolitik. From the European history of great voyages, national survival indicates expansion and European expansionism results in political imperialism and economic colonialism. On the contrary, although Imperial China's Confucianism was a cultural imperialism for maintaining its tribute system, the presentation of national survival in its strategic tradition was a defensive performance. In China's traditional defensive strategic

culture, colonialism did not appear in the history of Imperial China. For instance, during the Ming Dynasty, Emperor Young Lo built the largest naval force in the world and dispatched Zheng He, an eunuch Admiral, to lead seven voyages from east China to the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean to show the Ming's great power at sea and to promote economic communication. Simultaneously, Ming China's other military goal was to dispose military forces in south India for balancing and avoiding the Mongolian (Timur, 1404 AD) invasion of south-western Ming China.[67] An important point is that while China once dominated south Asia at sea, it did not colonise any other countries in its heyday, because colonialism is not a characteristic of Confucian strategic culture.

(3) The selection of means and types of war. In the Western strategic tradition, Clausewitzian strategic thought, nearly a century and a half ago, mostly stresses the function of violence and military force in war. In this sense, when military force is regarded as the most useful tool or strategic means, war becomes the process of unlimited use of violence. In terms of Clausewitzian strategic thinking, then, war is the behaviour of violence. Although violence is a *sine qua non* of war in China's strategic thinking, Chinese strategic culture stresses to win at 'the lowest possible cost' for limited war. Sun Tzu, nearly 2,500 years ago, pointed out, 'Achieve victory in every battle is not absolute perfection: neutralizing an adversary's forces with battle is absolute perfection',[68] while the idea of Clausewitz is not to win at the minimum possible cost, but to use military forces regardless of the cost.[69] Moreover, other obvious characteristics of Chinese strategic culture are 'the flexibility of strategy' and 'the principle of comparative advantage,' while Clausewitz stresses that 'the best strategy is always to be very strong,' and 'there is no higher and simpler law of strategy than that of keeping one's forces concentrated.'[70] For the former feature, Sun Tzu notes that military strategy is based on deception,[71] which means a flexible application of military strategy. For the later feature, Sun Tzu emphasises that the victory of war depends on the survey and comparison of different situations, such as

[67] Xian-Zhong Niu, 'A study on Zheng He's Voyages: From the Evolution of Strategic Thinking in the early *Ming* Dynasty,' *Zhonghua zhanglue xuekan* [*TheJournal of Chinese Strategy*] (Taipei, December 2001), pp. 68-69.
[68] Huang, *Sun Tzu*: *The New Translation*, p. 48.
[69] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. and ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1976), pp. 212-213.
[70] *Ibid*., p. 204.
[71] Yang Yi, ed. *Sun Tzu binfa zhuping* [The Interpretation of the Art of War by Sun Tzu] (Hong Kong: Shanlian Co. Press, 2006), pp. 5-6.

the leadership, the environment, weapons and soldiers.[72]

Judging from the above, Chinese strategic culture seems reasonable to get a conclusion that it is a contextual ideation of the national security of Sino-centrism, the thinking of defensive strategy, the restraint on using military force and the pursuit of CNP. Consequently, Chinese sea power in Confucian strategic culture also shows a characteristic of Sino-centric defence, and the Ming China's sea power is an example worth mentioning. However, it is important to note that the study of Chinese strategic culture is only one variable in studying Chinese strategic origins and cannot replace other strategic variables, including China's security environment, strategic interests, and CNP. In contrast, research on strategic culture indeed has its own limitations. Although China's strategic culture can be seen as the factor of its military strategic thought, it cannot be regarded as the only main factor of all origins of its strategic behaviour. In order to understand the practice of Chinese strategic culture in depth, it is indispensable to explore the connection of modern China's military strategic theory and strategic tradition.

3.3.2 Marxism-Leninism, Maoist Thought and Chinese Strategic Theory

Militarily, strategic theory is a philosophy of war existing in the certain context of strategic culture and drives the establishment of national strategy and defence. Military strategic theories always are the decisive keys of national strategic activities. As Ken Booth has written, 'Strategic theories have their roots in philosophies of war which are invariably ethnocentric. National strategies are the immediate descendants of philosophies of war'.[73] Therefore, the following explores China's military strategic philosophy and its military theory.

The first is the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist view of war and peace. In general, the view of war means different things to different cultures and states, which involves the philosophy of worldview that was built on the discussion of the origins of war, the sources of war, the causes of war, the nature of war, the ways of war, the relations of war and peace, and even related to the study of international relations. The war view of contemporary China follows the military views of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism since the CCP established its regime in 1949, and its war view was connected to the

[72] *Ibid*., p. 3; p.7.
[73] Ken Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), p. 73.

structure of the bipolar system after World War II (WWII). During the Cold War period, the power of the former Soviet Union dominated East European countries and some Asian countries, and spread the Marxist-Leninist military philosophy with its political influence over the dominated areas.[74] Marxists believe that the origin, nature and function of war are directly linked with the private economic system and class struggles between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in terms of historical materialism.[75] That is to say, in the Marxist viewpoint, the conflict of economic interests is the root of war, and the nature of war is class contradiction; this is the military theory of the former Soviet Union as well.

Principally, the Marxist-Leninist theory of war has four salient characteristics. The first is the origin of war, which was mentioned before. The second is the view of domestic war. Marxists argue that the proletariat must build an army to seize the regime of the bourgeoisie through violent revolution and control the state mechanism for self-liberation. The third is the conception of the 'People's War.' Here, Marxists believe that the war of proletarian revolution is the people's war; that is the approach for the weak class of the proletariat to fight against the strong troops of the bourgeoisie. The fourth is the view of counter-imperialism. Leninists claim that WWI derived from the conflicts of imperialist states fighting for limited global economic resources, and they believe imperialism is the final stage of the development of capitalism. Therefore, from Leninist internationalism, communists started to extend the view of war from a domestic level to an international level. From the Marxist-Leninist perspective, this is why the world proletariat must unite for the fight against imperialism.

Mao Zedong inherited the Marxist-Leninist theory of war. Mao once pointed out that many peasant revolutions in Chinese history were the movement of the peasant class fighting with the landlord class, and this was the Chinese contradiction of class. Mao also followed the Leninist explanation of war and peace under imperialism. He considered that the existence of imperialism was the origin of modern war, believing that war is the best way to eliminate the war of imperialism, and then real peace

[74] Shufan Ding, *Zhonggong junshi sixiang de fazhan* [The Development of Chinese Communist Military Thought] (Taipei: Tangshan Press, 1996), pp. 50-52.
[75] Jijung Li, *Junshi zhanlue siwei* [Military strategic thinking] (Beijing: Military Science Press, 1998), pp. 33-35. Also see Liang Biqin, *Junshi fangfa xue* [Military Methodology] (Beijing: People's Liberation Army Press, 1999), pp.126-31.

would come.[76] Rather, Mao in the 1960s optimistically predicted that a third world war would happen, and imperialism would be destroyed. When China entered the 1980s, Mao's prediction of a world war did come true; meanwhile, the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist view of war and peace was gradually challenged by the changing international relations from tension to relaxation. Therefore, when Mao's successor Deng Xiaoping came to power in 1978, he started to adjust the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist view of war, claiming that the strength of peace was increasing and would exceed the strength of war; thus world war would not happen in this period. Deng also stressed that the importance of China's role is to be the leader of the Third World countries in maintaining world order and opposing world hegemony.

Although the realistic international setting and war fighting experiences have corrected the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist view of war greatly, Mao's military thought is still the most significant guideline for China's military strategy, in which the notion of people's war is the core, and active defence is the approach.[77] Importantly, there is one other important thing in Mao's military thought: that is the role of the CCP. In the Marxist-Leninist view of war, the state is the creature of the bourgeois, belonging to the superstructure of human society for governing the proletariat. In order to overthrow the bourgeois regime and international imperialism, the class of proletariat must establish the communist party. Likewise, this is why Communist China always insists on following the principle of leadership of the CCP in its thinking of the people's war and national security, as Article 19 of *The Defence Law of the PRC* in 1997 put it, 'The CCP guides the armed forces of the PRC'.[78]

The second is Mao's military thought and PLA maritime strategic direction. Every formation of a military thought has its certain historical process. As to the Communist state, there are three factors in the formative process of military thought: (1) Historical materialism. From the materialist ideology of the Communist state, different military thought usually reflects different military features in different historical periods, and these different features can mirror the different levels of social material produced in history. Specifically, material produce is the origin of communist

[76] See 'Maodun lun' [Contradictory theory], *Selected Works of Mao Zedong, Volume 1*, Second Edition (Beijing: Renmin Press, 1991), pp. 314-20.
[77] David Shambaugh, 'The People's Liberation Army and the People's Republic at 50: Reform at Last,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 159 (September 1999), p. 661.
[78] The Defence Law of the PRC (14 March 1997) by the National People's Congress. Available from <http://www.npc.gov.cn/zgrdw/common/zw.jsp?id=4681&lmfl=%A8%A8?%A1%E4%A8%AE???%A1%C1&label=WXZLK&pdmc=010602>. Accessed on July 13, 2007.

military strategic thought. (2) The nature of class. Due to the legitimacy of materialist-socialist ideology, the notion of class must be the premise in the Communist states. Thus, military thought is a social ideology that reflects the political views and strategic directions of certain classes and interest groups. (3) Military practice. Primarily, the CCP believes that military thought comes from military practice, which can explain the pros and cons of army and strategy. This relationship of thought and practice certainly reflects Mao's '*shi jian lun*' (Practical Theory), in which Mao indicated that recognition is from practice, and practice is the experience of initial objective feeling, causing the formation of feeling, which is a circular process.[79] Overall, China's formative process of military thought can be concluded as a set of socialist ideology, material produced, and military practice. Therefore, China's military strategy shows not merely the communist military strategic thought, but presents the Chinese characteristic of national defence, such as the ideas of people's war and active defence.

The development of the concept of people's war can fall into three periods: 'People's War' (1927-1977), 'People's War under Modern Conditions' (1978-1991), and 'Local Wars under High Tech Conditions' (1991-2004). Importantly, it may be worth pointing out that Beijing, according to the 2004 *China's Defence White Paper*, has replaced 'Local Wars under High Tech Conditions' with 'Local Wars under the Conditions of Informationalisation'.[80] Nevertheless, the development of military strategic direction in high-tech war is still the same. In the first period, Mao adopted this concept and led the class of peasants and workers to fight the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), Japanese imperialism, and the Korean War in the 1950s. In the second period, after the death of Mao, Deng proposed his view of war, arguing that avoiding world war was possible, which was different from the Maoist view of war. In the same way, because of the Vietnam War and the tension of Sino-Soviet relations at the end of the 1970s, China started to realise that its backward armed forces needed modernisation. Thus, the CCP amended Mao's military thought from people's war to people's war under modern conditions that included limited disputes over borders,

[79] See 'Shi jian lun' [Practical theory], *Selected Works of Mao Zedong, Volume 1*, Second Edition (Beijing: Renmin Press, 1991), pp. 259-73.
[80] Refer to State Council of the People's Republic of China, *China's National Defence in 2004* (December 2004), Chapter 2. Available from Chinese Government's Official Web Portal <http://english.gov.cn/official/2005-07/28/content_18078.htm>. Accessed on July 15, 2007.

territorial waters, islands, and punitive counter-attack.[81] In the last period, the main reason of the strategic affirmation of 'Local Wars under High Tech Conditions' was based on the lesson of the first Persian Gulf War in 1991, and China's rising CNP during Jiang Zemin's era. In this period, the PLA stressed that high technology is a decisive factor in modern warfare, as well as the importance of the quality and quantity of troops, and the combination of time, space, strength and effectiveness.[82] In short, from the first Persian Gulf War until now, Beijing has regarded the high-tech war of the information age as the style of future war, and China will continue to concentrate on enhancing PLA military strategy by improving its military technological problems.

While China experienced the evolution of military strategic thought in three different periods, this development has produced the three current schools with different types of conflict scenarios on future warfare in the current PLA, according to *China Debates the Future Security Environment* by Michael Pillsbury, including People's War School, Local War School, and the RMA School. People's War School is the mainstream in China's military thinking just because the highest PLA leaders never challenged Mao's military thought; even Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, and recent leader Hu Jintao still see people's war as the core of China's military strategy. When facing threats, the scenarios of this school are that China will mobilise the population for fighting enemies, slowing the invaders, and practising a long-term war from the interior.[83] The Local War School was from Deng's view of war. This school is important as well in current Chinese military thinking, but it is still influenced by Mao's military thought. This school has two essential vital scenarios, including using rapid reaction forces and defending national boundaries and frontiers.[84] Further, the RMA School resulted from the impact of the RMA of Russia and the US on a small group of PLA leaders and political elites, and it did not include Mao's military thinking. The scenarios of this school focus on executing pre-emption outside the territory, enhancing C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computer, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance), and proceeding with asymmetric

[81] Paul H. B. Godwin, 'From Continent to Periphery: PLA Doctrine, Strategy and Capabilities,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 146 (June 1996), p. 467.
[82] Refer to the Chapter 5 of *China's National Defence in 2004*.
[83] Pillsbury, *China Debates the future Security Environment*, pp. 269-73.
[84] *Ibid*., pp. 273-74.

strategy.[85] The first chapter of China's National Defence in 2004 declares that the 'Worldwide Revolution in Military Affairs is gaining momentum,'[86] but it does not give any definitions of the RMA. Interestingly, China's premier Wen Jiabao in his 'Report on the Work of the Government' in 2005 gives a clear direction for the RMA; he says, China 'will actively promote the revolution on military affairs with Chinese characteristics and enhance the army's ability to use IT in fighting integrated warfare in defence of the country.'[87] China's 2004 White Paper and 2005 Wen's report shows that the Chinese leadership has reconciled traditional Mao and Deng military thought to the new idea of the IT-RMA, while there were differing disputes between these schools in the 1990s.

China's military thought has been transformed from territorial defence to the direction of peripheral defence and information warfare, while the CCP still insists on Mao Zedong's military thinking and Deng Xiaoping's thinking on army building. For the issue of China's maritime security, however, the thought of the People's War School seems to fail in dealing with the problem of China's maritime strategy. Conversely, the strategic thinking of the Local War School and the RMA School on peripheral and outside territorial defence has become the upholder of current China's maritime strategy for promoting the development of maritime power projection and extension, supported by the combination of maritime strategy and economic energy strategy. Thus, it would be preferable to say that both schools are the base for the rise of modern Chinese sea power.

3.4 The Influence of China's Nationalism on Its Maritime Strategic Orientation

Rising nationalism, or patriotism, is showing itself in various parts of the world as an obvious modern tendency. In particular, the beginning of the post-Cold War has

[85] As to the RMA School's strategic thinking of asymmetric strategy, see Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangshui, *Chao xian zhan* [Asymmetric Strategy: the Scenarios of War in the Age of Globalisation and the Way of War] (Beijing: PLA Press, 1999).
[86] Refer to the Chapter 1 of *China's National Defence in 2004*.
[87] Wen Jiabao, 'Report on the Work of the Government' at the Third Session of the Tenth National People's Congress on 5 March 2005. Available from *People's Daily Online* (14 March 2005) <http://english.people.com.cn/200503/14/eng20050314_176792.html>. Accessed on 17 July 2007.

accelerated the outbreak of nationalist conflict in many parts of the world. Examples are the ethnic conflict in the former Yugoslavia and the Balkans. Regarding functions of nationalism, it is a key driving power of national revolution and development with several essential purposes, such as national liberation, national status, national independence, national reunification, and national modernisation. Importantly, China could combine nationalism with its military modernisation, stressing the role of the PLA in national integration and in securing China from external enemies. This may help Beijing to design patriotic desires for reinstatement of China's influence in its nearby maritime areas, particularly Taiwan and the South China Sea.[88]

China has been experiencing the movement of nationalism since the early part of the twentieth century for blotting out China's humiliation by remaking China's status in Asia. From its development, Chinese nationalism has included three categories: nativism, anti-traditionalism, and the current pragmatism.[89] The common ground shared by these different Chinese nationalisms in the different periods is that they claim and rebuild Chinese national status in the world by establishing a politically, economically, and culturally united China. From the standpoint of Confucianism, it is clearly understood that the core of China's recent nationalism is the presentation of Sino-centrism in Chinese society for re-establishing its historical role as the major power in East Asia.[90] As Richard Bernstein and Ross Munro acutely pointed out:

> Driven by nationalist sentiment, a yearning to redeem the humiliations of the past, and the simple urge for international power, China is seeking to replace the United States as the dominant power in Asia.[91]

China's new commercial media and the Internet also act as the important approaches for the CCP to stimulate nationalism with publicising the external threats and internal secessionism. In this respect, the Beijing regime indeed has embraced

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[88] Judith F. Kornberg and John R. Faust, *China in World Politics: Policies, Processes, Prospects* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), pp. 59-60.
[89] The nativism focused on re-build Confucian tradition and self-reliance. Nonetheless, the anti-traditionalism considered that the backwardness of China was due to Confucian tradition; China therefore should adopt foreign development models and Western culture. The current pragmatism is more flexible; it not only stresses national modernization, but also keeps the value of Confucianism. See Suisheng Zhao, 'Chinese Nationalism and Its International Orientations,' *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 115, No. 1 (2000), pp. 2-10.
[90] Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, p. 229.
[91] Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, 'The Coming Conflict with America,' *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 2 (March-April 1997), p. 19.

nationalism as its new ideology in this age when almost no one believes in communism anymore.[92] In short, Chinese nationalism is seeking inspiration from the past and Sino-centrism in order to restore national identity, deal with foreign threats, and free the nation from its weaknesses and humiliations.

The growth of China's sea power, undoubtedly, coincides with the rapid growth of its maritime economy and the urgent needs for imported energy. Viewed in this light, China seems to know that sea power is the key to the politico-economic great power and maritime interests. Notably, Beijing has seen nationalism as a means to reconstruct the Chinese oceanic consciousness for claiming its sovereignty, territorial waters, sea rights, and a large blue-water navy.[93] Thus, nationalism can be regarded as a salient driving force of China's maritime strategy, and no analysis of Chinese national military strategy is sufficient without examining Chinese nationalism.

3.4.1 Nationalism and China's Strategic Concerns at Sea

Before the twentieth century, when China was still in its imperial era, Chinese nationalism did not exist. The emergence of modern nationalism for China's defence and status occurred only after the Opium War (1840-1842). At that time, China started to realise its backwardness in economic and technological development in comparison with the West. After Dr Sun Yet-Sen overthrew the Manchu Ch'ing Dynasty and established the Republic of China in 1911, then the CCP came to power in 1949 and defined 'China as a multiethnic political community.'[94] Even though the rise of Chinese nationalism was from the weak and poor environment, the rise of modern Chinese nationalism coincided with the growth of China's booming economy in Dengist China, but the situation of a prosperous economy also seems to have precipitated the decrease of communist ideology. With the decline of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism in Chinese society, the Beijing regime has been promoting nationalism as a powerful means for social stability and national development since the 1980s. However, this does not mean that the communist ideology has lost its legitimate status in the CCP and replaced it with nationalism; on the contrary, the CCP

[92] Shirk, *China: Fragile Superpower*, p. 11.
[93] Robert S. Ross, 'China's Naval Nationalism—Sources, Prospects, and the U.S. Response,' *International Security*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (Fall 2009), pp. 60-75.
[94] Suisheng Zhao, 'China's Pragmatic Nationalism: Is It Manageable?' *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Winter 2005-06), p.133.

still seizes the ideology of communism as the political theoretical function and keeps promoting nationalism to support the social practical function for its leadership and national stability. In this sense, the modern nationalism of China can be regarded as a pragmatic nationalism.

Confucian philosophy is the main traditional cultural form of China and was the foundation of a tribute system and worldview, as Yongnian Zheng pointed out:

> Confucianism has had a major impact on China's coalescence because it represents the collective experience of the nation formed through China's long process of adaptation and response to the challenge of its natural and social environments.[95]

Chinese nationalism of today is a political concept of territorial self-determination, the military concept of national self-defence, and the cultural concept of national identity in international relations. In the meantime, it is an instrument that 'the CCP uses to bolster the population's faith in a troubled political system and to hold the country together during its period of rapid and turbulent transformation into a post-Communist society.'[96] Further, Chinese nationalism is closely connected with the domination of the CCP. The CCP as the substitute for the people's will seeks the people's loyalty and support for the party just as they would embrace the nation itself, or perhaps it would be more correct to say that pragmatic nationalism has become a useful means for reinforcing the authority of the CCP. The characteristic of this nationalism is a so-called party-state centrism.

In theory, the central premise of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology is the notion of socio-economic class, not nation-state. To communism, the concepts of state, culture, national identity, institution, and nationalism are from the social superstructure (the bourgeoisie) for dominating social infrastructure (the proletariat). Additionally, the communist vision of international realpolitik is different from the vision of Western realism, just as communists stress that the nation-state as the major actor defining the anarchic international environment is artificial. While the CCP still holds these premises of communism, it is gradually changing its identity from the class identity of a Communist China to the national identity of a modern Socialist China since the death of Mao. Chinese nationalism started to replace the declining

[95] Yongnian Zheng, *Discovering Chinese Nationalism in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 73.
[96] Zhao, 'China's Pragmatic Nationalism,' p. 132.

communism in Dengist China and after. So far, Chinese pragmatic nationalism has become the main support of China's national behaviour for maintaining national stability, international status, the CCP's prestige, and Chinese national defence. Also, it is driving Beijing's maritime ambition for Chinese sea power status.

3.4.2 Nationalism as the Backbone of Contemporary Chinese Sea Power

Beijing has turned its attention to the seas in its quest for territorial waters and energy security in terms of its current interests of imported energy and seaborne trade, which has beckoned China's sea-based strategic direction for becoming a sea power. For the reason of a growing economy, China has certainly integrated a maritime factor into its maritime strategic thinking,[97] such as the 'Two-Island Chain' strategy and the US named 'String of Perils' strategy. For sea power, China is attempting to apply the past memory of the Ming era's maritime heyday to reconnect national identity and strategic tradition with its modern maritime strategic orientation by stressing sea power as related to China's national survival. Beijing emphasises that Chinese rising sea power is without military offensive ambition; for example, the sea power of the Ming Dynasty did not attempt conquest in terms of defensive strategic tradition.

Playing the role as a sea power in the international system of the Asia-Pacific Region has been a part of China's nationalism for shaping national identity, public attitudes, beliefs and ideas. Significantly, Chinese nationalism obviously involves an effort by Beijing's leadership to press political identity and culture into the service of national strategy.[98] In this regard, Chinese nationalism seems to share a common ground with Chinese strategic culture, in that they offer an historical context for shaping maritime behaviour, strategic decision-making, and public opinion. Historically, the glory days of the Ming Dynasty's sea power represent a good example to modern China; this helps Beijing to redefine Chinese oceanic civilisation and also assist Beijing in remaking its direction of sea-based grand strategy. As the *PLA Daily* declares, 'About 600 years ago, Zheng He led a huge fleet overseas in an effort to materialize glory and dreams through the blue waves. Today the task of materializing the blue dream of peaceful use of the seas has been assigned to our

[97] Brendan Nicholson, 'China May Patrol Sea Ship Lanes,' *The Age*, May 4, 2007, News, p. 9.
[98] James R. Holmes, 'China Fashions a Maritime Identity,' *Issue & Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (September 2006), pp. 97-98.

generation by history'.[99]

In the Chinese case, territorial integrity is always the focus of the discourse on China's nationalism because national identity and national interests today are of supreme significance in China's nationalism. Regarding the border of China, Taiwan and the South China Sea may become two major obstacles in Beijing's effort to develop sea power. From the view of Beijing, without control of Taiwan, the US defensive line will retreat thousands of kilometres to Guam and Hawaii.[100] Equally, Japan has also coveted Taiwan; each year, around 85 per cent of its energy and about 500 million tonnes of Japan's raw materials are shipped by the sea-lanes near Taiwan. Considering securing national interests the US and Japan may threaten China's reunification.[101]

Another issue of maritime territories is in the South China Sea. China's discourse of nationalism views the sovereignty over the waters adjacent to islands in the area as based on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which indicates that whatever country controls those islands can claim its sovereign rights over around 8,000,000 square kilometres of maritime territory in the South China Sea.[102] Chinese nationalism indeed is a double-edged sword that is highly relevant to the national security of politics, economy, and military. However, nationalism not only maintains the domestic stability of China and the authoritarianism of the CCP, but also builds a 'Great Wall' of public opinion of fighting secessionism, preventing external threats, and claiming territorial waters. Noticeably, it has rationalised China's strategic behaviour for securing maritime security by pursuing sea power.

Although the Confucian idea of a harmonious world is still presented by current Hu-Wen leadership in any international occasion, the Sino-centric form of Confucianism as China's conceptual framework for the world order has transformed into a state-centric form of nationalism. Nationalism is a relatively contemporary concept, which combines the political belief of territorial self-determination, the cultural belief of national identity, and the ethical belief of self-defence in the world.

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[99] Editorial department of *Jiefangjun bao* [PLA Daily], 'Lun xinshiji xinjieduan wojun de lishi shiming' [On our military's historic missions in new century, new stage] *Jiefangjun bao* [PLA Daily], May 23, 2006. Available from <http://www.chinamil.com.cn/site1/ztpd/2006-05/23/content_481599.htm>. Accessed on July 23, 2007.

[100] Li Jijung, *Junshi zhanlue siwei*, pp. 156-57.

[101] Nan Li, *From Revolutionary Internationalism to Conservative Nationalism: The Chinese Military's Discourse on National Security and Identity in the Post-Mao Era* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2001), pp. 25-27.

[102] *Ibid*., p. 26.

The supremacy of national interests in China's worldview does not necessarily suggest the Beijing regime will become either more benevolent or predatory in its performance of national strategic behaviour. Nevertheless, it allows the authorities of Beijing to adjust the restrictions of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology by defining national interests based on pragmatic naval nationalism.

3.5 Summary

Before the coming of the Western sea powers, the security of China's tribute system in Asia under Confucianism was unchallengeable. However, this Sino-centric *Weltanschauung* collapsed under the challenge of the Western sea powers during the Manchu Ch'ing Dynasty following the 1840s. This clash of civilisations took Beijing around a century before reasserting China's role with its rising CNP in the global system. With the rapid growth of China's CNP and its international status, China has confirmed its role as a great power in the world by remaking its Sino-centric worldview and seeking an Asian domination for achieving comprehensive security—China's maritime security particularly.

Strategically, that sea power today seems superior to land power in becoming a current generalised definition in the world. Even so, how can China finish its transformation from the approach of a traditional land power to the approach of a sea power? Moreover, how can China's national development adapt for its future advanced maritime strategy and future maritime challenge? These problems offer an important strategic direction to the development of China's maritime strategy. In history, the basic drive to a powerful maritime state is 'Export-driven Economy.' If the weight of the export-driven economy or maritime economy of a state economic structure were quite limited, the base of sea power would be fragile and could even disappear. Traditionally, China was a state with economic self-reliance, for which the maritime strategy of coastal defence was sufficient for national defence at that time. However, the gravity of export-oriented economy in China's economic system is getting more and more important. With the rising significance of China's SLOCs, the demand for structuring an advanced maritime strategy with a powerful naval strength

has become an urgent strategic choice for China's development and security.

The strategic origins of Chinese sea power cannot be simply examined by the traditional exegesis of Western realism and Mahanian sea power, though some scholars of the realist school still largely apply these realist theories to examine the sea power and maritime strategy of China. The main reason is that the discourse of realism cannot precisely explain Chinese strategic tradition and the historical experiences of Mahanian sea power. Further, they cannot sufficiently explain the activities of maritime cooperation and the evolution of China's maritime strategic thinking in the era of economic globalisation, although maritime force today is the essential element of Chinese sea power. In order to get a full vision of China's strategic behaviour and its maritime direction, the research of Chinese maritime strategy must be based on the context of economic globalisation and the historical *Weltanschauung* of China. In addition, studying China's maritime strategy must go through the analysis of its military strategic origins, which have been examined.

Overall, this research principally argues that the Chinese worldview of state-centric Confucianism is the most important base of Beijing's national strategic behaviour and its military strategy. From the assessment for China's modern international relations, it is easy to find that Beijing is pragmatically recovering its domination with its rising politico-economic power and expanding the strategic depth of its maritime defence for maritime security borders and sea rights in the Asia-Pacific. Significantly, although the CCP still insists on Mao's thought in theory, China's pragmatic nationalism has taken the place of declining communism in Chinese society, in which the concept of nation-state has replaced the class concept of communism. For the direction of Beijing's maritime strategy, this has also meant strong support for the rising Chinese oceanic consciousness and its evolution of maritime strategy from a coastal defence to a blue-water defence in contemporary international relations.

PART II
DEVELOPMENT

China's growing maritime influence has gradually become an important index of its comprehensive national power. Beijing's shift from a coastal defence strategy to an ocean-going strategy has implications for maritime security in the entire Asia-Pacific region. An examination of Chinese maritime strategy would not be complete without discussing the influence of Beijing's strategic choice on China's maritime strategy. Strictly speaking, its strategic choice and development are profoundly affected by the political, economic, societal, and military sectors according to the different needs of Chinese grand strategy in different periods. Broadly, maritime strategy can serve more than just the objectives of national defence, which can be far reaching. It can serve national security interests including those that are political, economic, socio-cultural, and military in nature. These conditions, in turn, can also determine the strategic choice of national conduct at sea.

This part primarily adopts the approach of sectoral analysis for addressing China's maritime strategy. In the political sector, maritime strategy has an important role in claiming sovereignty over territorial waters, protecting maritime rights and interests, and showing national sea power in the international environment. In the economic sector, the purposes of maritime strategy are mainly concerned with overseas energy imports, merchant marine development, seaborne trade, Sea-Lanes of Communication (SLOCs), and the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). In the socio-cultural sector, maritime strategy is the mixture of societal structure and strategic culture. In addition, its development is also affected by nationalism and sea-power mentality. In the military sector, maritime strategy is the coordination of national maritime intention and naval forces for achieving the military purpose of winning command of the sea.

With the aim of accurately examining China's maritime strategic direction and development since the PRC was founded in 1949, the discourse of the second part of this research was built on the assumption that China would attempt to expand maritime strategy for its sea-oriented national security if the expected maritime strategic benefits exceeded the expected maritime strategic costs. According to

different CCP leadership and the constantly changing international environment, this part essentially divides the evolution of China's maritime strategy into three strategic steps for discussion: coastal defence, offshore defence, and far sea defence. In addressing the three segments of China's maritime strategy, this research contributes to narrowing a gap in the understanding of the issues of maritime security strategy and Asia-Pacific power balancing regarding China.

Furthermore, what kind of maritime strategy can contribute to China's maritime security and sea-power construction is a question well worth examining as part of the overall effort to adapt China's growing influence to the international system. In order to realise Chinese maritime strategic choices, this research also sheds light on more specific aspects of regional maritime security related to China in the aforementioned sectors of analysis. Given the expansion of continental China's maritime strategy is a necessary route for protecting its maritime borders, securing maritime interests, maintaining maritime economy, and remaking international power status, this part seeks to broaden the viewpoint of this research topic by exploring the development of China's maritime strategy in following each chapter.

Chapter 4
Coastal Defence

Due to the historical influence of inward agricultural economy, land-oriented civilisation and continental strategic culture, the development of China's concept of sea power is vague. Consequently, China's grand strategic direction was traditionally based on the concept of '*zhonglu qinghai*' (emphasising land power at the cost of sea power).[1] While the contemporary Chinese sense of sea power has grown to include national economic and maritime interests, understanding of maritime defence is also evolving. With China's maritime rise in the Asia-Pacific, nevertheless, Beijing has gradually tried to change this unbalanced strategic thinking since the 1950s. Meanwhile, many PLA elites started to advocate that China must stop seeing its waters merely as a fosse. The formation of Maoist coastal defence can be seen as the beginning of China's maritime ambition for its national interests at sea.

When the Chinese Communist Party came to power in 1949, China was a weak, poor, and unrecognised country, particularly in the military and economic fields. The most important requirement in China's grand strategy at that time was to seek national security and development for shaping its security environment in the Cold War period. For these goals, at the beginning of the 1950s, Maoist China concentrated on the reconstruction of its economic system, heavy industries and armed forces through learning the Soviet model, the formation of China's coastal defence and its naval force structure as well. Against this background, Maoist geo-strategic thinking therefore viewed China's coastline as a natural fosse for shielding China from potential maritime intrusions. In this sense, the build-up of Chinese ground force was therefore more important than naval force in Maoist China. Although, 'beyond the fosse' in modern China's maritime strategic thinking, which means that China's survival must connect with the oceans in the world, is always a significant issue for the national comprehensive development of China, Maoist China did not see it as an important part of its grand strategy.

[1] Gabriel B. Collins, Andrew S. Erickson, Lyle J. Goldstein and William S. Murray, eds, *China's Energy Strategy: The Impact on Beijing's Maritime Policies* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2008), pp. 320-21.

In general, research on the Maoist maritime strategy of coastal defence is sparse. This does not mean, however, that the maritime strategy of Maoist China was not significant under its land-oriented national strategy, while its coastal defence strategy at that moment only required a small naval force for securing China's seaboard with an uncertain Maoist maritime strategic direction. From an examination of the development of Maoist maritime strategy, the relations between China's naval build-up, economic development, and international security setting are clear, and it is possible to gain a sound historical understanding of Maoist China's maritime strategic thinking.

Typically, grand strategy is the highest national strategy and directed by the political leadership of a state through using the state's entire resources to maintain national survival and development. The direction of grand strategy implies that a state's most important interests are both threatened and unresolved.[2] This greatly determines the leader's decision of national strategic choice. In this prospect, the core question of this chapter is that what is Maoist strategy of 'Coastal Defence' under the military thought of 'People's War' and 'Active Defence'? Did this maritime strategy integrate with the Maoist grand strategy?

4.1 Political Analysis: Land-Oriented Grand Strategy and Coastal Defence

China's maritime influence was not built in a day. During the Cold War period, Maoist China's most important relationship was with the Soviet Union just because the Sino-Soviet alliance provided a significant base for China's national security in the 1950s. Explicitly, after the establishment of the CCP regime, Mao Zedong chose a 'learning toward one side' strategy for allying with the Soviet Union due to having the same communist ideology and security requirements. In the meantime, Washington's anti-communist position and a common communist ideology made a close collaboration between Beijing and Moscow logical. Mao also hoped a Sino-Soviet alliance would

[2] Roy Kamphausen and Andrew Scobell, eds, *Right Sizing the People's Liberation Army: Exploring the Contours of China's Military* (Carlisle: SSI, U.S. Army War College, 2007), p. 483. Available from <http://www.StrategicStudiesInstitute.army.mil/>. Accessed on 5 September 2007.

provide an umbrella of military assistance for the CCP regime, especially against Japan's rise and the possibility of a US invasion. Thus, under the strategic thinking of learning from the Soviets, the direction of the grand strategy of Maoist China was entirely affected by the Soviet landward grand strategic focus. The honeymoon for both communist countries, however, was not too long.

The rift in Sino-Soviet relations after 1958 came about because of their differences over the importance of communist ideology and worldview after the two countries adopted divergent paths toward communist development and the West.[3] In addition, the 1969 border clashes at Zhenbaodao/Damansky Island seemed to verify the obvious divergence of national interests between the Chinese and the Soviets and caused them went from split to confrontation. In a few words, after the late 1950s, China's national strategy was concentrated on its borders with the USSR and Central Asia in accordance with its land-oriented strategic direction toward border security, until Sino-Soviet relations relaxed in the Deng Xiaoping era. With the transformation of the international system from bipolarisation to multi-polarisation in the late 1970s, Beijing communicated to Moscow a desire to build state-to-state relations, through abrogating the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance in April 1979.[4] This *détente* in the international environment greatly reduced Beijing's continental security threat from the Soviet Union. Subsequently, Beijing started to put the open-door policy into practice and to claim its maritime interests for its economic development through adjusting the direction of its grand strategy from the land to the sea. Hence, the PLA followed this trend to shift its maritime strategy from coastal defence to offshore defence from then on.

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[3] William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003), pp. 392-93; Jian Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), pp. 72-73. The reasons of the Sino-Soviet split can be concluded with two dimensions. The first is their conflicted ideologies, including the different models on socioeconomic development, different ideas on Stalinism and different attitudes toward the West. The second is their different security concerns. According to the Sino-Soviet alliance in the 1950s, the Soviet Union and China had to share ideas and technologies with each other. For security's sake, however, the Soviets not only often refused to share their knowledge of such things with China, but also did not provide support when China had conflicts with Taiwan in 1958 and India in 1959. In addition, with the fear of China's rise through the economic movement of Great Leap Forward and the intention of avoiding US-USSR confrontation, Khrushchev in 1959 held a summit with US President Dwight Eisenhower seeking to decrease tensions between both them. Therefore, the Soviets not only directly reneged their commitment to assistant China develop nuclear weapons, but also refused to support China's second confrontation with India in 1962.

[4] Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., 'China, Soviet Strategy, and American Policy,' *International Security*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Fall 1980), p. 42.

4.1.1 Sino-Soviet Relations and Military Cooperation in the 1950s

After the Chinese Civil War, the industrial and economic infrastructure of the PRC required a huge overhaul with vast capital investment and foreign assistance after 1949. Principally, by reason of the growing bipolarisation of the international system, a state of affairs caused by the Soviet-US confrontation, the CCP had little strategic choice but to turn to the former Soviet Union, the most developed communist country and sponsor of the Communist bloc. Therefore, China patterned itself on the Soviet model of communist development in restructuring the political, societal, and military systems, and the military strategic thinking and weapons systems of the Chinese maritime strategy were no exception.

In the 1950s, Mao Zedong was able to secure politico-economic support and military aid from Stalin, according to the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance in February 1950. At that time, however, the Soviet Union did not aid China directly until China's intervention in the Korean War, which Beijing called 'an imperialist war of aggression' that would threaten China's borders.[5] After US troops marched toward the Sino-Korean border in 1950, China entered the Korean War, fulfilling Washington's worst fears of the Chinese communists. Chinese and American troops confronted each other for almost three years until an armistice was finally signed in July 1953.[6]

Before the war began, the USSR had started to supply China with military assistance, including around 1,000 MiG-15 aircraft and aid to war industries and transport systems in Manchuria.[7] After the armistice, the Soviet Union continued military assistance to China, supporting Beijing's efforts to equip its navy with submarines, which at first were supplied by the USSR and later produced in China under Soviet licence. Concerning the Sino-Soviet Treaty in 1950, it included providing naval aid and advice to China, as the Soviet naval presence in China grew significantly following the signing of the treaty.[8] Strategically, perhaps in return for

[5] Ralph L. Powell, 'Maoist Military Doctrines,' *Asian Survey*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (April 1968), p. 254.
[6] Judith F. Kornberg and John R. Faust, *China in World Politics: Policies, Processes, Prospects* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005), pp. 131-32.
[7] Peter Jones and Siân Kevill, eds, *China and the Soviet Union 1949-84* (Essex: Longman Group Limited, 1985), pp. 2-3.
[8] The terms of the Sino-Soviet alliance bear out Stalin's reluctance to accord China equal status, rather than the satellite status accorded to the Eastern European nations. According to that treaty, China was given a five-year loan of 300 million US dollars at 1 per cent interest rate. However, Poland received more than 450 million US dollars in Soviet aid. Moreover, Mao had to provide two ports for the Soviet

this assistance, Mao agreed to let the Soviet navy continue using Lushun and Dalian seaports in northeast China as forward naval bases. Theoretically, Beijing gained a benefit to its security through having the Soviet forces at the ports, and their presence seemed to imply that the Soviet naval force had certain responsibilities for the defence of a newborn China.[9]

Politically, Beijing was in favour of the Soviet Union's naval umbrella, which would enable China to concentrate its defence expenditures almost solely on the ground force and perhaps the air force. Due to China's lack of a maritime strategy and tradition for the operation of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), China was mimicking the Soviet coastal defence strategy and naval technology before the Sino-Soviet split.[10] With Soviet-designed weapons systems and equipment, China's navy, thus, can be seen as a small-scale replica of the Soviet navy, with no ambition to build an ocean-going navy in the 1950s. Since China's coastal defence was fully rooted in Soviet strategic coastal defence thinking, it is necessary to explore the maritime strategic thinking of the Soviet Union for understanding the Chinese case. Generally, the construction of the Stalinist Soviet Union's maritime strategy and naval might was based on three interactive elements, including geo-strategic considerations, the dire state of the national economy, and international relations.

In Soviet naval history, there was a debate between the ideas of a big navy and a small navy. In the beginning, the development of Soviet naval forces was based on the Russian 'Old School' of maritime strategy in the 1920s by focusing on building a bigger navy with battleships and cruisers in order to meet the level of Western navies. Due to the problems of bureaucratic infighting and a national economy in ruins, however, this naval program eventually proved abortive.[11] After that, the idea of Soviet naval forces in the Stalinist era (1945-1953) was defined as a geo-political navy in nature, consisting of coastal patrol craft, submarines, and combatant ships, as well as escorts, torpedo boats, and other small vessels for coastal defence.[12] More importantly, the focus of this coastal navy was the development of an effective

navy and to accept Soviet control over China's Manchurian (Changchun) Railway. See Ross Terrill, *Mao: A Biography* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), pp. 201-2.

[9] Hsien-Sen Lin, 'Offensive Deterrence and the Origin of China's Intervention in the Korean War,' *Prospective & Exploration*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (2007), pp. 116-17.

[10] David G. Muller, *China as a Maritime Power* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1983), pp. 50-51.

[11] *Ibid*., p. 48.

[12] Natalia I. Yegorova, 'Stalin's Conception of Maritime Power: Revelations from the Russian Archives,' *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (April 2005), pp. 158-59.

submarine fleet for the purpose of strategic deterrence at sea. It was a navy without ocean-going capability, and its strategic purpose was only to protect the country's coast from foreign invasion, which was the so-called 'Young School' of Soviet maritime strategy through the 1950s.

Since the lack of politico-economic support and sea-oriented strategic thought led to the result that the former Soviet Union under Stalin was still far from the creation of a big and balanced navy.[13] Thus, Stalin rejected an ocean-going navy along American or British lines, but merely emphasised the defensive nature of Soviet naval operations, such as securing the shores and coastal shipping by building ships of smaller size and shorter range.[14] Maoist China applied this Soviet idea of coastal defence from the early 1950s to the late 1970s for its maritime strategy.

The Korean War was the first armed clash in the Cold War period conducted not only on the ground and in the air, but on the sea as well. It catalysed the escalation of confrontation between the two blocs of the Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War without long-term positive consequences. It definitely stimulated a series of confrontational processes. For example, in December 1950, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) decided to remilitarise West Germany to contribute to the defence of Western countries through building up a NATO army.[15] This triggered the creation of the Warsaw Pact in May 1955, formerly the Military-Coordination Committee (MCC), as the basis of a powerful, modern Soviet alliance.[16] Given this background of international bipolarisation since the 1950s, China's naval force had been strengthened by the military support of the Soviet Union for fighting against the US and its allies in the Asia-Pacific during the Korean War, and by naval aid especially. In the same period, naval cooperation was among the initiatives to coordinate the operations of Soviet military forces with Eastern European allies.

Beijing's decision to enter the Korean War was rooted in the gradual development of hostility between the CCP and the Western powers, the US and its allies especially, under the background of the Sino-Soviet Treaty in February 1950. Another reason arose from Beijing's recognition of the American intent to intervene. Therefore, Mao launched a 'pre-emptive attack' in the Korean War in accordance with

[13] *Ibid*., p. 158.
[14] *Ibid*., pp. 162-63.
[15] Hugh Faringdon, *Confrontation: The Strategic Geography of NATO and the Warsaw Pact* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986) pp. 95-96; pp. 138-139.
[16] Daniel N. Nelson, *Alliance Behaviour in the Warsaw Pact* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), pp. 71-74.

his military doctrines of 'People's War' and 'Active Defence' for national security.[17]

Originally, the Soviets and Chinese had no intention at all of intervening in the war, and they just provided moral support for the reunification plan of North Korea (the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, DPRK) under Kim Il-Sung. That changed when the Truman administration ascertained that North Korea's attack was abetted by Moscow to support the strategy of international communism, and then the US did intervene directly on behalf of South Korea through American land, air, and naval forces.[18] At the time, Truman also decided to detach the Seventh Fleet to secure Taiwan and to neutralise the Taiwan Strait. Subsequently, Beijing viewed the American action as a serious threat to China's territory and then decided to enter the Korean War on behalf of North Korea in the mid-1950. In connection with this, Mao observed that China must build a powerful navy to shield its coast and efficiently prohibit imperialist invasion.[19] For the sake of common security interests, thereupon the Soviet Union reluctantly started to increase military assistance to China by strengthening military and technological cooperation with China after the war.

Overall, learning by trial and error is always the approach for the development of strategy in world politics. To the Soviet Union, the lesson of the war not only offered a turning point in Soviet maritime strategic thinking about creation of an influential modern ocean-going navy with aircraft carriers for counteracting American maritime domination, but also provided a decisive moment for Stalin to think about offering positive naval assistance to China.[20] Even though the Chinese navy did not contribute to the war, it had at least provided a lesson for Mao's maritime strategic thinking in that the Korean War was an intense strategic learning experience for the PLA, and this stimulated the naval build-up of China.[21]

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[17] Allen S. Whiting, 'China's Use of Force, 1950-96, and Taiwan,' *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (Fall 2001), pp. 106-108; and W. A. C. Adie, *Chinese Strategic Thinking under Mao Tse-tong* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1972), pp. 1-26.

[18] Hao Yufan and Zhai Zhihai, 'China's Decision to Enter the Korean War: History Revisited,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 121 (March 1990), pp. 100-1.

[19] Shuguang Zhang, *Deterrence and Strategic Culture: Chinese-American Confrontations, 1949-1958* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), p. 68.

[20] Sergei Chernyavskii, 'The Era of Gorshkov: Triumph and Contradictions,' *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (April 2005), pp. 285-286.

[21] Muller, *China as a Maritime Power*, pp. 18-19.

4.1.2 The Sino-Soviet Break and China's Naval Self-reliance since the 1960s

The starting place of the Sino-Soviet split was generally in their different explanations of communist theory deriving from a question about Marxist-Leninist characterisation of the modern historical stage, the question being 'was the prime contradiction of the epoch between national liberation movements and imperialism as argued by the Chinese, or between socialism and capitalism as contended by the Soviets?'[22] More precisely, the main issue in their ideological disputes was the question of whether the Chinese or the Soviet model was better fitted for guiding the communist revolution in Third World countries.

Another fundamental reason for the break was realpolitik. Undeniably, the Soviet Union under Khrushchev feared China's rise as a great power with nuclear might, thus causing the Soviet Union to be reluctant to assist Maoist China in developing nuclear weapons. This reluctance precipitated the breach between the two countries at the end of the 1950s. Meanwhile, Sino-Soviet border controversies arose in the Yili-Tacheng Autonomous Area of Xinjiang in 1962, and the issue of disputed boundaries went well beyond the rather absurd series of frontier clashes that culminated in public hostilities along the Amur and Ussuri rivers in 1969.[23]

According to the worldview of Mao Zedong since the 1950s, the world was divided into a socialist camp and an imperialist camp, and it was imperative to belong to one or the other. Nonetheless, because of the background of the Sino-Soviet break and Khrushchev's withdrawal of Soviet military assistance from China, Beijing needed to look for another international coalition from the Third World, and the middle and small countries. These countries together were seen as the main progressive global force, which was opposed to big nations and the imperialism of the world.[24] In this situation, Mao articulated his international theory of the 'intermediate zone' located between the two camps for seeking another alliance in the Third World.[25] Beijing meanwhile started to stress 'self-reliance' in national defence and economic development. Further, following the Sino-American rapprochement in 1972,

[22] O. Edmund Clubb, *China and Russia: The 'Great Game'* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 448.
[23] Li Danhui, 'On Some Aspects of Sino-Soviet Relations in the 1960s,' *Far Eastern Affairs*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (April-June 2005), pp. 74-77.
[24] Edward Friedman, 'On Maoist Conceptualizations of the Capitalist World System,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 80 (December 1972), pp. 829-30.
[25] Clubb, *China and Russia*, pp. 466-467.

China began to collaborate with the United States against the Soviet Union and caused a final split in Sino-Soviet relations. Thus, the relations of China and the USSR started to move from hostility toward outright confrontation in the 1970s.

The Great Leap Forward began in late 1958, and it was the commencement of China's self-reliance in technology and economy through pursuing faster and greater productivity in both industry and agriculture. Essentially, this movement came about because of two important factors. Ideologically, Mao and his colleagues believed that the stage of communist society would come true in China after passing through the stage of modernised capitalist society in terms of Marxist-Leninist ideology. With this in mind, Mao launched mass-based and politico-economic radicalism in the form of building countless backyard steel furnaces for China's industrial modernisation.[26] Militarily, even though the Soviet Union in the 1950s definitely offered important military assistance to China's military establishment, the Soviet Union did not transfer its state of the art weapons systems to China. In the Chinese view, the motive of the Soviet Union was to keep its military and technological superiority over China. The Chinese former Marshal Nie Rongzhen, who was the leader of Weapons Research and Development (R&D), once said:

> The Soviet Union wanted to keep its lead over us and had misgivings about us. Therefore, it was imposing ever-tighter restrictions on us concerning sophisticated technology for national defence… They only permitted us to copy weapons they had stopped or would soon stop producing, and would not provide us with any new equipment was limited to letting us copy a few prototypes. In short, they wanted to keep us forever in the status of an imitator and an appendage, always two or three steps behind them… In the view of these changes in Sino-Soviet relations, I considered how we should develop our science and technology independently.[27]

Additionally, the decision for China's naval self-reliance came because Beijing could not get Soviet assistance for developing a nuclear-powered submarine. In imitation of Soviet-type coastal defence, China had no plan to build battleships and aircraft carriers but to build a powerful submarine fleet as the main pillar of a defensive navy. For maritime defence, Marshal Nie suggested in 1958 that the CCP develop nuclear-powered submarines for promoting China's defence modernisation

[26] Maurice Meisner, *Mao Zedong: A Political and Intellectual Portrait* (Malden: Polity Press, 2007), pp. 140-43.
[27] Cited in Bates Gill and Taeho Kim, *China's Arms Acquisitions from Abroad: A Quest for 'Superb and Secret Weapons'*, SIPRI Research Report No. 11 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 32.

and reducing the American threat. This suggestion was finally received by Mao and called Project-09.[28] China at that moment, however, still needed Soviet nuclear technological help on this project, but the Soviet Union seemed to prefer providing finished nuclear-powered submarines to transferring nuclear technology to the Chinese. Although China and the USSR had close military cooperation in the 1950s, they did not trust each other in terms of their different national security considerations. For instance, the Soviets wished to establish China-based radio relay centres and offered to supply around 70 per cent of the funds for Sino-Soviet installations in 1958, but Beijing rejected the offer, because the system would control important elements in China's intelligence and security.[29] Another example is that while Khrushchev realised that Mao needed more naval support during the Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1958, the former only provided limited aircraft, long-range artillery, and air advisers to China because he worried that a Sino-US face-off might cause a Soviet-US nuclear confrontation.[30]

On the naval issue, Moscow once provided Beijing a plan for a joint submarine flotilla, for which China could get Soviet nuclear submarines, but Mao considered that it was a problem of sovereignty and Chinese coastal defence might come under the control of the Soviet Union. Therefore, Mao rejected this idea and imposed naval self-reliance on the indigenous build-up of nuclear-powered submarines in 1959.[31]

In the early 1960s after the Sino-Soviet split, given the lack of indigenous production capability and foreign sources for naval weapons systems, the only reasonable solution for the Chinese was to mimic, amend and improve the existing Soviet weapons inventory through reverse engineering based on indigenous designs and production processes. For this mission, the central authorities of the CCP in 1961 decided to establish the Seventh Research Institute of the Ministry of National Defence for the research on warship, aviation and electronic technology, and nominated the former Admiral Liu Huaqing to command the institute.[32] With the huge effect of Soviet military withdrawal and the failure of the Great Leap Forward,

[28] John Wilson Lewis and Xue Litai, *China's Strategic Seapower: The Politics of Force Modernization in the Nuclear Age* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1994), pp. 4-6.
[29] *Ibid*., p. 15.
[30] John Wilson Lewis and Xue Litai, *China Builds the Bomb* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1988), pp. 63-64.
[31] Xia Minxing, 'Mao Zedong and renmin haijun jianshe' [Mao Zedong and People's Naval Build-up], *Wenshijinghua* [The Essence of Historical Literature], No. 195 (August 2006), pp. 8-9.
[32] Liu Huaqing, *Liu huaqing huiyilu* [The Memoirs of Liu Huaqing] (Beijing, Liberation Army Publication, 2004), pp. 283-284.

however, the naval development of China had been very limited. When China entered the period of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), this social upheaval disrupted military production and prevented China's defence industries from taking advantage of advanced technology available at the international level, hampering the build-up of Chinese naval forces.[33] In retrospect, the Cultural Revolution was domestic political infighting and a power struggle among the 'Gang of Four,' which consisted of four CCP radicals: Zhang Chunqiao, Jiang Qing, Yao Wenyuan, and Wang Hongwen.

Regarding the PLA High Command under the Gang of Four in the 1970s, there were some debates on Chinese naval development between those who wanted to imitate the Soviet Admiral Sergey Gorshkov's impressive naval force and those who favoured a small coastal naval force. Even so, these CCP radicals still opposed the expansion of the Chinese navy on the assumption that rockets and missiles were more effective than combatant ships.[34] Thus, China's naval build-up under these radicals did not get out of its backward situation with an advanced maritime strategic thinking. After the end of the Cultural Revolution, when Deng Xiaoping became the leader of the PRC in the mid 1970s, Beijing started to turn away from the old Soviet strategic naval doctrine of coastal defence and to pay more attention to the importance of deep-water naval capabilities and offshore defence for its maritime economy and national maritime interests.

4.2 Economic Analysis: Maoist Economic Development and Self-Sufficiency

The economy is always the essential foundation of national development and defence. The level of economic strength not only can decide the level of military capability, but also can determine the development of a military strategic route. The national economic development from beginning to end was a significant strategic issue for

[33] Benjamin C. Ostrov, *Conquering Resource: The Growth and Decline of the PLA's Science and Technology Commission for National Defense* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1991), pp. 36-37.
[34] Alan P. L. Liu, 'The 'Gang of Four' and the Chinese People's Liberation Army,' *Asian Survey*, Vol. 19, No. 9 (September 1979), p. 827.

China under Mao. In the early 1950s, Mao looked to the Soviet Union to study how a socialist state could industrialise a poor and weak country. Like the commencement of Soviet economic development in the late 1920s, the overwhelming emphasis of the First Five-Year Plan of China in 1953 was on heavy industries, neglecting light and consumer goods industries.

Imitating the Soviet route of national development and greatly aided by the Soviets, China finally established its industrial foundation for the development of its national economy. Generally, the economic development of grand strategy in Maoist China had five stages, including the industrialisation and collectivisation during the First Five-Year Plan (1953-1957), the Great Leap Forward (1958-1959), readjustment and recovery of agriculture (1960-1965), the Cultural Revolution (1966-1969), and balanced growth since 1970. While Maoist China tried to improve its poor and weak economic conditions through the above stages, it did not escape from the Chinese traditional idea of economic self-sufficiency, especially in the fields of heavy industry and agriculture. This continental economic development in Maoist China was definitely related to the land-oriented grand strategy, as previously mentioned.

In order to understand the economic dynamic of coastal defence, this section principally applies macroeconomic vision to examine China's maritime economy under its inward economic development. Another aim of this section is to explore the relationship between Maoist China's maritime economic strategy and the international law of the sea.

4.2.1 Maoist Inward Economy and Self-sufficiency

Under Mao, Chinese communist ideology and Sino-Soviet relations directly derived from the issue of economic development. Ideologically, by the mid-1950s, the collectivisation and nationalisation under the First Five-Year Plan were in full swing, and China moved from new democracy to socialism at that time on the basis of Maoist ideology. After the plan, with the intention to find a Chinese approach for fast economic growth, Mao launched the Great Leap Forward, which reflected his dissatisfaction with the slow Soviet route to economic development.[35] The purpose of this radical economic movement was to mobilise all Chinese efforts to achieve the last

[35] John G. Gurley, *China's Economy and the Maoist Strategy* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976), pp. 208-9.

stage of 'Communism'[36]—a communist society through traditional rural labour methods and the inspiration generated by collective goals and action. Christopher Howe described it as follows:

> The Great Leap Forward of 1958. Abandoning all caution (and all Soviet advice), Mao took his argument one step further. He urged that spectacular development could only be achieved if changes in ownership and organization were combined with a radical psychological transformation of the population—a transformation that would stimulate people to work more intensively, more creatively, more selflessly. If this could be achieved, Mao anticipated a wave of investment and development—a Great Leap Forward.[37]

Considering Mao's economic strategy, his idea was to accelerate economic development by putting it into practice in a communist way, but it finally resulted in serious social turmoil, while the way definitely caused brief and sudden economic progress. In the communist viewpoint, this movement was not a success, for which Mao also lost some political power in the CCP. Added to this, the Soviet Union suddenly withdrew its assistance from China after Khrushchev's break with Mao, China's fast economic growth declined dramatically, causing a situation of great depression with negative economic growth during 1959 and 1961, as shown in Table 2. After this depression, China started to recover its fragile economic conditions by proclaiming of 'Four Modernisations' in the fields of agriculture, industry, technology and defence, for which China altered its economic priorities to agriculture first, light industry second, and then heavy industry last.[38] At this time, the self-sufficient economy was still the centre of Maoist economic policy and led to an improvement in the Chinese economy quite slowly.

With the coming of the Cultural Revolution after 1966, China's economy was damaged again by Mao's communist ideology that was to root out the traditional old values, such as Confucian philosophy and capitalism by replacing them with proletarian values.[39] Politically, the movement known as the Cultural Revolution also played a key role in allowing Mao to practise socialism and restore his political

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[36] *Ibid*., p. 209.
[37] Christopher Howe, *China's Economy: A Basic Guide* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), p. xxvii.
[38] Richard Baum, ed., *China's Four Modernizations: The New Technological Revolution* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980), pp. 49-59.
[39] Nick Knight, *Rethinking Mao: Explorations in Mao Zedong's Thought* (Lanham: Lexington Books Press, 2007), pp. 260-65.

authority. During this period, as Table 2 shows, the growth of China's GNP went down from 13.28 per cent to 6.08 per cent, and foreign trade as an index of outward economy drops from 5.94 per cent to -0.19 per cent.

As can be seen, the situation of economic downturn did not change much until Mao's death. In this light, the outward economy of Maoist China was too weak to be an effective foundation for its maritime strategy. Overall, the Cultural Revolution had at least two economic results. The first was that general social disorder led to a decline in industrial output in the mid-1960s. The second was that it stopped the progress of the tentative revival of foreign trade until 1976.

Table 2: The Development of Maoist Economy, 1952-1975 (% growth per year)

Indicators \ Periods	**1952-59**	**1959-61**	**1961-65**	**1965-70**	**1970-75**
Industrial output	20.5	- 21.6	16.32	9.5	8.79
Grain output	4.44	- 14.44	5.92	3.56	2.51
Total trade	13.62	- 16.61	5.94	- 0.19	12.1
State budget revenue	17.46	- 16.45	5.76	4.39	4.58
GNP	6.69	- 12.4	13.28	6.08	6.43
Gross investment	24.37	- 16.25	9.3	7.16	10.72

Source: Data from Christopher Howe, *China's Economy: A Basic Guide* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1978), p. xxiii, p. 137. State Statistical Bureau, *China Statistical Yearbook 1981* (Beijing: China Statistics Press, 1981), p. 353.

Energy demand in Maoist era was an important issue. With oil, for example, the dimensions of China's oil performance are very significant from the 1950s to date. During the First Five-Year Plan, the problem of energy development was one of the most urgent tasks for China's heavy industry, and immediate measures were taken to prospect and make plans for the production of oil and coal. With Soviet technical assistance, a variety of programs of geological investigation, geophysical surveying, and exploratory drilling were undertaken, such as the development of the Dushanzi oil field as a Sino-Soviet joint venture and the Karamai and Daqing oil-field developments.[40] China's national self-sufficiency rate increased significantly from 26.9 per cent in 1951 to 61.1 per cent in 1960, and China's oil production increased

[40] Tatsu Kambara and Christopher Howe, *China and the Global Energy Crisis: Development and Prospects for China's Oil and Natural Gas* (Northampton: Edward Elgar, 2007), pp. 10-11.

from 305,000 tonnes in 1951 to 3,273,000 tonnes in 1960.[41] Concerning the direct ratio of Chinese total oil production to heavy industry, the gross output value of heavy industry had been increased 25.4 per cent during the First Five-Year Plan.[42] Without such Soviet support, China would have had the greatest difficulty in developing its oil energy in the 1950s. In this sense, the Soviet contribution was enormous in both military and economic terms for China. From the early 1960s, the Sino-Soviet split made the energy problem of Chinese oil self-sufficiency an immensely significant one. Therefore, the Maoist strategy of economic development from that point on started to put the stress on self-sufficiency and self-reliance rather than any form of overseas support.

The Maoist economy was a continental economy in relation to the gross output value of agricultural production. Although the development of heavy industry was the main goal of the Maoist economy, Mao did not sacrifice the growth of traditional farming, which has always been the main foundation of China's national economy. In accordance with the *China Statistical Yearbook*, it is obvious that farming always accounted for a major portion of the Gross Output Value of Agricultural Production (GOVAP). Physically, China has many of the largest and richest fishing grounds in the Asia-Pacific region, and most valuable fisheries concentrate in the shallow waters over its continental shelves. However, as shown in Table 3, the average percentage of fisheries in the GOVAP was merely around 1 per cent during 1952 and 1978.

Table 3: Gross Output Value of Agricultural Production, 1952-1978 (%)

Indicators \ Years	**1952**	**1957**	**1965**	**1978**
Farming	83.1	80.6	75.8	67.8
Forestry	0.7	1.7	2.0	3.0
Husbandry	11.5	12.9	14.0	13.2
Fishery	0.3	0.5	1.7	1.4
Others	4.4	4.3	6.5	14.6
Sum	100	100	100	100

Source: Data from State Statistical Bureau, *China Statistical Yearbook 1981* (Beijing: China Statistics Press, 1981), p. 5.

[41] *Ibid*., p. 13.
[42] State Statistical Bureau, *China Statistical Yearbook* (Beijing: China Statistics Press, 1981), p. 13.

Finally, it should be added that the development of China's merchant fleet was still a serious problem for Maoist economic growth. The assistance of the Soviet Union helped China to build its merchant fleet, including advice on managing a merchant fleet, purchasing foreign ships, and developing a shipbuilding industry, but it did not transfer finished merchant ships to China's flag. Consequently, Chinese building of merchant ships was slow throughout the 1950s and the 1960s and did not offer a great contribution to the development of a Sino-flag merchant fleet but restricted China's foreign trade.[43] This phenomenon of China's land-oriented national development meant that Maoist economic strategy had no intention to develop a maritime economy and Beijing's capabilities to pursue economic interests at sea were still quite limited in Maoist China.

4.2.2 Maritime Politico-economy and the Law of the Sea

The Chinese view of the sea was essentially affected by two contradictory factors. Historically, China has been a traditional land-oriented country with a mentality of vulnerability concerning the ocean, and most serious invasions that the country suffered during the second half of the nineteenth century were from the sea. Thus, the sea certainly posed a historical and cultural threat to China. Economically, Chinese geography owes many resources to the seas along its 6,700 miles of coastline, including the prosperous offshore fisheries in the waters of the Yellow, the East China, and the South China Seas; the continental shelf in these areas is probably also mineral-rich. Conversely, traditional China did not have a sound modern concept of sovereignty and law to claim its maritime rights.

Ideologically, the perception in Maoist China was that the rule of man was superior to the rule of law under the Marxist-Leninist notion of class. In this light, the Marxist-Leninist perceptions of law as a tool of state policy and international law as a means of foreign policy were stressed. Although this seemingly caused much domestic debate over the question of whether the nature of the law of the sea was bourgeois or proletarian in China,[44] the debate seemed not so important under the CCP's ambitious political concern for its sovereignty over offshore islands and

[43] Muller, *China as a Maritime Power*, pp. 58-59.
[44] Menno T. Kamminga, 'Building 'Railroads on the Sea': China's Attitude towards Maritime Law,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 59 (July-September 1974), pp. 545-46.

territorial waters in terms of China's world order of five principles of peaceful coexistence.[45] It would be better to say that China's attitude has a strong interest in taking advantage of the international law of the sea for its maritime affairs under the consideration of national interest.

The purpose of the Law of the Sea Conference at Geneva in 1958 was to confirm four Conventions of the Territorial Seas and the Contiguous Zone, the High Seas, Fishing, and the Continental Shelf, which came into force after the required twenty-two states had ratified them.[46] At that time, China did not ratify the Geneva Conventions, and it did not reject all global maritime conventions, because China was not a member of the UN. Before that time, however, China was a member of the International Load Line Convention and the Convention for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea in 1957.[47] Added to this, the purpose of these treaties did not involve economic interests, but securing the ships of one party in the territorial waters of others. In this sense, China was aware of its role at sea as a possible major user of the oceans in the future.[48] Significantly, Beijing issued a declaration that the breadth of the territorial sea of China was to be twelve nautical miles in September 1958 after the Geneva Conference on the Law of the Sea, although China did not become a party to the 1958 Geneva Conventions on the Territorial Sea and Continental Shelf.[49] As China's 1958 declaration on territorial seas indicated:

> The breadth of the territorial sea of the People's Republic of China shall be twelve nautical miles. This provision applies to all the Territories of the People's Republic of China, including the Chinese mainland, and its coastal islands, as well as Taiwan and its surrounding islands.[50]

This declaration affirmed China's sovereignty over certain islands and sea areas, including Taiwan and the Penghu areas. It also caused many international maritime disputes in China's nearby areas. For example, there are conflicting claims between

[45] It includes five ideas, notably mutual respect for territorial integrity, nonaggression, non-interference, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.
[46] Kamminga, 'Building 'Railroads on the Sea',' p. 546.
[47] International Maritime Organization (IMO), 'Historical background leading to the adoption of the Load Lines convention.' Available from <http://www.imo.org/Conventions/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1034>. Accessed on 27 September 2007.
[48] Cheng Tao, 'Communist China and the Law of the Sea,' *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 63 (1969), p. 52.
[49] Jeanette Greenfield, *China's Practice in the Law of the Sea* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 16-18; p. 229.
[50] Winberg Chai, ed., *The Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China* (New York: Putnam, 1972), p. 327.

China and Japan over the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands in the East China Sea.[51] (Refer to Appendix C) In the South China Sea, disputes exist between China and Vietnam over the Paracel Islands and between China, Vietnam, Malaysia and the Philippines over the Spratly Islands and so on.[52] Nevertheless, this Chinese case also has two noteworthy political implications for Maoist China. The first is that China could legally claim its offshore islands of Jinmen (Quemoy), Matsu, Taiwan, and Penghu,[53] and the second is that the twelve-mile claim could have kept the US Seventh Fleet away from the water around Taiwan during the Taiwan Crisis in 1958. This Chinese statement, however, was not accepted by the US but was supported by the USSR.

For Maritime Law, the twelve-mile breadth of territorial water aside, there are two major concepts: the continental shelf and the exclusive economic zone, which are the foundations of China's claim of its national rights and interests at sea in the Asia-Pacific region. Geographically, China's continental shelf is probably at least as rich as its coastal waters, and China was aware of that in the 1960s. In the light of Article 76 of the UN Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the continental shelf of a littoral state comprises, generally, the seabed and subsoil of the submarine areas that extend beyond its territorial sea throughout the natural prolongation of its land territory to the outer edge of the continental margin.[54] Importantly, the continental shelf circling China's east shoreline has rich natural gas and oil in many littoral areas. Nonetheless, Maoist China did not positively explore its submarine oil, because China then still relied on its land-based oil wells in its northeast area; the famous Daqing oil field is a good example.

Considering the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ),[55] it consists of the marine area beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea, extending up to 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured according

[51] Willy Lam, 'China and Japan: The Separation of Economics and Politics,' *China Brief*, Vol. 4, Iss. 17 (2 September 2004), pp. 1-3.
[52] Bernard D. Cole, 'Waterways and Strategy: China's Priorities,' *China Brief*, Vol. 5, Iss. 4 (15 February 2005), p. 3.
[53] Greenfield, *China's Practice in the Law of the Sea*, p. 229.
[54] The United Nations, *The Law of the Sea: United Nations Convention on the Sea* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), p. 27.
[55] Like the concept of the continental shelf, the EEZ was influenced by the 'Truman Proclamation' in 1945. The proclamation states that the US government regards the natural resources of the subsoil and seabed of the continental shelf beneath the high seas but contiguous to the coasts of the US as appertaining to the US, subject to its jurisdiction and control. See 'Truman Proclamation on the Continental Shelf,' Presidential Proclamation No. 2667 (28 September 1945). Available from <http://www.oceanlaw.net/texts/truman1.htm>. Accessed on 30 September 2007.

to Articles 55 and 57 of the UNCLOS.[56] China's position on this concept was made clear by the statements of its representatives on the UNCLOS Second Committee in 1974. They stated that every coastal state has the right to define an EEZ beyond and adjacent to its territorial sea in accordance with its geographical and geological conditions, the state of its natural resources, and the needs of its national economic development.[57] In this respect, the concept of the EEZ legal regime of 200 miles could have had a self-serving implication to China in the 1970s. Namely, China could apply this idea to keep other countries away from its coastal waters by the creation of the legal barrier of China's fishery zone, but China did not declare its EEZ at that time. The reason was that Beijing's declaration of EEZ waters might undercut its continental shelf claim in the nearby seas, because in the notion of the EEZ, there is no natural prolongation component involved like the concept of continental shelf.[58]

As stated above, international maritime law indeed enlarged China's legal maritime economic space and rights in the Asia-Pacific region. China did not sufficiently use its sea rights for economic purposes, however, but selectively adopted maritime law for political considerations. Relating to the strategic direction of economic development, Maoist China's maritime strategic behaviour was evidently impeded by its land-orientated grand strategy and its incomplete naval capability. For its fishing fleet, China's mechanisation of fishing was backward, it only concentrated on coastal fishing activities, and it followed a similar policy with its merchant fleet. For naval strength, the PLAN, which was the weakest of the Chinese armed forces, was also limited because its defence efforts were focused on the perceived land-oriented security threat from the former Soviet Union. Further, Maoist economic strategy after the Sino-Soviet break depended on the inward national economy of self-reliance and self-sufficiency in oil and food. Consequently, China then had no stronger strategic intention to use the sea for both the SLOCs and the exploration of maritime resources.

[56] The United Nations, *The Law of the Sea*, p. 18.
[57] Charles D. Bethill, 'People's China and the Law of the Sea,' *International Lawyer*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (1974), p. 738.
[58] Hungdah Chiu, 'Political Geography in the Western Pacific after the Adoption of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,' *Political Geography Quarterly*, Vol, 5 No. 1 (1986), p. 28.

4.3 Socio-cultural Analysis: Party/Army Relations and Techno-Nationalism

The perception of the ocean as a part of state sovereignty is an oceanic axiology of state and society, which guides all outward economic and national maritime activities. Traditionally, China's worldview and national behaviour were rooted in the continental tribute system of Confucianism. Therefore, China was the form of universal kingdom in which the world order was the extension of Chinese culture without the concepts of state, boundary, and sovereignty in terms of the state-centred notion of Western sovereignty. In Maoist China, the ideology of communism seemed to offer China a new structure of social and world order with class character but not including the concept of state sovereignty. As a result, national identity in Maoist China was constantly a serious problem for national development. Considering the philosophy of Mao Zedong, state sovereignty belonged to the bourgeoisie, and that must be overthrown by the communist party with its unchallengeable ruling power for building a proletarian society in terms of the dogma of Marxism-Leninism. This strong party-centred communist thinking, like Confucianism, undeniably hindered China's development as a normal state and its sovereignty in the world system in the twentieth century. Conversely, the development of nationalism in Maoist China was unimpeded by such an ideological restriction, and it seemed to support the formation of the notion of Chinese state sovereignty under the interaction between Maoist China and the world system since the 1950s. This section explores the societal factor of Maoist coastal defence by examining China's party/army relations and techno-nationalism.

4.3.1 National Defence under Maoist Party/Army Relations

During the revolutionary period of China, communist ideology was the core of its social movements, national development, military build-up, and international relations. As Mao noted in 1963, 'Once the correct ideas characteristic of the advanced class are grasped by the masses, these ideas turn into material force which changes society and

changes the world'.[59] Under this Maoist ideology, the main societal purpose was to build an egalitarian society, for which Maoist China developed a theory of rural and peasant-based revolution with a strong military element and Leninist party-state system. From this ideology, the CCP was defined as the vanguard of the Chinese socio-political revolution and as the guide of the army and politics in terms of communism.[60] Therefore, this triangular relationship between the CCP, the PLA, and the state caused a special phenomenon of weak society in China with two societal features.[61] Politically, all state administrative structures were subordinated to the party. Economically, private enterprise was subordinated to state property and central planning. Concerning party/ army relations (or so-called civil-military relations), the degree of civil control is directly related to both political democratisation and societal liberalisation in national development. With regard to the importance of civil control in civil-military relations, as Samuel P. Huntington observed:

> [T]his involves: 1) a high level of military professionalism and recognition by military officers of the limits of their professional competence; 2) the effective subordination of the military to the civilian political leaders who make the basic decisions on foreign and military policy; 3) the recognition and acceptance by that leadership of an area of professional competence and autonomy for the military and 4) as a result, the minimization of military intervention in the politics and of political intervention in the military.[62]

Using the Huntingtonian framework to analyse Maoist party/army relations, there are three noteworthy features involved. In politics, the CCP was established on the base of the PLA, because the military is an instrument of the CCP that brings the party to power in violent revolution and uses occasional coercion and force to keep it in power. As Mao said, 'Our principle is that the party commands the gun and the gun must never be allowed to command the party.'[63] Thus, party control or politicisation is the first basic feature of party/army relations in Maoist China. Moreover, the CCP in

[59] Cited in John Bryan Starr, *Continuing the Revolution: The Political Thought of Mao* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 59-69.
[60] Peter Zarrow, *Anarchism and Chinese Political Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), pp. 234-35.
[61] Amos Perlmutter and William M. LeoGrande, 'The Party in Uniform: Toward a Theory of Civil-Military Relations in Communist Political Systems,' *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 76, No. 4 (December 1982), pp. 778-79.
[62] Samuel P. Huntington, 'Reforming Civil-Military Relations' in Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, eds, *Civil-Military Relations and Democracy* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 3-4.
[63] Mao Zedong, 'Problems of War and Strategy,' *Selected Works of Mao Zedong, Vol. II* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1975), p. 224.

this system reigns supreme in the military as in other segments of society and government, the top of the military structure being the Central Military Commission (CMC) composed of six to twelve men for controlling the PLA directly and militarily. Under the CMC is the General Political Department (GPD), which is the political control in China's military and which oversees a pyramid network of party committees and political commissars in all branches, units, and forces of the military.[64]

The second feature is the symbiotic relationship of Maoist party/army relations characterised by low levels of differentiation between military and non-military posts, such as were evident in China in the early 1950s and during the Cultural Revolution.[65] Historically, this symbiosis derived from the Marxist-Leninist philosophy of people's war, usually waged as guerrilla war. It is a type of politico-military struggle in which the fusion of political and military elites is almost inevitable, and in which the governing of liberated territories is a function performed principally by the guerrilla army itself.[66]

The third feature is professionalism. In the military, civilian control is achieved through the institution of military professionalism. The concept of professionalism is inherent in a modern army, a feature that was not completely established during Marshal Peng Dehuai's tenure as a defence minister in the 1950s and Defence Minister Lin Biao's tenure in the 1960s, just because their promotion of military modernisation and institutional control challenged Mao's cult and power of personality in the PLA.[67] In brief, these three contradictory features of Maoist party/army relations weakened the social functions and caused an unstable social structure. More importantly, the military role vacillated between politicisation and professionalism, bringing uncertainty to the national strategic direction and military build-up.

At the beginning of the Maoist era, the military organisation of China was affected by the warlord tradition from the Chinese civil wars and ruled by the regional and local military authorities under the Great Region System (*Daxuzhi*), which was

[64] Harvey W. Nelsen, *The Chinese Military System: An Organizational Study of the Chinese People's Liberation Army* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1981), pp. 6-7.
[65] Ellis Joffe, 'Party-Army Relations in China: Retrospect and Prospect,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 146 (June 1996), pp. 301-2.
[66] Perlmutter and LeoGrande, 'The Party in Uniform,' pp. 784-85.
[67] Xiaobing Li, *A History of the Modern Chinese Army* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2007), pp. 189-90, 237-38.

established in early 1950. In this system, China was divided into six military and administrative regions: Northeast China, North China, Northwest, East China, Central-South and Southwest. Moreover, the Military Region Command and the Military Administration Council (*Junzheng weiyuanhui*) controlled each of these regions, while the CCP already had Regional Central Bureaus (*Zhongyangju*) for party control.[68] Although there were three parallel power structures on the regional level—the Military Region Command, the Military Administration Council, and the Party Bureau, these organisations were dominated by the same field army elites but not the party.[69] Consequently, military centralisation was a complicated task for the CCP. Historically, the development of party/army relations underwent three significant shifts: the Gao-Rao case in 1954 coincided with the first shift, the Cultural Revolution in 1966 started the second shift, and the Lin Biao incident in 1973 marked the third shift.

The major task of the CCP in the 1950s was to build a strong central government for recovering China's economy and centralising military power after the civil wars. All regional power structures would be civilianised under the direction of the central CCP and government authorities. For military centralisation, the status of the military elites in the CCP leadership was high at the beginning of the Maoist regime, and the military elites made up about 50 per cent of the Central Committee.[70] Conversely, some military leaders remained dissatisfied with the arrangement for military power. In the Gao Gang affair, for example, the local military elite Gao Gang intended to share more power with the party by keeping their autonomy, and this then caused central-regional conflicts.[71] After this case, the military dominance of the CCP at the regional level was shifted to a more centralised system in which the civil and military elites shared power. Thus, owing to this case, the Great Region System was abolished.

This domestic power shift, however, did not reduce the nature of party control; it only shifted the action from the regional level to the national level. Conversely, the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution damaged the more centralised system of

[68] Fang Zhu, *Gun Barrel Politics: Party-Army Relations in Mao's China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), pp. 59-60.
[69] *Ibid*., p. 60.
[70] Jonathan Adelman, *The Revolutionary Armies: The Historical Development of the Soviet and the Chinese People's Liberation Armies* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1980), pp. 119-21.
[71] David Shambaugh, 'The Soldier and the State in China: The Political Work System in the People's Liberation Army,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 127 (September 1991), p. 535.

party/army relationship and brought about the localised system of party/army relationship. In the political power struggle of the Cultural Revolution, Mao yielded more power to the PLA leaders, for which the military served as the revolution's Red Praetorian Guard, at both local and national levels for promoting military elites into his camp in order to beat his political rivals.[72] This military localisation in the power struggle stopped socio-economic development and the military build-up as well.

In the Lin Biao incident, like the Gao Gang case, Lin Biao fought hard to do the same thing in sharing more power within the CCP, which challenged Mao's dominance in the country.[73] In order to enhance politico-military power in the early 1970s, Mao united civil leaders and purged military leaders through centralising his political status and military power in the CCP. Again, party/army relations transformed from localisation back to centralisation. The development of Maoist party/army relations also affected the percentage of PLA membership on the CCP Central Committee and the Politburo. As can be seen in Table 4, the PLA membership on the CCP Central Committee and the Politburo went down slightly, while PLA membership on the CCP reached a peak in the Central Committee and the Politburo in both 1956 and 1977.

Table 4: PLA Membership on CCP Central Committee and Politburo (%)

Year \ %	**CCP Congress**	**Central Committee**	**Politburo**
1956	8th	35 %	35 %
1969	9th	51 %	45 %
1973	10th	40 %	26 %
1977	11th	59 %	30 %
1982	12th	42 %	22 %

Source: Data from David Shambaugh, 'The Soldier and the State in China: The Political Work System in the People's Liberation Army,' *The China Quarterly*, No 127 (September 1991), p. 534.

Overall, in the process of China's military centralisation, the PLA leaders were given even more top-level positions and a high percentage in the CCP Central Committee and Politburo. These military elites, rising from regional and local field armies, therefore controlled the power of the military and strategic decision-making.

[72] Nelsen, *Chinese Military System*, pp. 27-34.
[73] Andrew Nathan, 'A Factionalism Model for CCP Politics,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 53 (1973), pp. 44-45.

Significantly, these leading PLA elites were only familiar with the land-orientated strategic tradition of guerrilla war, specifically the Maoist continental military concept of active defence, but they had no concept of maritime strategy and any experience of naval war. They, in consequence, favoured adopting coastal defence strategy from the Soviet Union to Maoist China to provide for people's war at sea. This situation unquestionably impeded the development of China's maritime strategy and naval capability.

4.3.2 Maoist Nationalism and Naval Build-up

Under the domination of the trinity of party-state-army in Maoist society, nationalism was the main dynamic for social development. Nationalism as a political movement in the Mao era has two basic features. First, individual members give their primary loyalty to their own national community—the CCP. Second, this national community desires its own independent country, a rich state, a strong army, an integrated territory, and so on. These features also affected the decision-making of national security strategy and military build-up. Given the previously mentioned definition of nationalism, Maoist nationalism can be divided into three categories of nationalism in China's society from the early 1950s to the late 1970s, including Confucian nationalism, techno-nationalism, and anti-traditionalism.

Confucian nationalism, as an essential cultural nationalism, is an 'anti-imperialist nationalism' in Maoist China,[74] which calls for a return to Confucian tradition for rebuilding an influential Middle Kingdom in East Asia because it believes that the impact of Western imperialism on Chinese self-esteem and the subversion of native Chinese virtue are the roots of China's weakness. It stresses that China's decline is mostly because of foreign invasions in the context of the Sino-Western cultural clash.[75] It is notable that Confucian nationalism in Maoist China seemed to combine with the beliefs of Marxism-Leninism for fighting imperialism. In this respect, Confucian nationalism does not merely see Western countries as China's enemies, but also sees imperialism as the ideological enemy, and the purge of Western influences is the way to revive national strength and development. In the early days of

[74] Edward Friedman, 'Anti-imperialist Nationalism in Chinese Foreign Policy,' in Samuel S. Kim, ed., *China and the World* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), pp. 60-76.
[75] Runming Jiao, 'On Modern Chinese Nationalism,' *Social Science Quarterly: Studies on Modern History*, No. 105 (April 1996), pp. 97-98.

the PRC, the CCP leaders brought with them painful memories of China's incapability to determine its own fate in the past of humiliation of colonialism.[76] In order to go up against imperialist challenges from the Soviet Union and the US in the 1960s, the CCP endeavoured to make China entirely independent of foreign influence by becoming self-confident in society, self-reliant in military matters, and self-sufficient in economy. During the Cultural Revolution, Mao put a policy of autarchy into practice through isolating China from the outside world and stressing the maximisation of domestic self-reliant development and the minimisation of outside dependency.[77] For maritime strategy, this nationalism did not contribute to China's seaward national activities, but rationalised China's land-orientated national behaviour.

The growth of Chinese techno-nationalism with the base of Confucian nationalism claims that technology development is a fundamental military industry and the CCP must nurture an indigenous capability to innovate for national survival. This techno-nationalism can be seen as the powerful backbone for China's military development during the era of Soviet assistance and the Korean War in the 1950s, which illustrated China's backward and insufficient military capabilities. The PLA defence-technical leader Marshal Nie, with Mao's support at that time,[78] strongly promoted China's defence industrialisation for the programs of nuclear weapons in 1955, strategic missiles in 1956, and nuclear-powered submarines with submarine-launched ballistic missiles in 1958.[79] Importantly, the Sino-Soviet break and the Soviet Union's withdrawal of all military support seemed to stimulate Maoist techno-nationalism by pushing China in the strategic direction of military self-reliance.

With the propulsion of techno-nationalism, China offered a timetable for a rudimentary nuclear weapon in 1961, and then successfully tested its first missiles and finally exploded a nuclear device in 1964.[80] For the Chinese navy, the indigenous nuclear technology supported the development of China's nuclear attack submarine (09-1 design) according to the Project 09, which would not be commissioned until

[76] *Ibid*., pp. 102-3.
[77] Suisheng Zhao, 'Chinese Nationalism and Its International Orientations,' *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 115, No. 1 (2000), p. 7.
[78] According to Mao's speech on 'The Ten Great Relationships' of April 1956, he put forward a defence model based on the two principles of people's war and the establishment of a nuclear force. See Ellis Joffe, 'How Much Does the PLA Make Foreign Policy?' in David S. G. Goodman and Gerald Segal, *China Rising: Nationalism and Interdependence* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 93.
[79] Evan A. Feigenbaum, 'Soldier, Weapons and Chinese Development Strategy: The Mao Era Military in China's Economic and Institutional Debate,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 158 (June 1999), p. 289.
[80] Lexis and Xue, *China's Strategic Seapower*, pp. 34-35.

August 1974.[81] Subsequently, China started to develop nuclear attack submarines with the underwater-launch system, a so-called nuclear ballistic missile submarine (09-2 design). The opposition of the Gang of Four, however, delayed this plan, and it was not until the fall of these radical CCP leaders in 1976 that this plan started to move again. The work was completed in the early 1980s.[82] Briefly, the Maoist high technology policy of indigenisation under techno-nationalism indeed improved China's nuclear technology and modernised naval capabilities for the strategy of deterrence and coastal defence.

Further, another feature of Maoist nationalism is anti-traditionalism. It is a contradictive nationalism in contrast with Confucian nationalism, and it sees China's traditional culture as the foundation of its weakness, while the Chinese have long prided themselves on their culture. In essence, the main dynamic of China's anti-traditionalism was to get rid of Confucian values in Chinese society by learning from Western knowledge, technology, and cultural values, all for remaking an influential China.[83] Modernisation, which is China's most important national goal since the early twentieth century to date, means more wealth and industrial advances, enabling government to promote social construction and economic production more efficiently for building a modernised China. Westernised thinking made its first forceful appearance during the May Fourth Movement in 1919 and affected many founders of the CCP.[84] In the Cultural Revolution, the traditional cultural values and heritage of China were regarded as the feudal legacies of old culture that were attacked in many ways. The prime example of this is Mao's mobilisation of his Red Guards to destroy 'Four Olds'—old ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits, in order to smash Confucian values.[85] A point to observe is that the Cultural Revolution was a socio-political movement with a combination of both anti-traditionalism and anti-imperialism and caused a long-term situation of domestic social chaos, during which Beijing almost isolated itself from the outside world and paid little attention to developing an ocean civilisation by exploring its ocean consciousness.

Chinese nationalism in the Maoist era was a powerful instrument for the cohesion of domestic party/army relations and the foreign policy of national security.

[81] *Ibid.*, pp. 64-67; 104-10.
[82] *Ibid.*, pp. 68-73; 117.
[83] Zarrow, *Anarchism and Chinese Political Culture*, pp. 196-98.
[84] Richard W. Wilson, Sidney L. Greenblatt and Amy Auerbacher Wilson, *Moral Behavior in Chinese Society* (New York: Praeger Press, 1981), pp. 126-27.
[85] *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.

For Beijing, the concerns of national identity, sovereignty, and international threats, including Taiwan, the South China Sea, and other territorial claims, dominated the basic content of this nationalism. Hence, it is reasonable that this concern would arouse the PLA's desire for protecting China by stimulating its attempt to match this attention with a strong military build-up. From the aforementioned socio-cultural analysis of Maoist coastal defence, it seems reasonable to conclude that Maoist China's land-oriented societal structure, like its landward economy, deeply restricted the development of its maritime strategy and naval capabilities.

4.4 Military Analysis: Capabilities and Operations of the PLAN

In the hierarchical structure of national strategic planning, military capability is subsidiary to military strategy, and the military operations must follow the military doctrine of the strategy. That is to say, military capability and operation must be shaped or acquired that will bring effect to the strategy once a strategy and a military doctrine are determined. Historically, the PLA did not succeed to any naval tradition when the CCP established the regime in 1949. Hence, China's thinking on maritime strategy and military doctrine in the 1950s was based on three sources, including the landward military tradition of the PLA, poor national socio-economic conditions, and the strategic thought of the Soviet Union.

The development of China's naval and air forces shows how PLA military capabilities were given a massive increase by the military assistance of the former Soviet Union in the 1950s. Strictly speaking, there was no PLA navy when the CCP won power.[86] At that point, the budding naval force consisted of about 183 former Kuomintang (KMT) warships that were captured before 1949 during the Chinese Civil War, and less than 100 ships were operable.[87] Meanwhile, the naval training centres were set up on a regional basis, such as the first CCP naval force, the so-called Northeast Navy, which was formed in November 1948, and another regional navy, the East China People's Navy, which was established in April 1949. Nevertheless, the

[86] Li, *A History of the Modern Chinese Army*, pp. 130-31.
[87] Jiang Lei and Yin Qiang, 'The Scientific Guide of Building Naval Modernization in New Age,' *Mao Zedong and Contemporary China, II* (Beijing: Zhongyangwenxian Press, 2004), p. 1435.

PLAN headquarters in Beijing was not created until 14 April 1950 under the first commander Xiao Jingguang and a corps of admirals and other naval officers was established from the ranks of the PLA ground forces.[88] With Soviet assistance, the PLAN was reorganised in 1954 and 1955 into the North Sea Fleet, East Sea Fleet, and South Sea Fleet.

Learning naval build-up by imitation was Maoist China's most important plan for its underdeveloped maritime power. As China's former Admiral Liu Huaqing, in his memoirs, mentioned, 'China at that time was a country with the conditions of a lower scientific level and a weaker industrial foundation. Hence, imitation is a necessary historical stage and a required short-cut to reach the world level in the short-term.'[89] Although the PLAN was built in imitation of a Soviet small navy with the military thinking of coastal defence, the PLAN long pursued a coastal defence strategy, and the revision of maritime strategic thinking appears to have developed slowly in the PLA.

Under the military thinking of Maoist military doctrine and the influence of the Soviet Union, China's coastal defence was directly linked to the land-oriented strategic concepts of people's war and active defence. The build-up of the PLAN was also guided by the Maoist theory of a small navy, attempting to develop a modern coastal and small-sized naval combat force, including the build-up of torpedo boats, submarines, and a naval air force for conducting coastal operations.[90] For the examination of military factors in China's naval conduct for coastal defence strategy, this section mainly gives weight to the Maoist military doctrine, naval capabilities and military operations of the PLAN.

4.4.1 Maoist Military Doctrine and the PLAN

Military doctrine consists of some elemental principles, such as military exercise, an analysis of past wars and a speculative analysis of future military conflict, by which those planning the application of military force guide their military behaviour. Maoist military doctrine was formed by the land-oriented military experiences of fighting against strong Chiang Kai-shek's KMT armies and Japanese armed forces during the

[88] Gill and Kim, *China's Arms Acquisitions from Abroad*, pp. 23-24.
[89] Liu, *The Memoirs*, p. 296.
[90] Yang Guoyu, ed., *Dangdai zhongguo haijun* [Contemporary Chinese Navy] (Beijing: Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Press, 1987), pp, 41-42.

early 1920s and the late 1940s.[91] Given this historical background, defeating superior adversaries with inferior communist forces, including main forces, regional forces and militia, in asymmetric campaigns was the core military doctrine of people's war in Maoist China.

This Maoist people's war was an asymmetric strategy with the principles of conducting a protracted war of attrition, lured deep stratagem, total war, annihilation war, guerrilla and war according to the physical advantage of China's extensive territory. People's war concentrated, operationally, on the structure of base areas under the control of the CCP where Mao could build both his military forces and political power for mobilising people throughout the country to fight with the CCP against enemies.[92] Under the thinking of people's war, active defence as an offensive defence, rather than a passive defence, was an important military doctrine in Maoist military thought.[93] This doctrine places chief stress on gaining and retaining the initiative. Mao insisted that the PLA commander holding the initiative could be flexible in the employment of his armies, because the principle of flexibility is the actual expression of the initiative in military campaigns. In the application of active defence, additionally, mobility was the key to victory in a defensive war based on offensive operations. Physically, China has a vast territory for which it offered the geographic superiority of strategy for the exercise of Mao's military principles.

From the development of Maoist military doctrine, the Korean War can be seen as a military strategic assessment for Maoist people's war, active defence and the PLA capabilities. China's military operations under Maoist military doctrine indeed achieved Beijing's strategic objective of resisting America by supporting North Korea during the war. That war also stimulated China to see that PLA modernisation was a *sine qua non* for its national security, but defence modernisation did not compete in Maoist China due to a lot of political infighting in the CCP. Strictly speaking, there was no real maritime strategy in Maoist military thought, but the landward concept of people's war and active defence at sea for coastal defence. Namely, Mao's strategic philosophy thus applied to the sea as well as the land campaign. It is clear that the

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[91] William W. Whitson, *The Chinese High Command: A History of Communist Military Politics, 1927-71* (New York: Praeger, 1973), pp. 458-97.
[92] Mao Zedong, 'Lun Chijiuzhen' [On protracted war], in *Mao Zedong junshi wenji Ⅱ* [*Selected Military Writings of Mao Zedong Ⅱ*] (Beijing: Military Science Press, 1993), pp. 287-88.
[93] Zheng Wenhan, *Mao Zedong shixiang yanjiu daxi, junshi juan* [Study on the Thought of Mao Zedong, Military] (Shanghai: Remin Press, 1993), pp. 250-52.

concept of maritime strategy in Maoist China was completely new to the PLA elites. In Chinese naval history, the PLAN did not formally conduct a maritime operation of any consequence until the seizure of the semi-circular group in the Paracel Islands (*Xisha*) from South Vietnam in 1974.

4.4.2 Naval Capabilities

Under the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship in 1950, Beijing had several negotiations with Moscow about purchasing Soviet naval equipment for PLA naval capabilities, and they finally signed a significant agreement, 'About Providing Naval Equipment and Offering Technological Aid of Building Warships to China' in 4 June 1952, which was called the 'June Four Agreement.'[94] In this agreement, Soviet assistance included the creation of the Soviet Naval Advisory Mission in Beijing, the dispatch of five hundred naval training advisers plus maintenance personnel, and the transfer of some finished warships with their blueprints.

With Soviet military assistance, the PLA built naval surface fleets, submarine fleets, naval air forces, naval coastal artillery, and marine units in quick succession.[95] In the meantime, the Soviet Union began to deliver naval weapons, equipment, and spare parts for the newborn PLAN. First, the Soviet transfer of finished naval craft consisted of about fifty WWII-vintage torpedo boats in 1951, and the first submarine of the PLAN was a non-operational Soviet M-class that was shipped to China in 1953, then China received an additional eight Soviet S-1 and M-V-class submarines during 1954 and 1955.[96] During the period of Soviet military support, China started to assemble Soviet Riga-class frigates and Whiskey-class submarines from components that were provided by Soviet shipyards since 1955.

Before the break in Sino-Soviet relations in 1958, China definitely had built a naval capability for its coastal defence with Soviet assistance through naval training, equipment, and technology.[97] After the discontinuation of Soviet assistance to China, China in 1962 began to concentrate on the naval projects of imitating the Soviet small navy for building up its torpedo, torpedo speedboats, torpedo submarines, guided

[94] Yazhi Wang, *et al.*, 'The Soviet Union's Support to China's Military Technology and China's Mimic of Making Soviet Weapons,' *Russian Studies*, No. 4 (December 2004), pp. 85-89.
[95] Huang Chaihung, *et al*., 'China Enhances Naval Comprehensive Strength: An interview with Admiral Si Yun Sheng,' *Liaowang* [Outlook], No. 16 (April 1999), pp. 13-14.
[96] Muller, *China as a Maritime Power*, pp. 29-30.
[97] Wang, *et al*., pp. 85-89.

missile, guided-missile speedboats and guided-missile submarines.[98] At that juncture, the PLAN's inventory was comprised of about 350 surface ships and submarines, most of them assembled in China, such as Whiskey-class submarines, Riga-class frigate, Kronstadt-class large patrol craft, small patrol craft, and minesweepers.[99] In this regard, China was able to develop modest indigenous operational naval forces by the end of the 1950s, undeniably attributable to the assistance of the Soviet Union.

Regarding Maoist China's strategy of coastal defence, the Soviet 'Young School' of naval strategy was adopted by the CCP with slight adjustments. More concretely, based on the Maoist people's war, the maritime military strategy of people's war at sea was the foundation of Maoist China's coastal defence. Namely, it was guerrilla warfare taken to the sea. This scenario of naval combat served China well against Chiang Kai-shek's navy in the Taiwan Strait during the 1950s and 1960s, but it downgraded the significance of training, professionalism, and technologically sophisticated naval warfare and tactics.[100] Additionally, the political role of the Chinese navy was very controversial over the issue of building a communist navy or a capitalist navy, and this was the disputable question in the CCP during the Cultural Revolution. The strategy of people's war at sea, however, seemed to protect the navy from domestic political turmoil and attack, rather than to serve as a prescription for actual naval warfare in the revolution. This strategic concept was embedded in Maoist people's war in support of technologically-based capitalist ways in the Chinese naval establishment.[101]

Because of this land-based strategic thinking of coastal defence, China did not improve or increase its large surface combatants, like destroyers and frigates, but upgraded its large numbers of small surface vessels from gunboats to missile speedboats by the 1970s.[102] Under this strategy, submarines were also considered the major ships of the PLAN. Although the large submarine fleets were the first line of maritime defence, coastal patrol craft, such as torpedo and gunboats or missile

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[98] Liu, *The Memoirs*, p. 297.
[99] PLA Navy History Editorial Committee, *Haijun shi* [The History of the PLAN] (Beijing: PLA Publishers, 1989), pp. 14-27; and Gill and Kim, *China's Arms Acquisitions from Abroad*, Appendix 1, pp. 142-44.
[100] Elizabeth Speed, 'Chinese Naval Power and East Asian Security,' Working Paper No. 11 of Institute of International Relations of the University of British Columbia (August 1995), p. 3.
[101] Bruce Swanson, *Eighth Voyage of the Dragon: A History of China's Quest for Seapower* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1982), pp. 245-50.
[102] Bernard D. Cole, *The Great Wall at Sea: China's Navy Enters the Twenty-First Century* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2001), pp. 22-23.

speedboats, were built in ever-increasing numbers from an inner defensive perimeter as the following Table 5 shows.

Table 5: The Development of Chinese Naval Capabilities for Coastal Defence

Type \ Number \ year	**1950-60**	**1960-70**	**1970-74**
Major surface warships (a)	23	21	20
Gunboats	150	408	697
Missile speedboats	*nil*	15	161
Minesweepers	17	24	17
Amphibious vessels (b)	40	49	43
Submarines (700 tonnes) (c)	12	27	46
Supply ships	3	8	40

(a) Destroyers and frigates. (b) LSTs and LSMs. (c) All conventionally powered.

Source: Data from *SIPRI Yearbook 1975: World Armaments and Disarmament* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1975), pp. 303-307.

Further, the PLAN's Air Force (PLANAF), like its huge fleets of gunboats and submarines, is the largest naval air arm in the world. Although air power had become a critical factor of naval strategy during WWII, the PLANAF had no operational experience beyond coastal defence because it was restricted by Maoist continental strategic thinking. Like the PLAN, the PLANAF was merely a junior partner of the PLA's main ground force.[103] The missions of the PLANAF included fleet air-defence, reconnaissance and patrol at sea, anti-submarine warfare (ASW), electronic countermeasures, transport, mine laying, rescue, and vertical assault.[104] There were around 800 naval aircraft of three types in the naval air force in the Maoist era, such as Tu-16 and I1-28 for intermediate-range bombardment, MiG-17 and MiG-19 for air defence, and F-9 for surface attack,[105] but actual total numbers were uncertain.

Maoist China also had two other naval forces—naval artillery and marines—for the tasks of offshore island defence and amphibious operations. For naval artillery, China established thirteen regiments of naval artillery along its littoral in the 1950s

[103] Paul H. B. Godwin, 'Change and Continuity in Chinese Military Doctrine, 1949-1999,' in Mark A. Ran, David M. Finkelstein and Michael A. McDevitt, *Chinese Warfighting: The PLA Experience since 1949* (New York: M. E. Sharpe Press, 2003), p. 41.
[104] Gao Ru, 'The Thinking of Chinese Naval Distance Warfare,' *Xian dai chuan jian* [Modern Ships], No. 10 A, (2005), pp. 18-19
[105] The US Defense Intelligence, *The Chinese Armed Forces Today* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1976), p. 131.

and started to build its coastal guided-missile troops from the early 1960s.[106] For the marine force, called naval infantry by China, the Northeast Navy established it based on an infantry regiment, two infantry barracks, and about fifty amphibious vessels that were left by the KMT in 1953.[107] After the Korean War, China enlarged the structure of the marines from a small formation to a big formation of eight divisions and two amphibious tank regiments with Soviet support, which were disposed at points on the Chinese coast, the Fujian and Zhejiang provinces particularly.[108] Nonetheless, this force disappeared in the PLAN structure due to the Sino-Soviet split and uncertain strategic direction from the 1960s.

4.4.3 Naval Operations

Military operations or campaigns are planned and conducted to accomplish military goals. The PLAN of Maoist China had three main tasks. First, it was a coastal defence force against invasion from Taiwan and the US. Second, it was a coast guard, assisting ships, fishing boats, and coastal settlements in distress, escorting merchant or fishing ships through areas in which they were subject to the KMT's depredations, making coast surveys, and tending navigational aids. Third, the PLAN acted as a seaward extension of PLA ground forces in the blockade attempts against numerous of the offshore islands. Accordingly, the history of PLA naval warfare can fall in two periods for strategic analysis. The first period is from 1949 to 1958 for controlling territorial waters and offshore islands. The second period is from 1959 to 1976 for securing maritime claims by skirmishes along the coastline.

During the first period of naval operations, the Chinese navy launched several battles on coastal islands; for example, the battles of Jinmen Island (October 1949 and August 1958), Dengbu and Zhoushan Islands (November 1949), Hainan Island (April 1950), Wanshan Island (May 1950), Four Islands (June 1953), Zhejiang coast ambushes (November 1954), and Yijiangshan Island (August 1955).[109] In this period, the PLAN performed mostly as maritime transport units for PLA ground troops to seize offshore islands that were occupied by KMT. For coastal islands, the PLA

[106] Huang, *et al*. 'China Enhances Naval Comprehensive Strength.'
[107] Lian-Sheng Liu, 'The Development of China's Marines,' *Mainland China Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (1987), pp. 78-79.
[108] *Ibid*.
[109] Alexander C. Huang, 'The PLA Navy at War, 1949-1999: From Coastal Defense to Distant Operations,' in Mark A. Ryan, ed., *Chinese Warfighting*, pp. 249-50.

conducted many landing operations against the KMT-held Zhousan Islands (near the shore of Zhejiang province) and Jimmen Island (near the shore of Fujian province) with its numerical advantages of small boats under the principle of guerrilla operations.

For the examination of Maoist China's naval power projection, this section takes two Jinmen campaigns for case analysis. For the first Jinmen campaign of 1949, China dispatched about 150,000 troops, including the Third Field Army of Commander Chen Yi, the 10th Corps of Commander Ye Fei, and more than 200 conscript fishing boats and junks, which were able to transport just about 13,000 troops to the campaign. No formal naval units were involved in this campaign, even though China prepared such a big army for it. Conversely, the KMT forces at that time for protecting Jinmen consisted of nine infantry divisions but totalled only about 50,000 troops.[110] In spite of China's numerical advantage in troops in this campaign, it failed finally. The basic reasons were its lack of naval experience and the lack of available maritime transport suitable for amphibious operations.[111]

For the second Jinmen campaign of 1958, the so-called Taiwan Strait crisis, China launched a massive artillery attack against Jinmen Island with the formal support of both air force and navy for disrupting the logistical supply of the island. The PLAN in this battle included 39 gunboats, 33 torpedo boats, 33 amphibious landing vessels, and more than 300 sailboats and motorised junks.[112] In this battle, the entire Jinmen Island was under the range of PLA artillery bombardment and air attack, during which the KMT still sent many large supply ships to Jinmen for logistical support and defence with the assistance of the United States.[113] Although the capability of the PLAN had been improved for this battle with its numerical advantage, China still could not seize Jinmen, and the reasons for this unsuccessful operation were the same as in the first Jinmen campaign. Strictly speaking, the difference between the first and second Jinmen battles was that the role of the PLAN

[110] Ministry of National Defense, *Goumin geminjun zhanyi shi: kanluan houqi* [Nationalist Revolutionary Army Campaign History: The Final Phase of Suppressing Communist Rebellion], Vol. 5, No. 7 (Taipei: Historical and Political Editing and Translation Bureau, Ministry of National Defense, 1989), pp. 29-39.
[111] Lei Huajian and Wang Jicheng, *Xin zhongguo haizhan neimu* [An inside Story of New China's Naval Warfare] (Beijing: China Foreign Literature Press, 1993), pp. 16-17.
[112] Ministry of National Defense, *Goumin geminjun zhanyi shi: guangfu dalu zhengbei shiqi* [Nationalist Revolutionary Army Campaign History: The Era of Preparation for Recovering the Mainland], Vol. 5, No. 8 (Taipei: Historical and Political Editing and Translation Bureau, Ministry of National Defense, 1989), p. 145.
[113] *Ibid*., p. 118.

was transformed from PLA transport units without fighting capability into PLA small naval units with limited deterrent capability at sea, but its naval power projection was still insufficient for sea denial and control.

In the second period of naval operations, there were two small maritime skirmishes between China and Taiwan in 1965. At that moment, the PLAN was virtually deactivated and was rarely operational during the ten-year Cultural Revolution from 1966-1976, even though China launched a maritime battle with Vietnam for the Paracel Islands in that period. After the Taiwan Strait crisis in 1958, the Taiwan authorities still conducted sporadic naval assaults against the coast of China. The first skirmish was on 6 August at the coast of Shantou city in eastern Gangdong province. The KMT dispatched two submarine chasers to this area, and the PLAN ordered four speed gunboats, six torpedo boats, and one large gunboat to attack these KMT ships.[114] The PLAN utilised its numerical advantage, and consequently, the Taiwanese navy failed in this small-scale battle. Another small maritime skirmish was on 13 November in the same year. The KMT sent off two ships from the naval base on the Penghu Islands to Wuchiou Island, located near the coast of Fujian province, and then the PLA countered with ten gunboats and six torpedo boats.[115]

In this case, the outcome was the same as the previously mentioned skirmish—the Taiwanese navy failed again. The most important maritime campaign during the Cultural Revolution was the naval struggle for the Paracel Islands, located in the South China Sea and near China's Hainan Island and the Vietnamese coast. On 15 January 1974, the navy of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) dispatched three destroyers and one frigate to the Paracel Islands and attacked some Chinese fishing boats on the Ganquan Islet, thus causing the PLA to send off four submarine chasers, two minesweepers, and four gunboats to the scene for counterattack.[116] In the end, this event resulted in the defeat of the South Vietnamese force and China's seizure of the Islet and nearby maritime area. This incident first showed China's concern for the South China Sea through a military operation.

From the previously mentioned naval operations in the Maoist era, it is clear that the growth of China's coastal naval force under the Maoist strategic concept of

[114] Tong Neng, *Gongheguo haijun xiezhen* [The Portrait of People's Republic Navy] (Beijing: Military Science Press, 1999), pp. 166-71.
[115] *Ibid*., pp. 180-81.
[116] Sun Xiao, Zhen Shou and Zuo Dong, *Zhongguo haijun chuanqi* [The Legend of Chinese Navy] (Shandong: Huanghe Press, 1997), pp. 382-86; pp. 402-5.

people's war and active defence indeed demonstrated its maritime deterrent effect, especially in such characteristics as the advantage of large numbers of small speedboats, the tactics of guerrilla operations, and numerical superiority. Its development, however, still had three major restrictions, including no seaward national strategic thinking, insufficient economic support, and no strong political backbone.

4.5 Summary: Strategic Appraisal of China's Coastal Defence

Due to China's geographical situation, its national security must always deal with the northwestern continental threat and the eastern maritime threat. Hence, geopolitics is certainly crucial to Chinese strategic destiny. Nevertheless, China did not pay much attention to its maritime security in the Maoist era, and the reason is that Beijing's major traditional strategic direction only focused on the problem of border security but not on maritime security. This also determined the Maoist landward military strategic thinking. For example, the US and Taiwan from China's south-eastern littoral might launch a possible military offensive operation against China, and the Soviets deployed a million troops along the Sino-Soviet border after their relations deteriorated during the 1960s and 1970s. In addition, China had long been a continental power with a land-oriented strategic culture under Confucianism but without a strong politico-economic maritime ambition. In the Maoist era, generally speaking, China's national behaviour was still influenced by its continental strategic culture, land-based Soviet weapons systems, domestic revolutionary military experience, and Sino-centric worldview.

For Maoist coastal defence, it was a continental strategy, but not a sound maritime strategy. Politically, the friendly relationship between Chinese and the Soviets was maintained for only several years in the 1950s, and then the two sides went from alliance to confrontation during the 1960s. China also had several successive border disputes, including the 1962 Sino-India border war, the 1969 Sino-Soviet border clash, and the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese border conflict after the Sino-Soviet break. This situation really forced China to pay more attention to its land-

oriented national defence than to the maritime affairs of protecting sea rights and securing territorial waters. Economically, while Maoist China had initially defined its territorial waters for its economy, security and fisheries, it remained on the level of a unilateral declaration for territorial waters and sovereignty in terms of the international law of the sea without actual actions and international acknowledgement for the declaration.

Moreover, the percentage of its fishing industry in the gross output value of its agricultural production was still lower than the percentage for farming, which means Maoist China did not put its economic centre of gravity on developing an outward economy, or so-called oceanic economy. In the socio-cultural dimension, more significantly, its domestic radical movements of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution were the main causes of social chaos and cultural depredation, which impeded the development of a Chinese ocean mentality and naval build-up. Militarily, the major impediments to the development of PLA naval strength were a lack of sufficient capital, modern technology, naval experience, and political support; likewise, Maoist land-orientated thinking restrained China's maritime strategic behaviour, its naval power projection, and extension especially.

Strategically, these analytical results from different sectors lead to the important conclusion that Maoist China's expected maritime strategic benefits did not exceed its expected maritime strategic costs in terms of the assumption of this research. More concretely, China's navy did not pursue its strategic goals aggressively at sea before Mao's death owing to the failure of the Great Leap Forward in the early 1950s, its industrialisation program in the late 1950s, and the subsequent turmoil of its Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1976. This caused Maoist China to have no impulse to expand its maritime strategic direction and behaviour. Under the Maoist military doctrine of people's war, the PLA did not formally provide an integrated blueprint of Chinese maritime strategy to support its grand strategy and naval build-up, but merely mimicked the former Soviet Union's strategy of coastal defence, naval education, and naval build-up. Although military imitation was a key route for an immature PLA navy at the beginning, this approach finally restricted Maoist China's naval development.

At the same time, after the Sino-Soviet split, the Soviet Union's maritime strategy and naval development under Admiral Gorshkov's command was adjusted from a coastal defence strategy with a brown-water navy to an ocean-going strategy

with a powerful blue-water navy since the early 1960s for pursuing a global maritime strategy during the cold war. To China, until 1985, Admiral Liu Huaqing just began to promote a formal Chinese maritime strategy and pushing PLAN to change the old naval thinking from coastal defence to offshore defence and from a brown-water small naval build-up to a green-water regional naval build-up.

Overall, the Maoist strategy of coastal defence with a brown-water navy certainly derived from its continental grand strategic direction coupled with China's weak conditions. The Soviet influence aside, the formation of China's coastal defence was also related to its strategic tradition, domestic politics and fragile international security environment. Like the former Soviet Union, Maoist coastal defence with a small navy was the result of politico-ideological debates. Apparently, it did match the weak economic condition of China. For the limits of China's coastal defence, it was a narrow military strategic concept without integration into energy strategy, maritime economic interests, sea rights and the security of SLOCs for the growth of comprehensive national power. Rather, its strategic end was only to maintain a minimum deterrent naval might through the strategic methods of guerrilla war at sea under the Maoist guideline of people's war and active defence for politico-military purposes.

Chapter 5
Offshore Defence

The international security environment determines the orientation of a national strategy, and strategic culture shapes what kind of national strategy a state can have under the environment. According to the evolution of modern China, international security setting indeed determines Beijing's decision-making of national development, foreign policies and strategic directions. However, this seems to be insufficient to address the formulation of maritime strategy merely from examining China's security environment. For China, continental strategic culture is still an inescapable element and an important part in shaping China's maritime strategic behaviour, while Dengist China desired to develop a seaward strategy for its national interests at sea under the international institution of maritime law. Notwithstanding the importance of the Chinese international security environment, this research still needs to explore the socio-cultural context of Dengist maritime thinking in order to discover what kind of maritime security strategy, navy and ocean consciousness China developed to support its maritime security.

Mao Zedong's death in 1976 marked the end of a disordered period in which his radical communist thought had decisively shaped the political, economic, social and military policies of China. His influence would continue to guide successive PRC ruling elites in their primary strategic goal of building a militarily strong and economically prosperous socialist state in international society after the Cold War. Conversely, the end of the Maoist era also opened the door for significant changes to the way that PRC leaders pursued this goal consistent with the changes of international Realpolitik. After Deng Xiaoping became the leader of the PRC in the late 1970s, China made dramatic changes to its political, economic and military doctrines, amounting to what some have called the Dengist reforms; there was also a second revolution in terms of China's relationship with international politics. In so far as the Chinese maritime strategic direction is concerned, Dengist China also started to assert its maritime politico-economic interests, which had been ignored in Maoist national strategy, through transforming Maoist coastal defence to offshore defence for

its maritime security.

During the first decade after the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) was established in 1949, its closest relationship was with the former Soviet Navy. This tie served the decisive purposes of providing the Chinese navy with weapons systems and strategic concepts. After the Sino-Soviet break, the Soviet naval equipment and strategic concepts gradually lost their importance to the PLAN. In order to improve maritime defence, China in the 1980s looked to Western navies for new naval technology, weapons systems, and military thought. At the same time, the Chinese government was asking itself what kind of maritime strategy would allow China to achieve its national security goals toward the sea. With the strengthened recognition of securing China's vast '*haiyang guotu*' (national maritime territory) in terms of UNCLOS, in the mid-1980s the PLA finally decided to shift the focus of its maritime strategy from coastal defence to offshore active defence and to modernise its naval capabilities.

This chapter tries to answer the following questions: What was the Dengist strategy of 'Offshore Active Defence'? And why did Dengist China aggressively shift from coastal defence to offshore defence? Did the new maritime strategy of offshore active defence challenge the land-oriented military doctrine of the Maoist people's war?

5.1 Political Analysis: Emerging Sea-oriented Grand Strategy and Maritime Defence

The international security environment (ISE) is, generally, a comprehensive concept of a national grand strategy, uniting politico-economy, socio-cultural, and national defence issues with issues of international politics. In addition, a nation's geographical environment is a noticeable factor in its ISE. It manifests itself in, and helps shape, strategy in every facet in terms of geopolitics. That is, the international environment is the significant background of the entire development of a grand strategy. Nevertheless, geography does not determine national strategy; people do. The geography of a nation is only one factor among many in its formulation of

strategy. Although national strategy and policies must recognise geographical constraints, its main concern is the furthering of its national interests.

China's geographic position is, by itself, a sufficient condition for Beijing's strategic decision to become a continental power, a maritime power, or both. Indeed, Chinese grand strategy was heavily influenced by Beijing's view of the ISE. The boundary between China and Russia is about 4,000 miles long, many parts of it have been the subjects of disputes between the two countries, and there were disputes about territorial waters among China, Japan, and some South Asian countries as well. During the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s, the heart of China's national strategy was to defend against Russian intrusion over its northern border. This situation of Soviet threat greatly motivated Beijing to end its strong ideological antagonism towards the Americans. When the US and the Soviet Union reached an accommodation in the mid-1980s, the environment of international politics started to change from a nervous bipolar system to a multi-polar one.[1] Undeniably, this change was a factor in both the commencement of normalised Sino-Soviet relations, and in China's strategic shift from continental competition to maritime exploration.

5.1.1The Shift of China's Grand Strategy during the Dengist Era

During the Cold War, the nations of the world had been divided into two groups—they were the members either of the Soviet alliance or of the American alliance. This situation was a key factor in the shaping of China's international security environment, especially its continental security setting. In this bipolar system, China experienced cooperating with the Soviets in the struggle against American capitalist imperialism in terms of Leninist international communism. Later China collaborated with the Americans in opposing the Soviets in terms of a Sino-US perception on of a common threat after Richard Nixon visited China to sign the Shanghai Communiqué in February 1972.[2] Moscow's reaction to Sino-US strategic cooperation was to support Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in December 1978, to invade Afghanistan in December 1979, and to deploy massive forces along the China-Soviet border. From 1972 until the collapse of the former Soviet Union in 1990, the relationship among

[1] Deng Xiaoping, 'International Situation and Economic Problems,' *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, Vol.* 2 (Beijing: Renmin Press, 1993), pp. 353-56.
[2] Derek McDougall, *Asia Pacific in World Politics* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007), pp. 115-16.

China, the US, and the USSR was labelled the period of the 'strategic triangle,' which determined almost all international politics in the Asia-Pacific region.[3] This triangle also meant that China had become increasingly important to the global strategies of both the Soviet Union and the US.

Moscow's view of China as a potentially dangerous military adversary was due to its concern about the growth of China's nuclear capability. Conversely, Beijing's view of the USSR as an unfriendly neighbour stemmed from the 'Brezhnev Doctrine,' which asserted that Moscow had the right to intervene in other socialist states, even with armed forces, in order to defend socialism against counterrevolution.[4] Militarily, the security threat posed to China in the 1970s by the massive deployment of Soviet troops along the Sino-Soviet border, together with the potential for armed conflict over disputed boundaries, cannot be overemphasised. Soviet divisions were increased from twenty-five in 1969 to forty-five in 1973. The Soviets deployed many advanced and sophisticated weapons along the border, including over 150 SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads, strategic Backfire bombers, and numerous pieces of artillery and tanks.[5] Moscow also applied other military and diplomatic means to surround China.[6]

Without a doubt, this antagonistic relationship motivated Beijing to open the door to the US in order to enhance its security. This eventually promoted China's rapprochement with the US in 1979 after the Shanghai Communiqué in 1972, to include the original impetus for the normalised Sino-US relations. Beijing also knew that if China was to continue to focus on economic reform and development as a core national task, it must have settled borders with the USSR. After Mikhail Gorbachev

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[3] Andrew J. Nathan and Robert S. Ross, *The Great Wall and the Empty Fortress: China's Search for Security* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), pp. 46-47.
[4] *Ibid*., p. 44.
[5] Yao Wenbin, 'Soviet Military Deployments in the Asia Pacific Region: Implications for China's Security,' in Richard H. Solomon and Masataka Kosaka, eds, *The Soviet Far East Military Buildup: Nuclear Dilemmas and Asian Security* (Dover: Auburn House, 1986), pp. 97-105.
[6] These included the USSR expanding their Pacific Fleet to include nuclear-powered submarines, two aircraft carriers and many surface combatants, and patrolling the Indian Ocean, the Sea of Okhotsk, the Sea of Japan, the South China Sea, and the Malacca Strait. To China's south, Moscow formed a close relationship with Vietnam by using economic and military aid to lure Hanoi to its side in the Sino-Soviet conflict. In South Asia, Moscow signed a Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation with India in 1971, thereby enabling New Delhi to modernise the Indian military. In the same year, the Indian army assisted the rebels in Pakistan's eastern provinces, which resulted in the establishment of Bangladesh and weakened one of China's few allies and its only foothold in South Asia. See Li Bo, 'Analysis of Psychological Factors on Relations between Russia and India,' *Northeast Asia Forum*, Vol. 15, No. 6 (November 2006), pp. 90-93, and Liu Wengou and Jiang Feng, 'The History and Actuality of Russian-Indian Relationship, and Their Influence on China,' *Studies on South Asia*, No. 1 (2000), pp. 61-65.

became the leader of the USSR, he began to stress the political, economic, and scientific-technological components of national security, as well as its military components. Meanwhile, he regarded the USSR's economic problems as more urgent than the military one, and promoted domestic reforms by introducing '*glasnost*' (openness), '*perestroika*' (restructuring), '*demokratisatsiya*' (democratisation), and 'uskoreniye' (acceleration of economic development).[7] He also held summit conferences with the US President Ronald Reagan, which contributed to the end of the Cold War in the 1980s. Sino-Soviet relations then began to ease, and resulted in a rapprochement between China and the USSR in 1989.

Beginning in the early 1980s, the Reagan administration increased its military pressure on the USSR by its international strategic deployments. At the same time, Washington sale of defensive weapons to Taiwan challenged Beijing's interest. This situation pushed Moscow to proclaim its desire to improve relations with Beijing and its hopes of reducing military expenditure and deployments on the border. Beijing in turn declared its desire for normal relations with Moscow, in order to balance US intervention in Taiwan. However, Beijing claimed that there were 'three obstacles' to normalising Sino-Soviet relations: First, Moscow must withdraw its armed forces from the Sino-Soviet border and Outer Mongolia; second, Moscow must withdraw its army from Afghanistan; and third, Vietnam's forces must retreat from Cambodia.[8]

As general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1985 to 1991 and president of the Soviet Union in 1990, Gorbachev was widely hailed in the West for his '*novoye myshleniye*' (new thinking) in Soviet foreign policy.[9] During his tenure, he sought to improve politico-economic relations with the West by establishing close relationships with Western leaders. By 1989, Gorbachev had withdrawn almost all Soviet troops from the border areas with China, thereby greatly mitigating their twenty-year territorial disputes. In the 1990s, China grouped Russia with other Central Asian countries into the structure of a regional security relationship called the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.[10] This trend greatly affected Beijing's

[7] Valery L. Makarov, 'On the Strategy for Implementing Economic Reform in the U.S.S.R.,' *American Economic Review*, Vol. 78, No. 2 (May 1988), pp. 457-460.
[8] John W. Garver, 'The 'New Type' of Sino-Soviet Relations,' *Asian Survey*, Vol. 29, No. 12 (December 1989), pp. 1137-39.
[9] Peter Zwick, 'New Thinking and New Foreign Policy under Gorbachev,' *Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (June 1989), pp. 215-224. Erik P. Hoffmann, 'Soviet Foreign Policy from 1986 to 1991: Domestic and International Influences,' *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, Vol. 36, No. 4, Soviet Policy. (1987), pp. 254-72.
[10] Michael McDevitt, 'The Strategic and Operational Context Driving PLA Navy Building,' in Roy

grand strategic shift from securing its continental borders to focusing on maritime affairs and developing multilateral relations with Asia-Pacific countries.

5.1.2 China's Foreign Military Relations and PLAN Development since the 1980s

The transformation of the strategic triangle relations between Washington, Moscow, and Beijing in the Asia-Pacific from hostility to amity after the mid-1980s changed Beijing's worldview from a bipolar system to a multi-polar system.[11] China's foreign policy was also changed from one of bilateral relations with either the Soviet Union or the US to exploring multilateral relations with other countries. Thus, the 1980s can be seen as a remarkable period during which Beijing sought a new international security environment by developing an independent diplomacy for its regional security. Dengist China's military build-up also relied on its multilateral relations with other Western countries for advanced technology, weapons systems, and military training. In addition to shaping China's international security, Beijing's foreign relations in military areas were also expected to contribute to the ongoing PLA modernisation.

For military modernisation, the PLA's first major reforms took place in the mid-1980s, after its poor showing in the 1979 border conflict with Vietnam. Clearly, there was a need for PLA modernisation for local conflicts. From 1982 to 1986, the PLA began to demobilise a million of its four million troops, to introduce combined arms warfare for the ground forces by creating the group army force structure. The purpose of which was to pay more attention to the PLA Navy, the PLA Air Force, and Second Artillery Corps, and to develop military Research and Development (R&D) Programs.[12] Meanwhile, Beijing's military foreign relations evolved as a means to advance China's military modernisation program in several ways, such as improving politico-military relations with foreign countries, training PLA civil cadre technicians and specialists, acquiring modern military knowledge from developed countries, and advancing important PLA R&D programs by soliciting foreign aid.[13]

Kamphausen and Andrew Scobell, eds, *Right Sizing the People's Liberation Army: Exploring the Contours of China's Military* (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2007), p. 484.

[11] Hou Shuiping, *Deng Xiaoping lilun shi, 4* [The History of Dengist Theories, Volume 4] (Sichuan: Renmin Press, 2004), pp. 1-4.

[12] Kenneth W. Allen and Eric A. McVadon, *China's Foreign Military Relations* (Washington, DC: The Henry L. Stimson Center, 1999), p. 6.

[13] *Ibid*., 6-7.

China had three main sources for its limited acquisition of weapons systems in the 1980s, namely, the US, Europe, and non-Western countries.[14] Among these three sources, the US was the most important one. Washington actually offered Beijing assistance in improving the PRC's military capability. These efforts included instituting exchange programs for Chinese and American military officers, making China eligible for Foreign Military Sales (FMS), and announcing a US $550 million project for upgrading fifty Chinese Shenyang *J*-8II fighters, the so-called 'Peace Pearl Program.'[15] Meanwhile, in the late 1980s, the Sikorsky Corporation delivered twenty-four *S*-70C Black Hawk helicopters in a deal worth around US $140 million.[16] However, Beijing's strategic environment suffered as the result of the Tiananmen Square crackdown in June 1989: the Peace Pearl Project was suspended before completion following this event,[17] and China ended military cooperation with other Western countries as well.

Regarding naval acquisitions, from its relationship with France, the PLAN successfully obtained 'an upgraded combat direction system for integrating shipboard tactical information, displaying the data, and permitting the assignation of weapons systems to targets, which is an area of critical importance.'[18] The PLAN also obtained French ship-borne helicopter technology and the Crotale air defence missile system for the Luhu-class destroyer.[19] From Italy, the PLAN acquired a home torpedo of moderate capability. The US Navy supplied General Electric LM-2500 gas turbine engines for PLAN Luhu-class destroyers, but because of the Tiananmen crisis, Washington curtailed Beijing's acquisitions from the US, the PLAN then turned to Ukraine for gas turbine engines for its Luhai-class destroyers.[20]

Although the Tiananmen crisis caused a setback in Beijing's military relations with the West, it greatly accelerated the formation of Sino-Soviet/Russian military confidence-building measures (MCBMs). In 1989, the Sino-Soviet summit meetings

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[14] Bates Gill and Taeho Kim, *China's Arms Acquisitions from Abroad: A Quest for 'Superb and Secret Weapons'* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 135-44.
[15] In this program, announced in August 1987, the prime contractor, Grumman Aerospace, would provide China with fifty-five fire control and avionics upgrades for Chinese J-8 fighters. See United States House of Representatives, *Report of the Select Committee on U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with the People's Republic of China* (25 May 1991), pp. 83-84.
[16] Gill and Kim, *China's Arms Acquisitions from Abroad*, pp. 41-42.
[17] The development of the American Peace Pearl Program continued for a short time after June 1989, but was cancelled by Beijing in April 1990, due to escalating costs and unsatisfactory delivery times.
[18] Allen and McVadon, *China's Foreign Military Relations*, pp. 50-51.
[19] *Ibid*.
[20] *Ibid*.

were resumed, and Beijing and Moscow sought to stabilise military contacts within the framework of the political rapprochement. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, both China and Russia apparently decided that the politico-economic benefits accruing from their military cooperation, MCBMs, and arms sales outweighed any negative security implications. Then, in the 1990s, Moscow started to offer military training and weapons systems to the PLA, including sophisticated naval system and equipment. Conversely, China's rapid economic development in the 1980s increased the importance of securing its maritime interests as part of its overall grand strategy.

Additionally, continuing prosperity in the China Special Economic Zones, located on and near its eastern coast and related to China's open-door policy and economic development program, pushed Beijing to emphasise a new maritime strategy of offshore active defence. Its purpose was to safeguard China's territorial waters, coastal economy, sea-lanes of communication, and the Exclusive Economic Zones, to deter Taiwanese independence, and to maintain strategic depth.[21] This last goal required that Beijing maintain good military relationships with Russia in order to be able to purchase Russian naval equipment, such as Kilo-class submarines, Sovremenny-class destroyers and Su-27 aircraft.

5.1.3 The PLAN's Role in Military Diplomacy under China's 'New Security Concept'

As China recovered from its international ostracism after Tiananmen and weathered the effects of the failure of the rest of the Communist world, Chinese scholars generated a new security concept for Beijing's diplomacy. Then, in 1996, Beijing applied this new concept of national security under its new worldview of a multi-polar system, so different from the traditional Maoist worldview of a bipolar system.[22] In March 1997, PRC Foreign Minister Qian Qichen unveiled what was called China's '*xin anquan guan*' (New Security Concept, NSC). Beijing authorities began to promote this concept through diplomatic, economic, and military interactions. The

[21] Alexander C. Huang, 'The Chinese Navy's Offshore Active Defense Strategy: Conceptualization and Implication,' *Naval War College Review* (Summer 1994), pp. 7-32.
[22] David M. Finkelstein, 'China's New Security Concept: Reading between the Lines,' *Washington Journal of Modern China*, Vol. 5, No.1. (1999), pp. 37-49; and see *China's Position Paper on Enhanced Cooperation in the Field of Non-Traditional Security Issues*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Beijing, May 2002. Available from <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjb/zzjg/gjs/gjzzyhy/2612/2614/t15319.htm>. Accessed on 3 November 2007.

NSC was also reflected extensively in China's July 1998 White Paper on defence. According to this document, the basic statements of NSC are as follows:[23]

(1) Relations among nations should be established in accordance with the five principles of peaceful coexistence.

(2) In the economic field, all states should strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation, open up markets to each other, eliminate inequalities and discriminatory policies in economic and trade relations, gradually reduce the development gaps between countries, and seek common prosperity; and all countries should promote mutual understanding.

(3) All countries should promote security dialogues to enhance mutual trust and build confidence, and seek the settlement of divergences and disputes by peaceful means.

Table 6 summarises the differences between China's traditional and new security concepts.

Table 6: The Comparison of China's Traditional and New Security Concepts

	Traditional Security Concept	*New Security Concept*
Period	Cold War	Post-Cold War era
World system	Bipolar system	Multi-polar system
Actors	States	States and non-state actors
Back-ground	During the Cold War, the antagonism between the US and the Soviet Union created a bipolar system, placing the world under the cloud of nuclear mutual assured destruction. Thus, military issues and politics were the dominant concerns among nations during that time. Compared with these two issues, economic issues in this period were not so important.	After the Cold War and the collapse of the USSR, the likelihood of a world war decreased, though local conflicts continued. With the formation of a multi-polar system, the security concept of politico-military relations among nations extended to other areas such as economy, society, culture, technology, ecology, terrorism, religion, etc. Thus, security concept of today must be a broad one.
Core strategic views	1. Antagonistic bipolar system. 2. Struggle for hegemony. 3. Pursue military supremacy.	1. Stress on peaceful negotiation, dialogue, cooperation. 2. Search for peaceful coexistence, common security interest. 3. Achieving the national goals of peace and development.

[23] State Council of the People's Republic of China, *China's National Defense in 1998* (July 1998). Available from <http: //www.china.org.cn/e-white/5/index.htm>. Accessed on 13 November 2007.

Security issues	1. Establish military alliance. 2. Maintain the balance of bipolar system. 3. Struggle for military supremacy. 4. Extend the range of national power.	1. Insist on the five principles of peaceful coexistence. 2. Search for a comprehensive national security. 3. Build a security mechanism. 4. Develop strategic partnerships.
Security goals	1. Military security. 2. Political security.	1. Political security. 2. Economic security. 3. Military security. 4. International security, in the face of six issues: (a) National secession and the Middle East problems. (b) NATO enlargement and nuclear proliferation (c) Civil wars in some countries. (d) Hegemony. (e) Border disputes. (f) Racial disputes.

Source: Yu Xiaoqiu, 'The New Concept of Modern National Security,' *Zhongguo goufan bao* [Chinese National Defense News], 10 October 1997, p. 3. Li Qinggong, 'New Security Concept and the New Order of International Security,' *Zhongguo goufan bao* [Chinese National Defense News], 24 March 1998, p. 3. Russ Howard, 'Discussion of 'the Chinese Security Concept and its Historical Evolution',' *Journal of Contemporary China*, No. 10 (2001), pp. 285-92.

While the NSC states that Beijing seeks a peaceful rise in the region, the NSC promotes shaping China's security environment through its diplomacy as a great power. In this respect, Chinese naval diplomacy has become an inseparable part of China's foreign military relations for its maritime security since the mid-1990s. During the 1980s, the Chinese navy began to conduct voyages away from coastal waters; it also strengthened relations with European navies such as those of France and Italy. The PLAN also strengthened the relations with the US Navy through high-level naval exchanges, naval technology, equipment acquisitions, and navy ship visits (again, until the Tiananmen crisis). After Tiananmen, Sino-US naval diplomacy was broken off until 1997; in that year, the Chinese navy visited the US again calling at Hawaii and San Diego.[24]

In the 1990s, under the concept of NSC, Beijing was employing the PLAN as a diplomatic tool rather than as a naval combat force for the following political purposes:[25] to debunk the China threat theory, to show the flag and promote goodwill, to join regional security discussions, and to execute arms purchases and technology transfers. During 1985 and 2006, the Chinese navy visited thirty-six countries around the world. Sixty-two per cent of those visits took place in the Asia-Pacific region,

[24] *China's Navy 2007*, 114.
[25] Finkelstein, 'China's New Security Concept,' pp. 41-43.

thirteen per cent in Europe, twelve per cent in North America, eight per cent in South America, and five per cent in Africa, according to the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) in Washington DC.[26] See Table 7 below for details. Conversely, these PLAN visits are not completely explained by China's blue-water naval capability and power projection. This naval diplomacy certainly provided an opportunity for the Chinese navy to acquire more military information and strategic thought from the Western navies for supporting its naval modernisation, maritime strategy, and naval build-up.

Table 7: Chinese Naval Visits Abroad (1985–2006)

Dates		**Countries**	**Visited Ships**
1985	Nov.	Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh	Luda destroyer Hefei 132 and replenishment ship Fengcang 615.
1989	Mar.	United States (Hawaii)	Zhenghe training ship.
1990	Mar.	Thailand	Zhenghe training ship.
1993	Oct.	Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Thailand	Zhenghe training ship.
1994	May	Russia (Vladivostok)	Dajiang Sub Tender Changxingdao 121, Luda-II destroyer Zhuhai 166, and Jiangwei frigate Huainan 540.
1995	Aug.	Russia (Vladivostok)	Jiangwei frigate Huaibei 541.
		Indonesia	Luda-II destroyer Zhuhai 166, Jiangwei frigate Huainan 540, and one replenishment ship.
1996	Jul.	North Korea	Luhu destroyer Harbin 112 and Luda destroyer Xining 108.
		Russia (Vladivostok)	Luhu destroyer Harbin 112.
1997	Feb.	United States (Hawaii, San Diego), Mexico, Peru, Chile	Luhu destroyer Harbin 112, Luda-II destroyer Zhuhai 166, Replenishment ship Nancang 953.
		Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines	Luhu destroyer Qingdao 113, Jiangwei frigate Tongqing 542.
1998	Apr.	New Zealand, Australia, Philippines	Luhu destroyer Qingdao 113, Training Ship Shichang 82, Replenishment ship Nancang 953 (PI-Qingdao only)
2000	Jul.	Malaysia, Tanzania, South Africa	Luhai destroyer Shenzhen 167, Replenishment ship Nancang 953.
	Aug.	United States (Hawaii, Seattle), Canada	Luhu destroyer Qingdao 113, replenishment ship Taicang 575
2001	May	India, Pakistan	Luhu destroyer Harbin 112, replenishment ship Taicang 575.
	Aug.	France, Italy, Germany, Britain, Hong Kong	Luhai destroyer Shenzhen 167, replenishment ship Fengcang 615.

[26] *China's Navy 2007*, p. 115.

	Sep.	Australia, New Zealand	Jiangwei frigate Yichang 564, replenishment ship Taicang 575.
	Nov.	Vietnam	Jiangwei frigate Yulin 565.
2002	May	South Korea	Jiangwei frigate Jiaxing 521, Jiangwei frigate Lianyungang 522.
		Singapore, Egypt, Turkey, Ukraine, Greece, Portugal, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru	Luhu destroyer Qingdao 113, replenishment ship Taicang 575.
2003	Oct.	Brunei, Singapore, Guam	Luhai destroyer Shenzhen 167, replenishment ship Qinghaihu 885.
	Nov.	New Zealand	Jiangwei frigate Yichang 564, replenishment ship Taicang 575.
2004	May	Hong Kong	8 vessels.
2005	Nov.	Pakistan, India, Thailand	Luhai destroyer Shenzhen 167, replenishment ship Weishanhu 887.
2006	Aug.	United States, Canada, Philippines	Luhu destroyer Qingdao 113, replenishment ship Hongzehu 881.

Source: Office of Naval Intelligence, *China's Navy 2007* (Washington, D.C.), p. 114.

5.2 Economic Analysis: China's Ocean Frontier and Its Rising Maritime Economy

The stable international political environment after the mid-1980s certainly provided China with the security to reform its national economy and to rebuild its political status in the world. In 1985, Deng Xiaoping said that reform could be seen as China's second revolution, one largely concerned with national survival and development.[27] The Dengist strategy for national development stressed practical economic reforms and modernisation in four vital fields: agriculture, industry, technology, and national defence. In the agricultural sector, Deng gave individual peasants greater control over their farms and responsibility for production; this approach proved successful and widely popular. In the industrial sector, Deng gave managers greater responsibility for acquiring raw materials and resources, production, and compensation for workers. By introducing material incentives and free market reforms, and through allowing greater intellectual and cultural exchanges with foreign countries, Deng opened China up to overseas investment and technology. Deng modernised national defence by

[27] Deng Xiaoping, 'Reform is China's Second Revolution,' in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, Volume III* (Beijing: Renmin Press, 1993), pp. 113-14.

eliminating redundancy through military professionalisation, thus reducing the heavy economic burden on the PLA.

Under Deng's pragmatic reforms, China experienced an amazing economic growth, one that featured dramatic increases in GDP and GNP, and that transformed China's economic direction from an inward continental economy into an outward maritime economy. According to Deng's economic pragmatism, he frequently applied '*mao lun*'(cat theory) to explain the development of China's economy. He also said, 'It doesn't matter if a cat is black or white, so long as it can catch mice'.[28] Specifically, the theory implies that whether an economic system is capitalism or socialism, all that matters is that it pushes national economic growth.[29] Since the 1980s, Beijing's ambitions and visions for its emerging maritime interests and rights have extended beyond its borders and coastline. Its remarkable economic growth, large merchant marine, a growing shipbuilding industry, and prosperous seaborne trade all indicate that the PRC has finally emerged as a significant maritime power.

5.2.1 China's Emerging Maritime Economy and Interests since the 1980s

China is the third largest country in the world geographically, with a long coastline of 18,000 kilometres and about 5,000 islands and islets in territorial waters with a combined area of more than 14,000 square kilometres. According to the UNCLOS, Beijing claimed in 1982 to exercise sovereignty and jurisdiction in its EEZ of around 3.2 million square kilometres, an area that stretches from China's eastern coastline 200 nautical miles into the Pacific Ocean.[30] In general, the maritime dimension plays an important role in developing an export-oriented economy. Around 40 per cent of China's total population lives in the coastal area, this comprises only thirteen per cent of China's total land area. According to the *1995 China Statistical Yearbook*, the average population density is approximately 383 people per square kilometre, and there are fifteen major littoral cities with a population exceeding about 10,000 people. More importantly, this small but significant littoral region contributes about 60 per

[28] The original saying was first uttered by Deng Xiaoping in the early 1960s. In the 1980s, this saying became the maxim, or theory, for guiding China's economic reconstruction. See Deng Xiaoping, 'Restore Agricultural Production,' *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (1938-1965), Volume II* (Beijing: Renmin Press, 1994), p. 323.
[29] Joshua Cooper Ramo, *The Beijing Consensus* (London: Foreign Policy Centre, 2004), pp. 21-23.
[30] Wang Xiang, ' The UN Convention of the Law of the Sea and the Solution of the South China Sea Disputes,' *Journal of Heilongjiang College of Education*, Vol. 26, No. 6 (June 2007), p. 83.

cent of China's GDP, which is, undeniably, the backbone of China's economic development.

As Table 8 demonstrates, China's GDP rose dramatically from only 451 billion RMB in 1980 to 5,749 billion RMB in 1995. Within fifteen years, China's GDP in 1995 grew thirteen fold. Likewise, China's national defence budget with its rapid national economic growth also increased noticeably, from 19,350 million RMB in 1980 to 63,700 million RMB in 1995. In this sense, China's coastal area is its economic centre of gravity and a door for exploring its maritime economy. The maritime infrastructure since the 1980s was developed to support economic growth, and the maritime industry has shown a notable extension. China's need to secure and promote its maritime interests, territorial waters, and fishing grounds has forced Beijing authorities to accord high priority to developing an advanced maritime strategy with a modern navy.

Table 8: China's GDP and Defence Budget, 1980-1995 (100 million RMB)

Indicators \ Years	**1980**	**1985**	**1990**	**1995**
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	4,517.8	8,964.4	18,547.9	58,478.1
Gross National Product (GNP)	4,517.8	8,989.1	18,598.4	57,494.9
Total National Budget (TNB)	1,212.7	1,844.8	3,395.21	6,242.2
National Defence Budget (NDB)	193.5	191.5	290.31	636.7
NDB as Percentage of TNB	16%	10.4%	8.6%	10.2%

Source: Data from State Statistical Bureau, *China Statistical Yearbook 2001* (Beijing: China Statistics Press, 2001), p. 49; and Gerald Segal and Richard H. Yang, *Chinese Economic Reform: The Impact on Security* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 66.

In the 1990s, Beijing published two important documents: the paper on *China's Ocean Agenda in the 21st Century* (1996),[31] and the paper on *The Development of China's Marine Program* (1998).[32] Both papers have the common purpose of promoting a development strategy for China's marine program and maritime economy. According to these two official documents, China has adopted maritime development and marine protection as its longstanding development strategy, and its national

[31] Refer to PRC State Ocean Administration, *China's Ocean Agenda in the 21st Century* [Zhongguo haiyang ershiyi shiji yicheng](Beijing: China Ocean Press, 1996).
[32] The Central People's Government of the PRC, *The Development of China's Marine Program* [Zhongguo haiyang shiye de fazhang] (July 1998). Available from <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/6/index.htm>. Accessed on 3 December 2007.

strategic goal is to become a maritime power with a strong ocean economy. The 1998 Paper indicates that China's development of maritime economy has developed at a remarkable rate. In the 1980s, for example, China's maritime economy grew at a rate of seventeen per cent per annum, while its average growth rate reached 20 per cent by the 1990s. In the mid-1990s, the GDP of the littoral region, mainly relying on China's flourishing maritime economy, accounted for 48 per cent of the total in the littoral region. At the beginning of 1997, China's total output value of maritime industries was 6.4 million RMB. By the end of this year, it increased rapidly to about three billion RMB, accounting for four per cent of GDP. Strikingly, China's GDP increased speedily around 7.6 per cent from 1996 to 1997.[33] These statistics all present a picture of China's coastal areas contributing substantially to the overall national GDP.

In addition to the growth of China's GDP, China's maritime economy can also be divided into four aspects for discussion, namely, the shipping industry, the shipbuilding industry, seaports and the fishing industry. To begin with, the shipping industry plays an important role in international sea-borne trade and is a symbol of a rising maritime power. China's merchant shipping has made great progress: there are over 400 domestic and international shipping companies engaged in maritime trade, making China a maritime trade powerhouse. In 1990, total goods loaded in the region weighed 585 million tonnes; by 2005, the figure had increased to 1.6 billion tonnes.[34] Since Dengist economic reforms, China's shipping industry has been developing its global markets by constantly upgrading its exports structure: its 2006 tonnage stands at around three million. In 1996, China was ranked third in the world in export shipping, after Japan and South Korea.[35]

In the second place, since the 1980s, when China's shipbuilding industry entered the international market, it has expanded rapidly, and has become the third largest in the world. Its output grew from 1.2 million gross register tonnage (GRT) in 1992 to 4.48 million GRT in 1999.[36] China's capability to build various kinds of vessels for both domestic and international buyers was becoming popular in shipyards around the world. China's commercial shipbuilding is considered crucial to its maritime

[33] *Ibid*.
[34] The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNTCAD), *Review of Maritime Transport 2006* (Geneva: The UN, 2006), pp. 133-35.
[35] William R. Hawkins, 'China's Quest for Sea Power Still Has Far to Go,' *China Brief*, Vol.1, Iss. 4 (28 August 2001), 10-11.
[36] Vijay Sakhuja, 'Maritime Power of People's Republic of China: The Economic Dimension,' *Strategic Analysis: A Monthly Journal of the IDSA*, Vol. 26, No.11 (February 2001), p. 2024.

economic strategy.[37] According to the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNTCAD), China is by far the world's largest exporter of containerised cargo, with 14.4 million twenty-foot-equipment units (TEUs) in 2003. This number is expected to grow in the coming years, assuming an annual growth rate of almost eighteen per cent, which is now the highest in East Asia.[38]

Third, the development of seaports contributes vitally to the strength of any country's maritime economy. Since the 1980s, the explosion in its intercontinental trade has had an impressive influence on China's development of its port sector, and has motivated Beijing authorities to increase port capacity to support the growth in China's international trade and container traffic. This also has become a matter of China's national interest at sea. China's main ports are now ranked among the top twenty in the world, ahead of ports like Kobe and Yokohama in Japan.[39] Their growth rates have far exceeded other, more established, Asian ports. Hong Kong was once the biggest port in Asia; in 1992, it was outstripped by the ports of Shanghai and Shenzhen in total imports and exports.[40]

The fishing industry, the final element of China's maritime economy, depends on the area of China's fishing grounds. According to the *China Statistical Yearbook*, China's total sea area is about 1.182 trillion acres, including an area of marine fishing ground of continental shelf of 700 million acres.[41] At the beginning of Deng's economic reforms, the annual catch of fish was only five million tonnes; by 1997, it had grown to 36 million tonnes. In China's Ninth Five Year Plan (1996-2000), the Ministry of Agriculture emphasised fishing as an important sector. Distant water fishing is a relatively new industry in China, but it now plays an active part in utilisation of fishery resources on the high seas.[42] Additionally, it is engaged in combined ventures for rational utilisation of marine resources.

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[37] Hawkins, 'China's Quest for Seapower,' p. 10.
[38] The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNTCAD), *Review of Maritime Transport 2004* (Geneva: The UN, 2004), p. 99. Also refer to *Review of Maritime Transport 2008* (Geneva: The UN, 2008)
[39] Nazery Khalid, 'Port Development Boom in China,' *China Brief*, Vol. 6, Iss. 7 (29 March 2006), pp. 6-8.
[40] *Ibid*.
[41] *China Statistical Yearbook 2001* (Beijing: China Statistics Press, 2001), p. 8.
[42] See the Chinese 1998 White Paper on 'The Development of China's Marine Program.'

5.2.2 China's Maritime Economic Interests, Offshore Defence, and the UNCLOS

The Korean War and US intervention in Taiwan of the 1950s can be seen as the two fundamental stimuli for Maoist China's searching for maritime sovereignty and security. Due to the Sino-Soviet split and China's domestic politico-economic upheavals since the 1960s, however, China's quest for maritime security and interests became ambiguous in its grand strategy. This uncertain orientation of national development also affected the evolution of China's maritime strategy and maritime economy. It should also be added that the PRC took the China seat in the UN and became a permanent member of the UN Security Council in 1971, which not only confirmed China's great-power status in the world, but also pulled China into international institutions. Concerning the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), although the UN held its first and second Conferences on the Law of the Sea in 1956 and 1960, China did not join the conferences due to the problem of government identification at that period.

Following the PRC's entry to the UN in 1971, Beijing participated in the Third UN Conference on the Law of the Sea between 1973 and 1982.[43] After signing UNCLOS III in 1982, China established its State Ocean Administration in 1984 for dealing with its marine affairs and then, on 25 February 1992, reaffirmed the 'Law on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone'[44] for demarcating its ocean frontier and protecting its maritime interests.[45] Actually, China's maritime demarcation is based on its 1958 Declaration on the Territorial Sea, in which China made a general statement declaring its borders to be 'straight-lines connecting base-points on its coast and on the outermost of the coastal islands'.[46] Under the reaffirmed PRC Territorial Sea Law, Beijing declared in May 1996, on the ground of its straight baseline concept, that the borders of Chinese territorial waters included those waters adjacent to the mainland

[43] Liyu Wang and Peter H. Pearse, 'The New Legal Regime for China's Territorial Sea,' *Ocean Development and International Law*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (1994), p. 433.
[44] Beijing declared its law on territorial sea during the Maoist era on 4 September 1958, but this declaration was not accepted by the United Nations.
[45] Greg Austin, *China's Ocean Frontier: International Law, Military Force and National Development* (St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin; in association with the Dept. of International Relations and the Northeast Asia Program, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, 1998), pp. 21-22.
[46] Refer to Austin, *China's Ocean Frontier*, pp. 180-81. According to the 1958 Declaration, the straight baselines principle was also to be applied in an unspecified way to the islands groups claimed by China and its surrounding islands, including Pratas Islands, Paracel Islands, Macclesfield Bank and the Spratly Islands, etc.

and those adjacent to the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea.[47] Thus, the effect of applying the straight baseline method to the Paracels was to encompass a wider area for China's internal waters and the case of Spratlys as well,[48] which caused many controversial maritime demarcations in the South China Sea and its nearby states. The formulation of Dengist China's offshore defence maritime strategy and its naval modernisation has not only a military dimension, but also a politico-economic aspect.

Based on UNCLOS, China's maritime interests include sovereignty of islands, oceanic resources, seaborne trade, fisheries, the Sea-Lanes of Communication (SLOCs), the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), the Continental Shelf, and the Contiguous Zone. UNCLOS did enlarge and legalise the sea territories of littoral states, that is to say, the territories wherein they can exercise their sovereign rights; however, it caused many maritime conflicts. For instance, UNCLOS states that the demarcation of a state's EEZ can extend to a distance of 200 nautical miles (about 370 kilometres) from its coastline, but that caused many maritime conflicts among littoral states with overlapping EEZs. In East Asia, this has led to more serious conflicts, such as the conflict between Russia and Japan concerning the North Four Islands, the dispute between South Korea and Japan over Liancourt Rocks (Takeshima/Tok-do Islands), the dispute among China, Taiwan, and Japan over the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands and the ongoing dispute between several neighbouring states in the South China Sea.[49] Thus, the UN's enforcement of the law of the sea is the root of some difficult international maritime relations, and the reason why littoral states frequently seek to develop advanced naval capabilities.[50]

In spite of offering a maritime jurisdiction, UNCLOS has become the arbiter of disputes about maritime politico-economic interests, such as sovereignty, resources, and sea passage. For China, how to secure these interests has become the highest priority in its strategic plan for national defence. Furthermore, the issue of energy security problem in the context of China's growing economic power cannot be

[47] The Preamble of 'Declaration of the Government of the PRC on the Baselines of the Territorial Sea' on 15 May 1996. The full text is published by the UN, Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs, *Law of the Sea Bulletin 32*, 1996, New York, 37-40. Available from <http://www.un.org/Depts/los/LEGISLATIONANDTREATIES/PDFFILES/CHN_1996_Declaration.pdf>. Accessed on 4 January 2008.
[48] Daniel Dzurek, 'The People's Republic of China Straight Baseline Claim,' *IBRU Boundary and Security Bulletin*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1996), p. 81.
[49] Yizhou Wang, 'UNCLOS and International Relations,' *Guoji zhengzhi* [International Politics], No.8 (August 1996), pp 24-25.
[50] Jie Li and Shipeng Xu, 'UNCLOS and Maritime Military Operations,' *Xiandai junshi* [Modern Military], Vol. 21, No.2 (February 1997), pp. 13-14.

disregarded when analysing the economic factor of China's offshore defence.

Even though economic market systems are an essential and occasionally underestimated element of energy security, crude oil remains a main strategic commodity that promotes a degree of politico-military competition among nations. China's rapid economic growth increased its demand for commercial energy sources. According to the *China Statistical Yearbook*, China's total energy consumption after 1992 began to exceed its total energy production.[51] Consequently, Beijing had to seek possible energy supplies from overseas. Since the 1980s, China has sought to meet its energy needs by turning to the Persian Gulf states, and this has already caused much international concern. In particular, the development of the PLAN is viewed as supporting Beijing's claims in the East and South China seas and in response to its need to secure oil supplies through the Malacca Strait and beyond.[52]

In 1985, China was self-sufficient in energy and a net exporter of crude oil. Beginning in 1993, however, with demand growing and domestic production almost flat, it became a net oil importer. In order to satisfy its crude oil needs, China started to import oil from the Middle East. By 2003, China had replaced Japan as the second largest oil consumer in the world, amid predictions that its energy imports in the near future would exceed those of the US.[53] With the growing dependence upon Middle East oil, the security of shipping and sea-borne trade in China's national strategy has become more significant than ever.

Beijing's territorial ambitions in the South and East China Seas are usually justified by its claim to be protecting offshore energy supply. It is repeatedly claimed that energy considerations have been a critical factor in Beijing's sovereign claims, its diplomatic inflexibility, and its willingness to use force in pursuit of these claims at sea. In the East China Sea, for example, China's petroleum companies have been drilling for oil and gas since the late 1980s, and there are fears that their drilling might soon impinge on Japanese-claimed territorial waters near the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands.[54] Similar regional competition over the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea also developed rapidly once the potential natural energy resources were identified, although how much oil and gas are under the Spratly Islands is still unknown.

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[51] *China Statistical Yearbook 2001*, p. 229.
[52] Philip Andrews-Speed, Xuanli Liao and Roland Dannreuther, *The Strategic Implications of China's Energy Needs* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 77-78.
[53] June Teufel Dreyer, 'China's Power and Will: The People's Republic of China' Military Strength and Grand Strategy' *Orbis*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (Fall 2007), pp. 651-52.
[54] Andrews-Speed *et al.*, *The Strategic Implications of China's Energy Needs*, p. 80.

Since the 1990s, Beijing has begun to combine its energy needs and economic growth as a main strategic concern, using its claim of territorial waters in terms of the law of the sea. However, the energy production of China's territorial waters occupied only a small percentage of total production. The truth is that the main concern behind Beijing's territorial claim on its surrounding seas is sovereignty, not energy. Although the Beijing authorities have claimed that the South China Sea contains potential deposits of about five billion tonnes of oil and about ten billion tonnes of natural gas,[55] the Honolulu-based East-West Center once estimated that the crude oil deposits of the South China Sea could yield between 0.25 million and 0.65 million tonnes per annum, which would represent less than 0.5 per cent of current Chinese consumption.[56] Given China's energy needs for the near future, the reserves of the South China Sea will do little to resolve China's energy security problem. Therefore, it is doubtful that energy security has been the key factor behind Beijing's strategic ambitions in the East and the South China Seas. A more comprehensible reason is that the 'hyper-sovereignty value' highlighted by Alastair I. Johnston,[57] is the central driver of the PRC's strategic thinking, national behaviour, and diplomacy.

In short, it seems that Beijing had no choice but to expand the range of its national defences at sea, by transforming a coastal defence strategy into an offshore defence strategy for dealing with its marine affairs and securing its maritime politico-economic interests.

5.3 Socio-cultural Analysis: Civil-Military Relations, Pragmatic Nationalism and Ocean Consciousness

Following the death of Mao, his nominated successor, Hua Guofeng, assumed the Chair of the CCP. In deciding political policy, Hua advocated following whatever policies Mao had supported. Sadly, many of the ruling elites in the CCP government

[55] Sun Keqin and Cui Hongjian, *Ezhi zhongguo* [Containing China] (Beijing: Zhongguo yanshi, 1996), pp. 740-41.
[56] Fereidun Fesharaki, 'Energy and Asian Security Nexus,' *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 53, No.1 (Fall 1999), p. 92.
[57] Alastair Iain Johnston, 'China's Militarized Interstate Dispute Behaviour 1949-1992: A First Cut at the Data,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 153 (March 1998), p. 2.

and military viewed Hua's policies as the extension of the Chinese Proletarian Cultural Revolution that had wreaked havoc on the state and the Chinese people. Those who had suffered during this period of socio-cultural chaos had no desire to see it continue. Adhering to Maoist creeds, Hua was never fully in charge, nor did he fully control civil-military relations. Deng and his followers, in contrast, in order to improve China's economic condition gradually squeezed Hua out and Deng himself seized the chair of the Central Military Commission (CMC) in 1982. He immediately started to control civil-military relations systematically. Deng appointed Hu Yaobang as the CCP general secretary and Zhao Ziyang as premier in the 12th CCP Congress in the same year. This implied not only the failure of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, but also evidenced the rise of the Dengist identification of pragmatism and an ocean-oriented mentality.

5.3.1 Dengist Civil-military Relations under Seaward Strategic Direction

In the Maoist era, the PLA's political participation was largely a function of personal associates at the top of the CCP and PLA. In the Dengist era, this situation of 'the Party controls the barrel' did not change a lot, perhaps due to Deng Xiaoping's military background. With the death of Deng and the abdication of the second-generation of senior CCP elites in the 1990s, the special party/army relationship changed and a new era dawned. The third generation of CCP leaders lacks a military background and do not have the same patronage networks and authority inside the military. Furthermore, the passing of senior PLA elites and the considerable change of PLA higher leadership in the Jiangist period of the late 1990s have caused the emergence of institutionalised fluidity in PLA leadership. In a sense, this variable PLA leadership also meant that old land-based military thinking among Beijing's ruling class was no longer absolute.

Traditionally, the 'state' concept in China's party/army relations was a weak conception, and can be seen as an obvious throwback to Confucian political culture, in which the thought of the state is not so important, but 'tian xia.' It also echoes China's traditional hierarchical monarch-subject-father-son relations. However, with China's increasing intercourse with international society since the 1980s, this has gradually brought the state concept back for military nationalisation. Following the

passage of the National Defence Law (NDL) in 1997,[58] the Chinese government started to institutionalise its party/ army relationship by introducing the role of the state into China's military system. Generally, the NDL provides an overall framework for '*yifa zhijun*' (administering the army according to law) and elaborates in some detail various aspects of PLA organisation, duties, construction and legal responsibilities.[59] One provision of the NDL—regarding the subordination of the military to the state—is striking.[60] In this provision, the law affects a vital pattern of institutionalised civil-military relations, by suggesting that the PLA be placed under the rule of the state. Overall, the law can be viewed as a guideline for PLA nationalisation under the direction of national development and for isolating military stability from political change. The law can also be regarded as a basis for consistent relations between the PLA naval institution and national maritime management.

Although Deng initiated the forced withdrawal of military elites from the civilian policy process, this trend has more recently been reversed.[61] PLA officers are 24.3 per cent of the 14th CCP Central Committee, which is the highest percentage since the 11th Central Committee elected in 1977. In the Dengist era, Admiral Liu Huaqing was the first soldier with a military background to be appointed to the Politburo Standing Committee since Marchall Ye Jianying and General Wang Dongxing in the late 1970s.[62] Most importantly, Liu's rise in China's party-army-state leadership definitely shows China's interest in developing a sea-oriented national reconstruction and maritime security strategy.

In the Maoist era, the Chinese navy lacked political status and influence in China's politics and policy-making processes. There are two major reasons for this phenomenon.[63] First, the early Chinese naval build-up was mostly composed of former Kuomintang naval personnel under the command of the Chinese communist army leadership; the navy did not have the political status to join the CCP policy-making process. Second, the PLA naval leadership lacked significance in China's

[58] Adopted as law by the 5th Session of the 8th National People's Congress in March 1997.
[59] David Shambaugh, *Modernizing China's Military: Progress, Problems and Prospects* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 47-48.
[60] See Xu Jiangrui and Fang Ning, *Guofangfa gailun* [Introduction of the National Defence Law] (Beijing: Military Science Press, 1998).
[61] See David Shambaugh, 'China's Commander-in-Chief: Jiang Zemin and the PLA,' in Mark Weisenbaum, ed., *Chinese Military Modernization* (London: Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1996).
[62] David Shambaugh, 'China's Military in Transition: Politics, Professionalism, Procurement and Power Projection,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 146 (June 1996), pp.269-70.
[63] Mark A. Ryan, David M. Finkelstein, Michael A. McDevitt, eds, *Chinese Warfighting: The PLA Experience since 1949* (New York: M.E. Sharpe Press, 2003), p. 244.

continental national defence strategy and military command structure compared to the army. The PLAN's weak political status did not change until Admiral Liu was nominated as vice-chairman of the CMC from 1989 to 1998.

Concerning the development of Chinese civil-military relations since the 1980s, it is clear, as Table 9 indicates that the number of PLA seats in the CCP's Central Committee is gradually decreasing. In contrast, the number of total PLAN seats has increased from only 7.4 per cent in the 11th CCP Congress to 15.5 per cent in the 14th CCP Congress; and after the 15th CCP Congress, the percentage of PLA seats decreased to around 11.6 per cent, due to the reduced number of total PLA seats in the early twenty-first century. Overall, the PLAN's political status has undoubtedly improved as China has opened its economy and recognised the importance of its maritime security.

Table 9: The PLA Navy Share of Membership in the CCP's Central Committee, 1977-2002

CCP Congress	CCP Chief	CMC Chair	PLA Seats	PLAN Seats	PLAN %
11th / 1977	Hua,Guofeng	Hua,Guofeng	94	7	7.45%
12th / 1982	Hu, Yaobang	Deng, Xiaoping	47	6	12.77%
13th / 1987	Zhao, Ziyang	Deng, Xiaoping	55	5	9.09%
14th / 1992	Jiang, Zemin	Jiang, Zemin	45	7	15.56%
15th / 1997	Jiang, Zemin	Jiang, Zemin	43	6	13.95%
16th / 2002	Hu, Jintao	Jiang, Zemin	43	5	11.62%

Source: Data from Chinese Government's Official Web Portal <http://www.china.org.cn/>.

5.3.2 Pragmatic Nationalism and Ocean Consciousness

National identity is the core of strategic culture and the backbone of national strategic behaviour. With the fading away of the Maoist ideology of communist utopianism, the CCP's propaganda of implementing a patriotic education for filling an ideological vacuum has been practised over the whole period since the early 1980s. To assist in that political education, the CCP published a volume of the *Selected Works for Instruction in Patriotic Education* in November 1995, containing some writings and speeches of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin on the topic of Chinese

patriotism.[64] While the 1989 Tiananmen democracy movement was a threat to the CCP's regime, Beijing's turn to Chinese nationalism has deeper roots and can only be understood in the larger background of the CCP's need to rebuild its legitimacy or authority. Under Dengist rule, the CCP undertook market economic reforms to recover its weak legitimacy with national economic performance, in the course of which political authority in China received an increasingly pragmatic justification.

Dengist efforts to reconstruct CCP legitimacy upon a new foundation of economic performance were in general successful, as attested by the rapid growth of GDP, industrialisation, and national modernisation. However, the achievement of Dengist economic development has alienated modern China from communist ideology. Despite the failing communist ideology, China's economic reforms have also had many unplanned consequences that are economic, social, and cultural, as well as political. Zbigniew Brzezinski thus stated 'In China, communism's ideological dilution will be the price of economic success. Modern China may enter the twenty first century still ruled by communism, but it will not be a communised China'.[65]

Nationalism, which sometimes takes the form of patriotism, is a type of *esprit de corps*—the affection and loyalty for members of one's national community, which may also be an ideology usually encompass a doctrine of national self-determination.[66] David Apter in the early 1960s predicted that communist China would turn to nationalism in the twenty-first century. He pointed out that the increasing weakness in solidarity and identity when socialism is no longer the reigning ideology may result in political leaders turning toward greater patriotism. Moreover, replacing communism or socialism, nationalism would become the dominant ideology in developing states, due to its higher functional flexibility in promoting identity and solidarity by incorporating elemental loyalties in a readily understandable synthesis.[67] In this regard, rising Chinese nationalism in the Dengist era is not merely an ideological replacement for Maoism, but 'the glue that offers much-needed identity and solidarity to a society experiencing the disruptive forces

[64] Li-Wen Dong, 'lun zhonggong de aiguo zhuyi' [Study on the patriotism of communist China], *Studies in Communism*, Vol. 21, No. 8 (August 1998), pp. 26-27.
[65] Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Failure: the Birth and Death of Communism in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Scribner's, 1989), p. 232.
[66] Michael Mann, 'Apolitical Theory of National and Its Excesses,' in Sukumar Periwal, ed., *Nations of Nationalism* (Budapest: Central European University, 1995), p. 55; Michael Keating, *Nations against the State* (New York: St. Martin's, 1996), p. 1.
[67] David E. Apter, ed., *Ideology and Discontent* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), pp. 24-28.

associated with rapid development.'[68]

'*Zhongdang aiguo*' (loyalty to party and being patriotic) is a Chinese political slogan, which means that both 'loyalty to party' and 'to be patriotic' are a united faith and must be followed by people in terms of Chinese nation-state system and political culture. For this reason, nationalism in Chinese national defence is always an important controlling means of the communist party in the PLA under the orientation of national development.[69] The PLA is an instrument of the CCP, and is expected to side with the CCP's policies and proletarian dictatorship. As Deng Xiaoping stressed '[The PLA] should always be loyal to the party, to the country, to the people, and to socialism. I am certain that it will remain so and that, having been tested for several decades, it will be able to do its duty.'[70]

Additionally, such a state-nationalism of the PLA is directly related to China's territorial integrity and its maritime strategic direction, which including the landward sovereignty of minority nationalities in the autonomous districts of Xinjiang and Tibet, the sovereignty of Taiwan, the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands, the Paracel Islands, the Spratly Islands, continental shelf and EEZ. From this dimension, it is easy to comprehend that the security concept of national defence in Dengist state-nationalism has covered Beijing claimed ocean territory. However, whether or not China could alter its traditional continental culture to a maritime one is a significant problem, and the crux of the problem is the development of '*haiyang yishi*' (ocean consciousness or mentality). In terms of China's geography on the brink of the western Pacific Ocean, it could become a great maritime power in Asia, but the land-oriented Confucian civilisation and self-sufficient agricultural economy greatly limited its maritime development and ocean consciousness.

Compared with China's neighbouring maritime states, Chinese ocean mentality is still fragile, while Beijing has been promoting ocean consciousness as an important part of its patriotic education since the 1980s.[71] In general, ocean consciousness is the cultivation of oceanic awareness, including the recognition of maritime economy, the

[68] Maria Hsia Chang and Xiaoyu Chen, 'The Nationalist Ideology of the Chinese Military,' *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (March 1998), p. 46.
[69] Hou Shuiping, *Deng Xiaoping lilun shi, Volume II*, pp. 326-27.
[70] Deng Xiaoping, 'Speech to Comrades Who Had Attended an Enlarged Meeting of the Military Commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China,' in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* (1982-1992), *Volume III* (Beijing: Renmin Press, 1993), p. 304.
[71] Lo Gang, 'Cultivating the Concept of Maritime National Territory,' *Wenjiao ziliao* [Cultural and Educational Information] (January 2007), p. 211.

confirmation of maritime interests and rights, the utilisation of ocean resources, the legislation of related maritime law, the protection of maritime security environment, and the build-up of naval capabilities.[72] Such an ocean consciousness is a comprehensive concept of national development at sea. Under the context of Chinese rising maritime economy, Beijing must face any severe challenges from the sea. Hence, the sea's significance transcends that of the land, and impacts on strategic and resource considerations.

The development of Chinese ocean consciousness definitely shows China's ambition for sea power. This ambition has become the most important part of Beijing's propaganda and patriotic education, as Beijing attempts to arouse Chinese common consensus on maritime national rights and interests. According to China's definition, the concept of Chinese sea power must be a 'sea power with Chinese characteristics.'[73] According to the War Theories and Strategic Studies Department of the Academy of Military Science, Chinese sea power has three features:[74] First, it focuses solely upon China's maritime rights and interests only within the context of national sovereignty and UNCLOS. Second, it includes securing national territory, sea-lanes, maritime resources, and overseas interests. Finally, it is a comprehensive notion in nature, which is a compound of political, economic, diplomatic, and cultural methods. SPCC is, strictly speaking, China's performance of maritime comprehensive power. Although China emphasises that its features of sea power are different from Mahanian sea power, contradictorily, its rising ocean consciousness to promote sea power bears a striking similarity to Mahan's concept of sea power, as Mahan, in *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, suggests:

> The government's policies can favour the natural growth of people's industries and its tendencies to seek adventure and gain by way of the sea; or it can try to develop such industries and such a sea-going bent, when they do not naturally exist; or, finally, the government may, by mistaken action, check and fetter the progress which the people left to themselves would make.[75]

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[72] Li Jie and Shong Tao, 'Enhancing National Ocean Consciousness,' *Zhongguo goufan bao* [Chinese National Defence News], 23 February, 1996, p.3. Jiao Yongke, 'Propagate Maritime Culture, Develop Maritime Economy,' *Zhongguo haiyang bao* [Chinese Ocean News], p. 1407. Available from <http: //www.soa.gov.cn/zhanlue/14073a.htm>. Accessed on 27 March 2008.
[73] Ge Dongsheng, ed., *Guojia anquan zhanlue lun* [Theory of National Security Strategy] (Beijing: Military Science Press, 2006), p. 225.
[74] *Ibid*.
[75] Alfred T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History: 1660-1783* (Boston: Little Brown, 1918), p. 82.

The combination of ocean consciousness and nationalism is, indeed, the backbone of China's maritime strategy. With the fall of Maoist utopianism and the rise of Dengist pragmatism, the evolution of this pragmatic combination not only offset the vacuum of Chinese ideology, but also upheld China's seaward strategic orientation. Since the late 1980s, Beijing has been promoting the view that the sea is China's national living space, second national territory, and even its maritime national territory.[76] Exploring and using the sea, will have more and more significance to China's long-term development. For maritime security, the objective of protecting China's maritime national territory requires a strategic shift from Maoist coastal defence to offshore defence.

5.4 Military Analysis: Offshore Active Defence, Capabilities and Operations of the PLAN

The Asia-Pacific security environment, in which China is emerging, demands that the matter of a maturing PLAN be put in a politico-military context. Under the Maoist strategic doctrine of people's war and the strategic guideline of active defence, in 1949, PLA soldiers were taught to prepare for an attack on China by either the US or the USSR. After the Sino-Soviet border clashes in 1969, the PLA believed that the Soviet Union was the greatest threat to China. In this case, the Maoist strategy of a 'people's war' called for a retreat to the interior in the face of a superior enemy force. Once this force had been lured deep into China's territory, the PLA's main force units and militia would engage in mobile warfare and guerrilla attacks on enemy weak points and lines of logistics. However, the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese war had shown the ineffectiveness and backwardness of the PLA in dealing with a rival of inferior numbers and relatively equal firepower, and raised the question of how the PLA would fare in a war against a modern army that enjoyed an important advantage in weapons systems and military technology. This too inclined Dengist strategic elites to

[76] Nayan Chanda and Kari Huus, 'China: the New Nationalism,' *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 9 November 1995, p. 20.

rethink Maoist strategic military doctrine of a 'people's war' and active defence.

5.4.1 PLA Doctrinal Transformations and the Modern Maritime Strategy

The formulation of PLAN's maritime strategy was promulgated under the common guidance of the PLA's overarching military strategic doctrines: the 'people's war' and 'active defence.' Radical changes in China's security environment caused the reassessment of China's view of threat, and the changing character of war has pushed Beijing authorities to build-up the PLA more rapidly. The PLAN, naturally, would follow military doctrinal shift and adjust its maritime strategy for a national naval supremacy.

During the period of tension in Sino-Soviet relations in the 1970s, Beijing realised that military technological development made a 'people's war' unattractive for mounting an effective national defence against a potential military attack by the Soviets. As a result of the USSR's mechanised armed forces, which could be quickly deployed, and its sophisticated missiles, PLA elites began to doubt whether Chinese armed forces could succeed in a modern war. In response to this problem, the PLA transformed the Maoist concept of people's war. Hence, Deng stated, the PLA needed to insist that the people's war doctrine continued to be effective under modern conditions. This resulted in the so-called new military doctrine of a 'people's war under modern conditions',[77] which rejected several traditional creeds of Maoist military thought, such as 'luring the enemy in deep,' 'protracted war,' 'guerrilla war,' and so forth. With the aim of preparing to carry out this doctrine in the 1980s, the PLA restructured its thirty-five Army corps into today's eighteen Group Armies.[78] Likewise, in order to increase the efficiency of military operations, the CMC reduced the scale of Chinese armed forces from eleven military regions to seven regions, including Beijing, Shenyang, Jinan, Nanjing, Guangzhou, Chengdu and Lanzhou military regions in terms of the professionalisation of the military.

This Dengist strategic doctrine stressed the importance of the first battle with China's presumed major enemy—the Soviets. The doctrine said that if the army of the

[77] Yao Youzhi and Huang Yingxu, eds, *Deng Xiaoping da zhanlue* [Grand Strategy of Deng Xiaoping] (Beijing: Liberation Army Publication, 2004), pp. 232-39. Mark Burles and Abram N. Shulsky, *Patterns in China's Use of Force: Evidence from History and Doctrinal Writings* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000), pp. 26-29.
[78] Peter Worthing, *A Military History of Modern China: From the Manchu Conquest to Tian'anmen Square* (London: Praeger Security International, 2007), p.188.

Soviet Union moved close to Chinese border, the PLA would move behind enemy lines into Soviet territory to the conduct mobile operations on its logistics. Once the Soviet offence had been sufficiently disrupted, the PLA would launch a counterattack to push the Soviet forces back.[79] Although the Maoist 'people's war' had been revised by Dengist PLA strategists, the concept of active defence was still the major and unchangeable guideline of the PLA.

Following the elimination of the Soviet military threat in the early 1980s, Beijing again changed its military doctrine from a people's war under modern conditions to 'limited, local war.' In the 1985 Enlarged Conference of Central Military Commission, Deng put forward the view that China no longer faced an imminent military attack from the Soviet Union.[80] The PLA was told that it must no longer prepare to fight 'an early war, major war and nuclear war.' Rather, it was told to prepare for limited war. In the context of the eased international situation of the mid-1980s, Deng considered that the likelihood of a total war was small. Instead of preparing for continental defence against the Soviets' attack, the PLA started preparing for small, local, and limited military engagements on China's periphery that might involve a variety of adversaries. In the 1988 CMC Enlarged Meeting, the people's war doctrine under modern conditions was officially replaced by the doctrine of limited war as the PLA's new military strategy.[81]

The 1991 Persian Gulf War caught the attention of PRC leaders, who saw it as exactly the kind of limited war that they believed China would likely face in future conflicts. This war led PLA leaders to call for a renewed emphasis on military preparedness and on preparing to fight a 'Local, Limited War under High-Tech Conditions.'[82] In 1993, Admiral Liu Huaqing, as senior military member of the CMC, and for many years the officer responsible for supervising PLA technological modernisation, pointed out that the PLA 'fails to meet the needs of modern warfare and this is the most important problem with the build-up of army.'[83] Incontrovertibly,

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[79] Ellis Joffe, 'People's War under Modern Conditions: A Doctrine for Modern War,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 112 (December 1987), pp. 556-66.
[80] Deng Xiaoping, 'Speech to the Expanded Conference of the Central Military Commission,' *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, Volume 3* (Beijing: Renmin Press, 1993), pp. 126-29.
[81] Dennis J. Blasko, 'Chinese Army Modernization: An Overview,' *Military Review*, Vol. 85, No. 5 (September/October 2005), p. 68.
[82] James R. Lilly and David Shambaugh, eds, *China's Military Faces the Future* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Research, 1999), pp. 54-55.
[83] Liu Huaqing, 'Unswervingly March Along the Road of Building a Modern Army with Chinese Characteristics,' *Qiushi* [Seeking Truth], No. 15 (18 August 1993), p. 18.

the Gulf War demonstrated the high level of technology and the cutting-edge C4ISR[84] systems that characterised modern warfare, leading Chinese strategists in the 1990s to promote military development in the direction of military 'informationisation' and 'electronicalisation', by emphasising acquisition and development of state-of-the-art technology and advanced weapons systems.[85]

The strategy of active defence is a traditional continent-oriented national strategy of China as is that of a people's war. In the Dengist era, the military doctrine of active defence no longer involved the Maoist phases of strategic defence, strategic statement and strategic offence. The strategic object is no longer to lure the enemy in deep to drown it in a Maoist people's war. Conversely, strategic deterrence is to be pursued through forward positioning and sabre rattling, engaging the enemy at or over the boundary, and stressing offensive operations. The new military notions of active defence included the concepts of 'victory by elite troops,' 'gaining initiative by first strike,' 'bringing overwhelming military superiority,' 'launch in-depth strikes' and 'fight a quick battle to force a quick resolution.'[86]

Even as the CCP made these military doctrinal changes, the PLA continued to rethink China's need for a maritime strategy. Under this tendency of strategic transformation, former Chinese Admiral Liu Huaqing once stated that 'the first issue for the PLA Navy is to affirm a naval strategy that can be generalized as offshore defence';[87] thereupon the idea of an offshore active defence strategy gradually won approval. After Liu's promotion of this strategy at a series of naval meetings, it was ultimately accepted in the mid-1980s by the Central Military Commission (CMC) and the Chinese government. In the process of the formation of offshore defence strategy (see Table 10), the PLA not only broke with the Maoist strategy of coastal defence, but also introduced the concept of maritime defence into its strategic decision-making. Liu, consequently, became the father of the modern PLAN or so-called China's Mahan.

[84] C4ISR means the four systems of Command, Control, Communications, Computer, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance.
[85] Vinod Anand, 'Chinese Concepts and Capabilities of Information Warfare,' *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (2006), p. 781.
[86] Shambaugh, 'China's Military in Transition,' p. 280.
[87] Liu Huaqing, *Liu huaqing huiyilu* [The Memoirs of Liu Huaqing] (Beijing: Liberation Army Publication, 2004), p. 434.

Table 10: The Formation of 'Offshore Active Defence' in the 1980s

Time	Occasions	Essential Contents
1983	Meeting on Naval Operations in August.	Raises several questions about the PLAN needs for an operational guideline of its own.
	Senior Naval Executive Course in October.	Liu gives a speech entitled 'On Several Issues Related to the Navy's Implementation of the Strategic Guideline of Active Defence.'
1984	Seminar on the Education Reform of the Navy's Academies in July.	Call for the development of the PLAN's strategy and tactics.
1985	A PLA naval tabletop exercise in December.	Formally rolls out the draft of the naval strategy of 'offshore defence.'
1986	The Chinese Naval Enlarged Party Meeting in January.	Liu introduces some important aspects of naval strategy, including its types, characteristics, operations, objectives, and naval mission statements.
	PLA National Defence University (NDU) in April.	Liu gives a speech entitled 'Naval Strategy and Future Naval Operations.'
	Naval Research Institute in Summer.	Liu instructs the institute to study 'the development of naval strategy' and focus on the 'offshore defence' strategy of the PLAN.
	PLAN-organised Conference on 'Strategy for Navy's Development' in November.	Liu stresses on the necessity to formulate a people's naval strategy with Chinese characteristics under modern conditions.
1987	Report to the Central Military Commission (CMC) in February.	Liu's report entitled 'On the Issue of affirming the Naval Strategy.'
	Report to the General Staff Department (GSD) in March.	Liu's report entitled 'Brief Illustration on Naval Strategy.'
	Meeting organised by the Department of Operations and General Staff Department in April.	Liu's reports on Offshore Active Defence were fully supported by representatives from nine related departments.

Source: Liu Huaqing, *Liu Huaqing Huiyilu* [The Memoirs of Liu Huaqing] (Beijing, Liberation Army Publication, 2004), pp. 433-39.

As to the concept of offshore active defence, Liu vaguely defines offshore operations or 'area defence' as occurring inside the nearest island chain, somewhere between China's coastline and the blue-water ocean, i.e., in the Yellow Sea, the East China Sea, the South China Sea, the seas around Okinawa, Taiwan, the Spratlys and the Paracels.[88] He eschewed Mao's narrowly circumscribed approach to the sea.

[88] *Ibid*.

According to Liu's idea, offshore defence has the following features:[89]

(1) Strategic defence. Consistent with China's long-standing foreign policy of peaceful coexistence, Liu called on Beijing to design a maritime posture that could hold a strategically defensive line. Consistent with Mao's concept of active defence, which is predicated on 'offensive defence,' naval operations would nonetheless be offensive in character, meeting sea-borne threats far from the Chinese coast.

(2) Operational area. Liu envisioned confining Chinese naval operations largely within the first island chain. As China's naval power grows, however, he contemplates extending the reach of the PLA navy toward the second island chain. Given this, Taiwan's strategic status at sea is very important to China's island-chain strategy. Only if can China occupy Taiwan, then China could break through the blockade line of the first island chain and extend its naval power into the West Pacific Ocean, which also can be seen as the premise of developing China's blue-water maritime strategy.[90]

(3) National objectives. Liu declared that his strategy fulfilled the nation's foremost policy priorities: upholding national unity, protecting territorial integrity, ensuring access to natural resources, deterring imperial aggression from the sea and maintaining peace in the Asia-Pacific region.

(4) Peacetime missions. Liu maintained that his peacetime strategy would safeguard territorial integrity (including Taiwan as a top strategic priority), support diplomatic aims, maintain credible deterrence, cope with regional contingencies, and assist other socialist nations confronting seaborne challenges.

(5) Wartime missions. Liu called on the PLAN to act either independently or jointly with the other services in defeating enemies at sea, assuring Chinese use of the SLOCs, and taking part in nuclear retaliatory operations under unified command.

Overall, Liu's idea originated from China's traditional continental strategic culture, which concentrated on the concept of strategic defence for the security of China's territorial waters; it was an expansion of China's continental national strategy.

[89] *Ibid*., p. 437.
[90] Jiang Yu, 'Island Chain and Chinese Navy's Going to the High Seas,' *Shipborne Weapons*, 12 December 2008, pp. 28-31.

5.4.2 Naval Capabilities

The maritime strategy of PLAN offshore active defence was formed in the mid-1980s; this section tries to analyse the build-up of the Chinese ocean-going navy under the strategic direction of offshore defence. Even if there are different sources offering different data about the Chinese naval structure, they are nearly the same, and from each of them there is a panorama of PLAN capabilities. Accordingly, this section principally relies on the data from *The Military Balance* for checking its long-term trend.

Since 1978, there have been several significant improvements in the Chinese navy, especially in its major surface combatants, nuclear-powered submarines, naval air force and minesweepers. Comparing the development of the Chinese naval build-up in the 1970s with that in the 1980s, the PLAN in the late 1970s had increased its large surface warships from 23 to 44 in 1985 and then to 55 in 1990. For its undersea force, the PLAN increased the production of nuclear-powered submarines from one in the 1970s to five in the 1980s, and mothballed numerous old submarines in favour of new generations.[91] After the confirmation of the offshore defence strategy, the military organisation of the Chinese navy, as Table 11 demonstrates, was enlarged from 30,000 to 350,000 personnel, the large number of marines, naval air force, submarines, and surface vessels.[92] In order to have a streamlined and effective force, the PLAN began to reduce its redundant personnel and ageing equipment for maritime modernisation in the early 1990s. An understandable trend of the Chinese naval build-up since 1985 was, in general, towards supplementing a large offshore defence navy with a powerful surface fleet, an influential submarine fleet and an advanced naval air force.[93]

Table 11: The Force Structure of the PLAN for Offshore Defence, 1985-1996

Type \ Number \ year	**1985-86**	**1990-91**	**1995-96**
Naval personnel	350,000	260,000	260,000
Submarines, Conventional	107	88	46

[91] *The Military Balance, 1978-1979* (London: IISS, 1978), pp. 56-57.
[92] *Ibid*., p. 56.
[93] See Gordon Jacobs, 'Chinese Naval Developments Post-Gulf War,' *Jane's Intelligence Review* (February 1993), p. 84. China State Shipbuilding Corporation, with the assistance of Navy Weapons Assessment Research Centre (NWAR), operates twenty-seven shipyards, sixty-six manufacture plants, and thirty-seven research and development centres for both commercial and PLAN vessels. Clearly, China's naval build-up in the 1980s was integrated with China's booming military industry.

Submarines, Nuclear-Powered (a)	3	5	6
Major surface warships (b)	44	55	50
Coastal patrol combatants	906	915	870
Mine warfare vessels	25	52	121
Amphibious vessels (c)	53	58	54
Marines	86,500	6,000	5,000
Naval air force	34,000	25,000	25,000

(a) SSNs and SSBN (b) Destroyers and frigates (c) LSTs and LSMs.

Source: Data from *The Military Balance, 1985-86*, p. 114; *The Military Balance, 1990-91*, pp. 149-50; The *Military Balance, 1995-96*, pp. 177-78.

The PLAN's large surface ships underwent generational change and its previously backward fleet was rapidly upgraded. The PLAN in 1996 possessed sixteen Luda-class missile destroyers built between 1970 and 1991. The original Ludas were built in the Guangzhou shipyards, with a displacement of 3,960 tonnes, a top speed of 32 knots, and a range of 4,000 nautical miles.[94] As these relatively old vessels were designed for surface warfare with quite limited Anti-Air Warfare (AAW) and Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) capabilities, they were refitted in the 1990s to eliminate this weakness.[95] The upgraded Luda III, outfitted with Italian Breda 70 calibre anti-aircraft mounts, eight China-made anti-ship missiles, variable depth sonar, Whitehead B515 torpedo launchers, and a cruising radius of 4,790 kilometres, began sea trials in 1991 [96]

The Type 052 Luhu-class destroyer is the first modern Chinese warship to be fitted with sophisticated Western-designed weapon systems. Luhus have a displacement of 4,500 tonnes and are powered by Motoren Turbinen diesel and General Electric LM-2500 gas turbine engines, carrying the same armaments as Luda III. Although Luhus are intended to become the main force of the PLAN fleet, the low number of ships so far on order, and the reliance on imported engines and armaments, introduces a strong warning about further additions of this destroyer to the PLAN.[97] After the first generation of Luhus, China started to build a bigger Type 051B Luhai-class destroyer, which is 20 per cent larger than the Luhu-class. This warship, 154

[94] Hugh Cowin, *Warships* (London: Bloomsbury Books, 1986), p. 78.
[95] Andrew S. Erickson, 'Can China Become A Maritime Power?' in Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes, eds, *Asia Looks Seaward: Power and Maritime Strategy* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2008), p. 71.
[96] 'New Ships for the PLAN,' *Jane's Defence Weekly* (18 January 1992), p. 88.
[97] Shambaugh, 'China's Military in Transition,' p. 290.

meters in length, displacing 6,500 tonnes, and with a widened hull beam to enhance stability, was commissioned in 1999 and is believed to have served as the basis for the Luyang-class designs.[98] China's two Sovermeny-class missile destroyers, purchased from Russia in 1996 and delivered in 1999 and 2000, have improved China's range of maritime air-defence. Nevertheless, these two ships still play only a limited role in China's maritime defence. To overcome this, the PLAN has produced two Type 052B Luyang I-class and two Type 052C Luyang II-class air-defence guided-missile destroyers based on Luhai-class, and these ships were launched during 2004 and 2005.

China's inventory of frigates has likewise improved considerably since the 1990s, during which the PLAN's thirty-two old Type 053 Jianghu-class frigates were supplemented by twelve Type 053H2G and 053H3 Jiangwei-class missile frigates, which were produced during 1991 and 2005. After that, the PLAN kept developing Jiangkai-class frigates, which have a more streamlined design and a larger displacement than that of Jiangwei-class.[99]

Second, the Chinese submarine fleet is the largest submarine fleet in the world. It offers the PLAN a strategic weapon system that is at once a cost-effective deterrent and a decidedly lethal means of fighting even an advanced fleet of surface combatants. The efficiency of modern long-range land-attack Cruise missiles has convinced the PLA leadership that the first line of China's maritime defence must be moved hundreds of miles out to the sea. The role of the PLAN submarine fleet is growing as its operations move farther from the shoreline.[100] More importantly, the role of PLAN's submarine force is increasingly to conduct merchant blockade missions against surface vessels for China's maritime energy security.

China's modernised submarine force has attracted significant concern and attention in the Asia-Pacific region. The effect in recent years has involved the acquisition of at least five classes of submarines that are expected to be much more modern and capable than China's ageing submarines. In the 1990s, there were two important developments in the PLAN's submarine program: it launched homemade Song-class submarines in 1994, and took delivery of two Type 882 Kilo-class

[98] Evan S. Medeiros, ed., *A New Direction for China's Defense Industry* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2005), pp. 144-45.
[99] *Ibid*., p. 147.
[100] *World Submarine Challenges 1997*, (Washington DC: Office of Naval Intelligence, Department of Defense, February 1997), p. 18.

submarines from Russia in 1995 (and two Type 636 Kilos in 1998).[101] The Song-class was intended to replace the Ming-class and Romeo-class submarines as the standard conventional submarine in the PLAN. Meanwhile, the Kilos will mark a significant strategic addition to the power of the Chinese naval undersea fleet.[102]

Particularly noteworthy is the PLAN's evolution of nuclear-powered submarines. China has five Type 093 Han-class SSNs, which entered service between 1974 and 1990. During 2006 and 2007, China launched two new Type 093 Shang-class SSNs, which are viewed as replacements for China's aging Han-class SSNs.[103] The Type 094 Xia-class SSBN is the PLAN's only strategic ballistic missile submarine,[104] and China decided to launch a new Type 094 Jin-class SSBN with the capability of Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) in 2008.[105] From the build-up of China's nuclear-powered submarines, they are unquestionably a vital symbol of China's status as a regional nuclear maritime power.

Third, another main element of the Chinese naval force is the PLAN Air Force (PLANAF), which is finally beginning to recover from grave setbacks suffered during the Maoist Cultural Revolution period in the 1970s. As with its surface ships and submarines, China's navy modernised its air force structure in the 1990s through a combination of purchases of foreign-made aircraft, including fourth-generation fighters like the Su-27s, and homemade aircraft production like MiG-31s.[106] Regardless of progress in Chinese aircraft manufacturing, the PLAN remains significantly dependent on foreign suppliers for both complete aircraft and important aircraft components.

The PLANAF today possesses around 2,300 operational combat aircraft, including many fighters. For example, the Su-33 Flank D Carrier-Capable Fighters, which is a derivative of the Su-27 design and connected with China's aircraft carrier development program, can operate from carriers using a ski-jump ramp and is capable

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[101] Lilly and Shambaugh, eds, *China's Military Faces the Future*, pp. 164-65.
[102] According to *Jane's Fighting Ships 1992-1993*, the *Kilos* are quite and fast. They have a range of 6,000 nautical miles at 7-8 knots submerged and can stay underwater for up to 60 days. They are also outfitted with 18 Type-53 torpedos and can carry enough replacements to reload 12 times. See Barbara Starr, 'U.S.A. keeps an eye on slow 'Kilo' to China,' *Jane's Defense Weekly* (7 March 1995), p. 3.
[103] *Jane's Fighting Ships 2007-2008*, p. 31.
[104] *World Submarine Challenges 1997*, pp. 21-23.
[105] *Jane's Fighting Ships 2007-2008*, 116-18.
[106] Christopher D. Yung, *A 'People's War' at Sea: Chinese Naval Power in the Twenty-First Century* (Alexandria: Center for Naval Analyses, March 1996), pp. 14-15.

of in-fight refuelling.[107] Su-30 MKK 2 Flanker Land-Based Fighters, the Su-30 is a derivative of the Su-27. According to *Jane's Fighting Ships 2007-2008*, China's air force operates at least 130 Su-27s, and these aircraft may be used for fleet-defence.[108] The J-10 Fighters are also designed for carrier operations.[109] In addition, the PLAN operates 36 JH-7 Fighter-Bombers that were delivered since 1998, which are broadly comparable in outward appearance to the Russian-made Su-24 Fencer.[110]

5.4.3 Naval Operations

Under the Dengist military doctrine of a people's war under modern condition, China's military strategic focus was concentrated on the problem of the Sino-Soviet border. Thus, the importance of the PLAN was not emphasised in Maoist land-orientated national defence at the time of the Sino-Vietnamese war in the late 1970s. Generally, the reasons for the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese military clash were the rising Soviet-Vietnamese alliance and China's punishment on Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia. The Soviet Union's basing its Pacific Fleet in Cam Ranh Bay in 1979 reintroduced a strategic concern among PRC leadership about threats to offshore resources and sovereignty. Beijing decided to teach Vietnam a lesson.[111] For this, Deng Xiaoping dispatched a great PLA ground force to the north of Vietnam. Likewise, this war taught the PLA a lesson that the superiority majority of the army was no longer the key to victory in war.

(1) For the Paracel Islands. In April 1979 a second Sino-Vietnamese maritime conflict occurred, over the sovereignty of the Paracels in the South China Sea. In this military dispute, the PLAN sent one landing ship and a single armed barge to fight with three Vietnamese small patrol gunboats. Finally, Vietnamese patrol gunboats surrendered to the Chinese navy.[112] Afterwards, the PLAN announced the establishment of its first maritime brigade on Hainan Island in December 1979. In

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[107] Keith Jacobs, 'PLA-Navy Update—People's Liberation Army-Navy Military-Technical Developments,' *Naval Forces*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2007), pp. 21-24.
[108] *Jane's Fighting Ships 2007-2008*, p. 31; p. 136.
[109] John J. Tkacik, *China's Quest for a Superpower Military*, Heritage Foundation Backgrounder, No. 2036, May 17, 2007, pp. 12-13.
[110] See 'JH-7 (Jianhong Fighter-Bomber), FB-7 / FBC-1.' Available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/china/jh-7.htm>. Accessed on 5 April 2008.
[111] Austin, *China's Ocean Frontier*, p. 79.
[112] Sun Xiao, *et al*., *Zhongguo haijun chunqi* [The Legend of Chinese Navy] (Shandong: Huanghe Press, 1997), pp. 402-5.

1980, two H-6 bombers of the PLANAF conducted the first patrol of the Spratlys, and four major vessels, including three Luda-class destroyers and one Fuqing-class replenishment ship, operated in the Tonkin Gulf in the following year.[113]

(2) For the Spratly Islands. The Spratlys are in the far south of the South China Sea. China has had several military conflicts with Vietnam and Philippines for the sovereignty of the Spratlys. In 1988, PLAN marines and Vietnamese soldiers engaged at Johnson Reef in the Spratly Islands, and several Vietnamese boats were sunk and over seventy sailors were killed, which ended in China's successful control of the reef.[114] In 1992, Vietnam accused China of landing troops on Da Luc Reef and then the PLAN seized almost twenty Vietnamese cargo ships transporting goods from Hong Kong for four months.[115] Moreover, regarding the problem of the Spratlys between China and the Philippines, two PLAN warships once occupied Philippines-claimed Mischief Reef (Meiji Jiao) in 1995, and then the Filipino military evicted the Chinese in March and destroyed Chinese markers.[116] In 1996, PLAN vessels engaged in a ninety-minute gun battle with a Filipino navy gunboat near Capones Island. In April 1997, the Filipino navy ordered a Chinese speedboat and two fishing boats to leave Scarborough Shoal, and then removed Chinese markers and raised its own flag. For this, China sent three warships to survey Filipino-occupied Panata and Kota Islands.[117]

While China continues to modernise its military and maritime force, the PLAN has not engaged in any significant maritime military clash after its serious confrontation with Vietnam in the Spratlys in 1988. A rational explanation for this is that China's national development needs a steady international environment in which security is Beijing's important national interest, instead of military conflicts. In addition, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and the UNCLOS, China's military behaviour is constrained; hence, strategic deterrence and diplomacy

[113] Austin, *China's Ocean Frontier*, p. 81.
[114] Sun Xiao, et al., pp. 415-18.
[115] 'South China Sea Tables and Maps,' *Energy Information Administration: Official Energy Statistics from the U.S. Government*. (September 2003). Available from <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/schinatab.html>. Accessed on 5 April 2008.
[116] It began when several Filipino fishermen reported to their government that they had been forcibly detained by the PLAN at Mischief Reef for over a week. After that, the Filipino government sent reconnaissance jets and discovered that the Chinese navy was close to completing a compound which appeared to contain military barracks and a satellite dish. This discovery led to increased tensions between China and ASEAN, of which the Philippines is a member. See Austin, *China's Ocean Frontier*, p. 81; and refer to Ang Cheng Guan, 'The South China Sea Dispute Re-visited,' IDSS Working Paper, August 1999, pp. 8-13.
[117] 'South China Sea Tables and Maps,' *op cit*.

have become top priorities for resolving maritime disputes, rather than the use of armed force.

5.5 Summary: Strategic Appraisal of China's Offshore Active Defence

No navigation is achievable without the guidance of a compass, which almost determines the direction of many successful voyages. Furthermore, the culture of using a compass also greatly influences the range of maritime activities. For China, the compass of a continental-oriented strategic culture obviously guides the strategic direction and range of China's defence-oriented maritime strategy—its 'Offshore Active Defence.'

According to the evolution of the Chinese offshore defence strategy, China has been enlarging its naval power from its eastern littoral to the nearby western Asia-Pacific Ocean since the 1980s. With China's rapid rise as a regional power in the Asia-Pacific, it has had different strategic goals on practical and ideological levels. Practically, its strategic purposes are no more than its economic security, national integrity, sea routes and energy supply (Refer to Appendix D). Ideologically, its strategic purpose is to become a sea power with Chinese characteristics in East Asia. Accordingly, if China desires to become a sea power in terms of comprehensive national power at sea, it still needs to have a powerful politico-economic strength to support a blue-water maritime strategy, plus a large and balanced navy. Ocean consciousness, or maritime culture, is an inevitable element of constructing Chinese sea power.

For the PLAN to be considered a ocean-going navy, it should be able to exert control over the seas close to China's shoreline, including the East China Sea and the South China Sea, and to deny access to sea routes near China's coasts—such as the Sea of Japan, the Philippine Sea, and some parts of the northern Pacific Ocean—against any other navy. In this regard, 'green-water navy' may be a better term to describe the PLAN with the capability of operating beyond China's immediate coastlines, achieving limited strategic tasks at a distance from China, and possibility

inflicting damage on intruding navies and air forces.

The growth of China's green-water fleets, under the guidelines of China's offshore active defence strategy, shows that Beijing is not ready to develop global long-range power projection capabilities as Liu defines them. Rather, Beijing seems to be constructing a navy geared to achieving asymmetric sea denial capabilities on its immediate periphery for the purpose of defending its emerging maritime interests and resolving the large problem of island sovereignty. It is doing this by establishing surface fleets of large displacement with sophisticated AAW and ASW capabilities, and maintaining a large modern submarine fleet with strategic nuclear weapon systems.

Finally, Beijing's transition in military doctrine is based on the change of the international security setting, threat recognition, and the nature of warfare. Although China still sees Dengist limited war as the nature of modern warfare, it has been adding high-tech conditions for PLA build-up in the age of information. Nonetheless, the definition of China's naval doctrine of offshore active defence is still the same as Liu's, which has been guiding the PLAN since its formulation in 1985. Can China shift from its land-based offshore defence to a sea-based 'distant ocean offence' for future warfare at sea? This problem largely depends on Beijing's concept of security and potential threats at sea, on sustainable economic strength, available military technologies, the transformation of Chinese continental strategic culture, and the quality of PLA leadership. These elements will also determine whether China can build a blue-water navy or not.

Chapter 6
Aspiration for Far Sea Defence

The oceans in the landscape of international politics have become more and more significant. In the post-Cold War era, the phenomenon of globalisation has greatly spurred burgeoning maritime international trade. Increasingly, many Asia-Pacific major actors (including the US, Japan, China, and even India) have embraced the Mahanian outlook of sea power through using their navies to project their politico-economic-military influence overseas. These powers have unquenchable thirst for energy imports, which has impelled the extension of the SLOCs and EEZs. The export-driven maritime economies of East Asia have created a vast demand for the development of shipping and shipyards. Given the prosperous maritime economic environment in the Asia-Pacific of the twenty-first century, any conflict, war, or terrorist activities will be seen as the major factors contributing to regional insecurity in peacetime. With the decreasing likelihood of military clashes between nations, regional conflict has gradually been replaced by cooperation. In the domain of maritime security, the importance of the navy's diplomatic role has become higher than its military role. East Asian navies have been drawn more deeply into constabulary work.

It is inevitable that the desire of many regional countries for blue-water maritime strategy is directly connected to their national comprehensive power. Under the trend of developing far sea strategy for competition over maritime resources, Beijing has no reason to continue its maritime strategic guideline of offshore defence in terms of the Maoist active defence. Instead, it should plan a new far sea defence strategy to secure its vast maritime frontier and resources and to manage any potential threats abroad. China's east littoral today is the centre of the Asia-Pacific economy. To safeguard this vulnerable coastal economic zone, Beijing is enlarging its maritime realm from its coastline to the high seas, creating a strategic buffer zone by strengthening and extending their naval power. Compared to China's naval capabilities in the 1980s, the PLAN now is no longer a collection of floating junks or limited coastguards, but a formidable regional war machine in the Asia-Pacific

maritime region. With the confirmation of China's seaward grand strategy, the old strategic guideline of offshore active defence was modified to accommodate new, advanced concepts of national maritime energy and economic security. There have been important improvements in all areas of China's grand strategy.

For Beijing, the far sea defence is a new concept, which emphasises multi-dimensional precision attacks beyond the first island chain and operations outside China's claimed EEZs to protect its national strategic interests, adding a layer of strategic depth within which to defend China's coastline.[1] This chapter aims to examine the ambition of a sea-power-minded China for far sea defence through analysing the possibility of a Chinese Blue-Water Maritime Strategy in the Asia-Pacific. Overall, a sound exploration of this question requires a multi-faceted analysis rather than just a one-dimensional explanation. According to the approach of sectoral analysis, this chapter falls into four sections. First, the political section of the chapter explores how China applies its worldview of '*hexie shijie*' (Harmonious World) or '*he-he zhuyi*' (Peace-Cooperationalism) to deal with its multi-faceted maritime security. The second, economic section analyses China's 'Malacca Dilemma' and its maritime energy and economic security. Following this, a socio-cultural section analyses the maritime soft power of China in terms of the Chinese strategic culture. A concluding military section examines China's naval political factionalism to help understand the PLAN debate between the 'Aircraft Carrier School' and the 'Submarine School' regarding the preferable direction of naval build-up toward an effective blue-water navy.

6.1 Political Analysis: China's Emerging Strategic Objective of Sea Power Status

That China's rise in world politics relies heavily on its thriving economic development since the Dengist era is undeniable. With China's politico-economic rise at sea, Beijing requires a China-centric regionalist approach and a strong military to

[1] Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress—Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008* (Washington DC: US Department of Defense, 2009), p. 18.

match its rising international status. Given China's status as an Asia-Pacific great power, its international performance reveals the essential factors of both peaceful and military threats to the region. Recently, Beijing's efforts to promote the Chinese security concept of a 'harmonious world'; its more active participation in worldwide peace-keeping activities, regional security dialogues, and certain pronouncements of PRC leaders can be taken as evidence for more peaceful intentions. However, largely increased military budgets, the acquisition of more state-of-the-art weapons systems, and certain expressions of the leadership argue for China's recognition of potential threats. Although in recent years Beijing has been energetically promoting the Confucian worldview of peaceful cooperationalism to Asia, China's actions, most notably its military build-up, have caused many regional countries to question the validity of such peaceful proclamations.

6.1.1 Beijing's Perspective of a Harmonious World and Multi-faceted Maritime Security

From Beijing's viewpoint, the international system at the beginning of the twenty-first century is still a continued structure of 'one superpower with many great powers.' Under this structure, there are two obvious features in China's security environment. The first feature is that China's landward territorial disputes with Central Asian countries and Russia have almost been resolved. In contrast, maritime conflicts in China's periphery have been emerging as an issue. The second is that national maritime security is potentially more serious than continental security, and China's current security setting has been described as a situation of '*luwen haidong, luhuan haijin*' (land-oriented stability and sea-oriented fragility).[2] For a stable maritime security setting, Beijing is trying to adopt bilateral and multilateral diplomatic policies in line with traditional Confucian ideas of harmony to reduce any threat to China's development.

Due to the formation of an international multipolar system under globalisation and informationalisation in the post-Cold War period, the Chinese concept of national security has been altered from emphasising 'traditional security' to stressing 'non-traditional security'. The former is defined as a national freedom from threat and

[2] Gao Zichuan, 'Analysis of the Basic Situation of China's Peripheral International Environment,' *Dangdai yatai* [Contemporary Asia-Pacific], No. 1 (2004), pp. 4-8.

destruction due to military conflicts and is mainly based on political and military security in the Cold War period. Conversely, non-traditional security is defined as a broad national freedom from multi-dimensional threats of non-military power since the collapse of the USSR in 1991. Concretely, non-traditional security is also a comprehensive security package including economic, social, cultural and global security.[3] In order to manage contemporary threats (both traditional and non-traditional) and establish a reasonable new international order, the Beijing authorities constructed a 'New Security Concept' for China's 'Peaceful Rise' diplomacy in the mid-1990s under Jiang Zemin's period.[4] Subsequently, the new security concept has gradually transformed into the latest diplomatic concept of 'harmonious world' in Hu's era.

Beijing's recent worldview originated from the idea of building a 'harmonious society.' This was first used in the report entitled 'The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Sets to Enhance Ruling Capabilities' of the Fourth Plenary Session of the CCP 16th Central Committee in 2004. This report stressed that the CCP must insist not only on enhancing its ruling capability to build a harmonious socialist society in China, but must also promote a peaceful foreign policy to manage international affairs.[5] Therefore, this internal concept was raised to the external level of Beijing's foreign policy. For example, the PRC National Secretary and President Hu openly proposed the 'harmonious world' idea to UN members at the 2005 UN 60th Anniversary Summit. Meanwhile, the PRC State Council Information Office (SCIO) published a white paper on 'China's Peaceful Development Road' at the end of the same year. From the statement in this white paper, there are several goals Beijing intends to reach for a 'harmonious world', which include upholding democracy and equality to attain coordination and cooperation, fairness and mutual benefit to achieve common development, tolerance and opening to achieve dialogue among civilisations.[6] The SCIO subsequently published a new paper entitled 'China's Harmonious Diplomacy'

[3] Yu Xiaofeng, Pan Yihe and Wang Jiangli, *Fei chuantong anqian kailun* [The Introduction of Non-Traditional Security] (Hangzhou: Hangzhou Renmin Press, 2006), pp. 49-52.
[4] Kai Shijin, 'Tuidong jianshe hexie shijie: zhongguo guojia anquan dazzhanlue' [Promoting building harmonious world: the grand strategy of China's national security], *Journal of Xi'an Politics Institute*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (February 2008), p. 11-13.
[5] Editor, 'The Chinese Communist Party Sets to Enhance Ruling Capabilities,' *China Daily*, 17 September 2004. Available from <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-09/17/content_375400.htm>. Accessed on 24 May 2008.
[6] The PRC State Council Information Office (SCIO), 'China's Peaceful Development Road,' *People's Daily*, December 2005, Beijing. Available from <http://english.peoples.com.cn/200512/22/print20051222_230059.htm>. Accessed on 25 May 2008.

in 2007.

As the PRC applies this 'harmonious world' concept as its new security approach, it has to be noticed that Beijing indeed desires to build its own status within the international order by promoting the peaceful value of Confucianism to the world. Although the above-mentioned harmonious world concept seems different from Jiang's new security concept, both ideas share a similar vision for a comprehensive regional security; China's preferred world order of peaceful coexistence is the major strategy to realise it. Ironically, this peaceful stance was not successful in dispelling widespread fears about China's rapid growing comprehensive national power in political, economic, military and even cultural fields. Since many Asia-Pacific countries still see rising China as a security threat and a major regional competitor, Beijing's worldview of a harmonious world looks like a false appearance as well as an impracticable political goal. That is because focusing on constructing a harmonious Asia for most Asia-Pacific countries is seemingly more pragmatic, and therefore more attractive, than just promoting a broad Chinese idea of harmonious world.

It is obvious that China's harmonious world concept is directly related to its national security approach that depends deeply on a stable environment. In order to prevent multi-dimensional threats from traditional and non-traditional sources, China must actively shape an independent security framework. Beijing's harmonious world notion and peaceful rise theory do not mean that China has already abandoned its views on the significance of traditional security,[7] but instead is emphasising the importance of a comprehensive national security. In China's developing strategic seaward orientation, Beijing is similarly not only anticipating military threats, but also non-military threats at sea. These threats definitely prompt China to think about a multi-faceted maritime security strategy to avoid all potential maritime threats.

The Chinese traditional security perception is concerned with a narrow sense of politico-military threat with the integration of sovereignty and territory as the most important and constant national strategic interest.[8] According to Chinese military academic circles, the US and Japanese definitions of national military threat do not

[7] Aki Mori, 'Rich Country, Strong Armed Forces? The Sources of China's Comprehensive National power,' (Special Issue: Taiwan's Role in the Future of Asia-Pacific Security and Peace) *Yatai yanjiu luntan* [Forum of Asia-Pacific Studies], Vol. 38 (December 2007), p. 36.
[8] Yan Xuetong, *Meiguo baquan yu zhongguo anquan* [American Hegemony and Chinese Security] (Tianjin: Tianjin Renmin Press, 2000), pp. 22-23.

include sovereignty as an unequivocal concern.[9] Nonetheless, the broader Chinese approach refers also to negative effects, such as danger and harm done to national interests, including state survival, territorial sovereignty and national security by another nation, especially Taiwan and the South China Sea issues.

Taiwan is, in essence, a very important traditional security interest for China's national development strategy at sea, and the South China Sea as well. Specifically, Taiwan is off the Chinese coast, is one of China's significant economic partners, and is also considered by an influential part of the Chinese people to be Chinese sovereign territory in terms of China's patriotism (while Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping and other CCP leaders once considered that this island was not so important for China in the 1930s).[10] Given Taiwan's increasing strategic significance for controlling far-reaching oceanic lifelines in East Asia, it is difficult to imagine that the US, or Japan, will allow China to control this island. In actual fact, Taiwan (given its US links) is likely to have an important role in containing China in this region, which could anger China and accelerate the security competition between Beijing and Washington.

Further, Beijing's claim of historic rights appears to be far wider, encompassing much of the South China Sea, but many Southeast Asian countries do not accept this argument, provoking many maritime disputes with China.[11] Since China cannot regain the sovereignty of the waters by military means (because of its focus on economic development), Beijing decided to seek what is less attractive than its original objective by promoting the rhetoric of 'leaving disputes aside and developing jointly' thus decreasing the maritime threats to sea-lanes and increasing common maritime security in this area.[12] As described above, China's maritime strategic consistency is directly associated with both issues that are the primary obstacles to Chinese maritime dominance.

The Chinese perception of politico-military threat can be encapsulated in two

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[9] Niu Tianjin and Zhang Shijiang, 'Rambling Talk on Military Threat,' *Jiefanjun bao* [PLA Daily], 21 September 1990, pp. 4-6.
[10] Alan M. Wachman, *Why Taiwan? Geo-strategic Rationales for China's Territorial Integrity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), pp. 84-90; and Edgar Snow, *Red Star over China* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1969, reprinted 1973), p. 110. These two books share a very important viewpoint that CCP leaders had no concept of a modern state and seaward perspective; thus they endorsed Taiwan's independence during Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan before the CCP came to power in 1949.
[11] Refer to Michael Richardson, *Energy and Geopolitics in the South China Sea: Implications for ASEAN and its Dialogue Partners*, ASEAN Studies Centre Report 8, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Studies (ISEAS), April 2009.
[12] Gerald Segal, 'East Asia and the 'Containment' of China,' *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (Spring 1996), p. 118.

main factors. On the one hand, fundamental conflicts of interest—such as opposing social systems and ideologies as well as disputes in economic interests, territorial and sea rights and interests—which are the preconditions for the rise of a threat. Conversely, this 'threat' must be supported by actual powerful military might, which is the condition for posing such a threat.[13] This extensive definition of military threat consequently provides an underlying principle for expanding PLA responsibilities and modernising its capabilities. The US and its allies have traditionally been seen as China's major security concern. For China's maritime security setting, however, India's rise in the Indian Ocean is also another of Beijing's security concerns. For energy security, New Delhi has become a peer competitor with Beijing for oil routes in the Indian Ocean. Even if Sino-Indian relationships have seen improved gradually since the late 1990s, India's rise as a dominant regional power in the Indian Ocean has become an unavoidable challenge to the security of China's oil transport.[14] US naval facilities on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean and on Changi in the Malacca Strait are a second concern,[15] which undoubtedly drives the enlargement of China's naval capabilities from coastal to blue-water expanses.

The level of non-traditional maritime threats, in contrast is broad, and includes economic and environmental threats. In general, these threats derive from the phenomenon of globalisation that has not only changed people's lifestyle around the world, but also shrunk the world into a 'global village'.[16] In this sense, the security distance among nations is gradually decreasing under the age of globalisation, so that a threat to one is a threat to all. In this new environment, one's security must rely upon coexistence; none can survive without a common international security environment. For China, its concern for non-traditional maritime threats includes terrorism, secessionism, energy struggle, and economic competition.[17] These threats are often related to China's seaward national development. In this context, the expansion of a blue-water maritime strategy with a deep-sea naval power has become the indispensable condition of maintaining China's maritime security.

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[13] Allen S. Whiting, 'The PLA and China's Threat Perceptions,' (Special Issue: China's Military in Transition), *The China Quarterly*, No. 146 (June 1996), p. 599.
[14] David Walgreen, 'China in the Indian Ocean Region: Lessons in PRC Grand Strategy,' *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (2006), p. 59.
[15] Jiang Hong and Wei Yuejiang, '100,000 US Troops in the Asia-Pacific Look for 'New Homes','*Guofang bao* [National Defence News], 10 June 2003, p. 1.
[16] Raymon Aron, *The Industrial Society: Three Essays on Ideology and Development* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), p. 7.
[17] Yu, *et al*. *Fei chuantong anqian kailun*, pp. 59-60.

For the needs of maritime security, both threat levels suggest that Beijing has sufficient reasons to continue strengthening its maritime strategic capabilities. In order to avoid the circumstances of a security dilemma, the Beijing authorities tactically cover up the fact of its rising maritime power by promoting the 'peaceful rise' theory and 'harmonious world' concept to Asia. However, will China's rise at sea be peaceful? This question is still a haze over the Asia-Pacific. While Beijing is trying to build a picture of an ascendant China contributing to the construction of a harmonious international society, it seems contradicted by the realist logic that states that the mightier a rising China is, the less threat it has to protect itself from.[18]

6.1.2 Rising Great Power Diplomacy under a Blue-water Perspective

In accordance with Beijing's recent vision of navalism, the PLAN would need to build a large blue-water fleet that projects its might well beyond the coasts of the East and South China Seas. Militarily, the Chinese navy has three military fleets with different strategic purposes in China's nearby seas. According to the original conception of three Chinese fleets in the early 1960s under Mao's leadership, the main strategic purpose of these premature fleets was predicated on the need for coastal security. Conversely, the PLAN is reinforcing its three fleets for three distinct strategic purposes. The first is to patrol the sea areas around Japan and Korea; the second is to push out into the second island chain in the Western Pacific; and the third is to protect the Malacca Strait and the SLOCs in the Indian Ocean.[19] For the third, the vulnerabilities of the seaborne trade of oil supplies from the Middle East have stimulated China to consider the strategic option of deploying a limited forward presence of naval units in the Indian Ocean. This shows that the significance of the Chinese navy in maintaining SLOCs is directly connected with China's energy security, which is necessary for its continuing rapid economic development (Refer to Appendix E). As the former USSR Admiral Sergey S. Gorshkov pointed out:

> One of the main qualities of modern naval forces is their universality. It is

[18] John Mearsheimer, 'The Rise of China Will Not Be Peaceful at All,' *The Australian*, 18 November 2005. Available from <http://johnmearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/P0014.pdf>. Accessed on 30 May 2008.
[19] David Lei, 'China's New Multi-Faceted Maritime Strategy,' *Orbis*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Winter 2008), p. 144.

> expressed in the ability of these forces to solve multiple tasks. The development of the means of armed struggle at sea has not merely raised the effectiveness of the operations of the fleet and has not only widened the sphere of its possible use, but has also continuously influenced those tasks which have fallen to it. … In considering historically changes in tasks solved by the fleets, one cannot but notice that the most 'ancient' of them, retaining its importance even in present-day conditions, are the conflicts on sea communications and sea landings.[20]

From the direction of the PLAN build-up on the high seas for protecting seaborne trade, it is clear that China's vital national interests are almost all located in the maritime Asia-Pacific realm. This is a strong motivating force for constructing China's blue-water maritime strategy. Accordingly, it would be better to say that where there is a Chinese national interest, there is the disposition of the PLAN. This recent Chinese blue-water ambition in Asia is not just a symbol of peaceful rise but also a sign of maritime expansionism, although Beijing emphasises that China will never seek hegemony through outright military expansion.[21] Given the top priority of national economic security, in realist terms, China will strive to be the strongest great power for its security setting. China's rising great power status produces, predictably, a corresponding growing hegemonic ambition with the underlying principle that China does not want peer competitors who might pose a threat to its security. In this light, China will try to maximise the national comprehensive power gap between itself and its neighbours and ensure no regional country can threaten it. This realist rationale of international politics can also be recognised in the history of Ming China (1368-1644). For example, the strongest Ming hegemony did not want a powerful Mongol empire and other disobedient tributaries as its neighbours.[22] The US, likewise, as a contemporary global hegemon, also prefers a militarily weak Canada and Mexico on its borders.[23]

This realist viewpoint definitely offers insights into the relationship between China's rise and its hegemonic ambition. Being a regional hegemon seems to be a possible way for China to solve the problem of sustaining national seaward economic development and energy security. In this standpoint, the Waltzian realist argument can

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[20] Sergey G. Gorshkov, *The Sea Power of the State* (Annapolis: US Naval Institute Press, 1976), p. 276.
[21] According to 'Jiang Zemin's Report at 16th Party Congress,' *People's Daily*, 18 November 2002. Available from <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200211/18/eng20021118_106983.shtml>. Accessed on 2 June 2008.
[22] Refer to Louise Levathes, *When China Ruled the Seas: The Treasure Fleet of the Dragon Throne 1405-1433*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994).
[23] Mearsheimer, 'The Rise of China Will Not Be Peaceful at All.'

explain Beijing's internal aspiration for a hegemonic status but cannot explain its pragmatic diplomatic behaviour of actively promoting regional multilateral security cooperation. In recent years, China has begun to take a more constructive approach toward regional and global affairs and has embraced much of the current constellation of international institutes, rules and norms as a means to pursue its national interests. China joined the ASEAN Regional Forum in 1994, established the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001, and has participated in the Six-Party Talks regarding the North Korea problem since 2003. More broadly, the establishment of Beijing's multi-diplomacy since the mid-1990s has helped the country to be seen as an emerging great power with varied interests and responsibilities in Asia, and not as the victimised developing nation of the Maoist and Dengist eras.[24] Importantly, according to Jiang Zemin's Report at the 16th Party Congress in 2002, he stated that China must enhance its solidarity and cooperation with the region.[25] Subsequently, this idea of regional security cooperation has been confirmed as the new official guideline of Beijing's foreign policy.

In Beijing's thinking on regional security cooperation, there are three primary dynamics: external pressure, national interest; and international institutions. For a start, external pressure can push China to participate in multilateral security agreements for maintaining its own security interests. Taking US Asia-Pacific strategy in the mid-1990s as an example, the US strengthened their strategic partnerships and military alliances with Japan and Australia, which caused a potential threat situation to China Therefore, multilateral security cooperation is the best approach for Beijing to reduce the pressure of US politico-military domination in the region,[26] and to combat the US policy of containing China.[27]

In so far as national interest is concerned, it is the key premise of realist discourse that respective struggling for national interests is an international zero-sum game. However, in this age of globalisation, pursuing national security interests seems to rely less on self-reliance than on multilateral cooperation. This situation also

[24] Evan S. Medeiros and Taylor M. Fravel, 'China's New Diplomacy,' *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 6 (December 2003), pp. 35-36.
[25] Military of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 'Full text of Jiang Zemin's Report at 16th Party Congress,' on 8 November 2002. Available from <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/topics/3698/t18872.htm>. Accessed on 3 June 2008.
[26] Gary Klintworth, 'China's Evolving Relationship with APEC,' *International Journal*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (1995), pp. 514-15.
[27] Robert G. Sutter, *China's Rise in Asia: Promises and Perils* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), p. 36.

pushes Beijing to secure its growing international interests by selectively agreeing to multilateral security cooperation.[28] Moreover, the influence of international institutions should not be overlooked. Since the Dengist era, China has started to join many international institutions for security cooperation, which has also pulled China toward the process of international socialisation. From this viewpoint, China's attitude toward international cooperation is not due to the CCP leadership's preference but thanks to international institutions providing China with a cooperative setting and motivation.[29]

Largely, China's continuing maritime strategic expansion is rooted in maritime economic security and development requirements, since these are both vital parts of national development. This is also the base of the evolution of Chinese blue-water diplomacy for being an Asian sea power.[30] However, the complexity of international relations seems to have greatly limited Beijing's realist behaviour in Asia. For the sake of maritime security, Beijing pragmatically adopts regional security multilateralism, combined with the harmonious world concept, to increase mutual trust and to strengthen mutual support for shaping its security environment in the Asia-Pacific region and for its ambitious rise in maritime comprehensive national power.[31] Alternatively, perhaps it would be more correct to say that China now desires to consider both sides at the same time.

6.2 Economic Analysis: The Top Strategic Priority of Economic Security

The western military strategic thought of Mahan and Jomini shows that maritime might, economic development and international politics are inextricably linked with each other when it comes to pursuing national sea power and that controlling sea lanes

[28] Jiang Zhaijiu, 'Zhongguo dichu duobian hezuo de dongyin' [The dynamics of China's regional multilateral security cooperation], *Guoji zhengzhi kexue* [Chinese Journal of International Politics], No. 1 (2006), pp. 5-6.
[29] Alastair I. Johnston and Paul Evens, 'China's Engagement with Multi Security Institutes,' in Alastair I. Johnston and Robert S. Ross, eds, *Engage China—The Management of An Emerging Power* (New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 235-72.
[30] Ni Lexiong, 'Shehui zhuanxing yu junshi xiandaihua' [Social transformation and military modernization], *Junshi lishi yanjiu* [Military Historical Studies], No. 3 (2002), p. 86.
[31] Jiang, 'Zhongguo dichu duobian hezuo de dongyin,' pp. 1-2.

as avenues for seaborne trade and commerce has become increasingly essential in worldwide economic competition.[32] From this perspective, geo-economics at the dawn of the twenty-first century will dominate geo-politics; war is the continuation of politics, and more directly, it is the continuation of economics according to Clausewitzian logic. However, under the principle of comparative advantage, the likelihood of war caused by economic disputes seems to have decreased, since the benefit of economic cooperation is greater than that of military conflict. Since China's rise is highly dependent on economic security, a steady Asia-Pacific environment (where Beijing exerts great influence over the most vital foreign policy interests at China's periphery) is critically important.[33] If economic development is the top strategic priority, then international cooperation provides a beneficial setting for the Chinese with respect to creating economic advantages. Hence, economic cooperation with the region has gradually become the inevitable goal of the Beijing authorities since the mid-1990s.

6.2.1 Blooming Regional Economy and Urgent Energy Security

Shaping a security setting through decreasing the perception of China's threat in Asia is the major condition of China's peaceful rise to great power status. Jiang Zemin and his successor Hu Jintao in recent years have endeavoured to emphasise China's multidirectional cooperation and good neighbour policy for building China a positive regional image. They have played down China's global ambitions and adopted a relatively low profile on most international affairs not directly bearing on China's interests in Asia. It may be nearer the truth to say that the lower the ambition China has the fewer obstacles there are in its path toward politico-economic ascendancy. This is what Henry Kissinger has to say on this matter:

> When China affirms its cooperative insertions and denies a military challenge, it expresses less a preference than the strategic realities. The challenge posed by China for the medium-term future will, in all likelihood, be political and economic, not military.[34]

[32] Michael I. Handel, 'Corbett, Clausewitz, and Sun Tzu,' *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (Fall 2000), pp. 106-23.
[33] Edward Friedman, 'China's Dilemma on Using Military Force' in Edward Friedman, ed., *China's rise, Taiwan's Dilemmas, and International Peace* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 205-26.
[34] Henry Kissinger, 'China Shifts Centre of Gravity,' *The Australian*, 13 June 2005. Available from <www.taiwansecurity.org/news/2005/AS-130605.htm>. Accessed on 7 June 2008.

The rapid economic modernisation of China over the past decade has resulted in a stable dependence on seaborne trade as a basic support in fostering its growth and investment in maritime-related industries since the 1980s. Rather, tighter interdependence with the worldwide economy provides extraordinary chances for China to develop new geo-economic and political ties in the Asia-Pacific. Importantly, Beijing's growing blue-water maritime ambition and PLAN's capabilities for securing the Chinese vital maritime economic interests might trigger a tense situation in the regional maritime realm. Predictably, when the Chinese economy becomes ever more dependent on overseas markets and energy supplies to maintain its remarkable development, these trends will definitely affect the Chinese leadership's strategic thought about maritime defence and naval doctrine for maritime security.

China is a great regional economic powerhouse with the fastest growth of gross national product in the world. According to *China Statistical Yearbook 2007*, China's economic indexes of Gross Domestic Income (GDI) and Gross National Product (GNP) demonstrate that China's economic growth in 2006 was more than twice what it had been in 2000. Given the steep rise of China's recent GDI and GNP, China's national defence expenditure has also undergone a rapid increase, while the percentage of NDE in total government expenditure is maintained at approximately 7.6 per cent, as Table 12 demonstrates. Another thing that is important for China's NDE is that some military spending is hidden by items of 'science and technology' expenditure; this part is very difficult to estimate correctly. Therefore, the data of NDE from China's official statistics only provide part of the total picture of its growing military spending. As long as China's economy continues to thrive, its military budget will continue to increase.

Table 12: China's Economy and Defence Expenditure, 2000-2006

Indicators\Years (100 million RMB)	**2000**	**2002**	**2004**	**2006**
Gross Domestic Income (GDI)	98,000.5	119,095.7	159,586.7	211,808.0
Gross National Product (GNP)	99,214.6	120,332.7	159,878.3	210,871.0
Government Expenditure (GE)	15,886.5	22,053.2	28,486.9	40,422.7
National Defence Expenditure (NDE)	1,207.6	1,707.9	2,200.0	2,979.4

NDE as Percentage of GE	7.6%	7.7%	7.7%	7.3%

Source: Data from State Statistical Bureau, *China Statistical Yearbook 2007* (Beijing: China Statistics Press, 2007), p. 57; pp. 279-81.

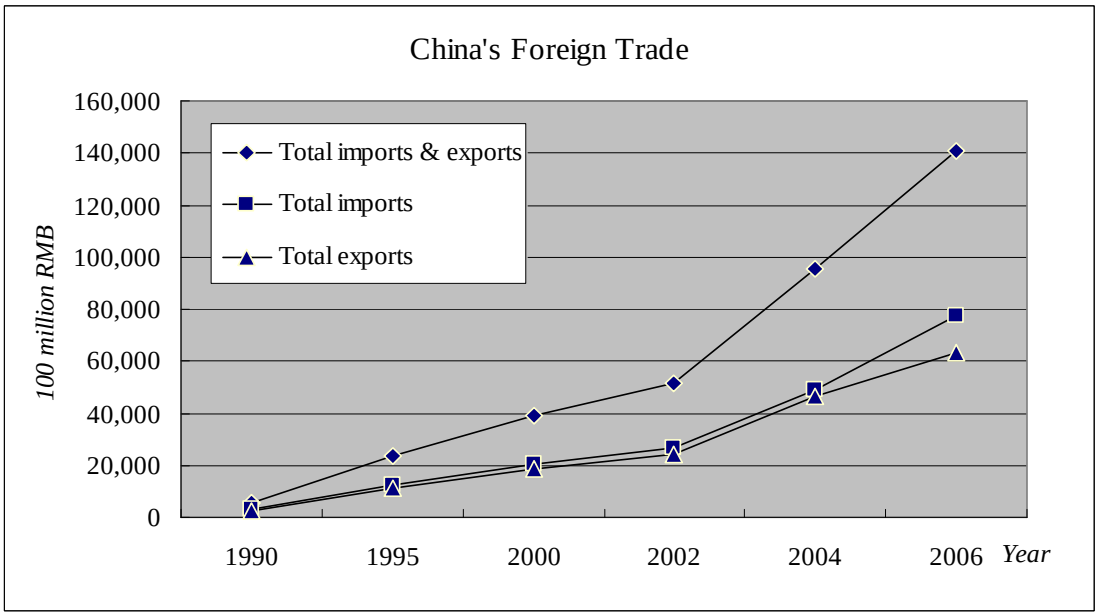
Respecting the current economic growth, China has a population of about 1.3 billion and will reach 1.5 billion by 2030. Although China has a huge proportion of the world's population, its economy is still just one-seventh the size of the US's and one-third the size of Japan's. [35] Because of the rapid modernisation and industrialisation, the insufficiency of natural resources and energy available to support such an enormous population is increasingly an obstacle to the enlargement of China's comprehensive national power. Hence, Beijing must continue to focus on dealing with the shortage in resources and strengthening the security of its fragile economy through aggressively developing its maritime economy in the twenty-first century. Most importantly, this dynamic of the expansion of the maritime economy has greatly pushed China to collaborate with global economic systems and international trade since 2000.

As for China's foreign trade, there was an increase in the total value of imports and exports from 556 billion RMB in 1990 to 14,097 billion RMB in 2006, with a steep rise after 2002.[36] China's total foreign trade in 2007 was almost 25 times the value of 1990, with the value of China's total imports becoming gradually higher than total exports since the 1990s, as Figure 2 shows. In 2004, China's imports from the ASEAN countries increased by 33.1 per cent, from Japan by 27.3 per cent, from India by 80 per cent, from the EU by 28 per cent and from the US by 31.9 per cent.[37] This points out an important economic phenomenon: that the growth of China's foreign trade will continue and will become the main dynamic of its economic growth. Regarding regional economic cooperation, in 1997 China (together with South Korea and Japan) inaugurated a new framework for regional cooperation in the ASEAN+3 summit track. In November 2004, China and ASEAN signed the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area agreement that makes ASEAN China's fourth-largest trade partner.[38] China and ASEAN have also agreed to discuss an agreement for a regional free-trade

[35] Zheng Bijian, 'China's 'Peaceful Rise' to Great-Power Status,' *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 5 (September/October 2005), p. 19.
[36] PRC State Statistical Bureau, *China Statistical Yearbook 2007* (Beijing: China Statistics Press, 2007), p. 724.
[37] Zheng, 'Peaceful Rise' to Great-Power Status,' p. 24.
[38] Matthew Wheeler, 'China Expands Its Southern Sphere of Influence,' *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 17, No. 6 (1 June 2005), p. 41.

zone by 2010 and this might create the largest free-trade zone in the Asia-Pacific, comprising 1.7 billion people, with a total GDP of two trillion USD and trade worth over 1.2 trillion USD. It is estimated that the free-trade agreement could increase exports from Southeast Asia to China by 48 per cent and exports from China to ASEAN by 55 per cent.[39] Viewed in this light, in brief, the relationship between China and Southeast Asia can be regarded as a security relationship of economic interdependence.

Figure 2: China's Foreign Trade—Total Imports and Exports, 1990-2006



Source: Data from State Statistical Bureau, *China Statistical Yearbook 2007* (Beijing: China Statistics Press, 2007), pp. 723-24.

Intensive economic-industrial development will cause the deficiency of national internal resources, and historically can be seen as the major dynamic of national expansion for external resources. The expansionism of British sea power during the period of the industrial revolution in the final quarter of the eighteenth century is a good example. The cause and effect relations between economic development and seaward national behaviour have become an historical generalisation in the field of international relations, which also seems to be an appropriate way to explain the Chinese policies regarding energy security—oil supply especially. Currently, about 80 per cent of petroleum entering China comes by sea, through the South China Sea via

[39] Evelyn Goh, *Developing the Mekong—Regionalism and Regional Security in China and Southeast Asian Relations*, Adelphi Paper 387 (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 14.

the Strait of Malacca and the Indian Ocean from Africa and the Middle East.[40] This huge demand for oil has made China the world's second largest oil importer after the US.

The degree of dependence on foreign oil supply is a noticeable index estimating national energy security. As oil imports increase, a country becomes more vulnerable to maritime security threats. China's insecurity is mainly caused by its dependence upon unfettered access to overseas energy resources and trade, passing through the sea routes. For the urgent concern of maritime energy security, China has been exploring possibilities for land energy transport, thus diversifying energy imports, since the 1990s. These diplomatic measures include joining the regional project of ASEAN Mekong Basin Regional Development Cooperation, which now features importantly in the area of economic cooperation between China and ASEAN.[41] This project is a gigantic system of economic corridors based on an all-weather road network that will connect all mainland Southeast Asian countries and China's two Southwest provinces, Guangxi and Yunnan. This system will offer China strategic depth and be crucial to its prospective maritime geo-strategic position. In the long-term, this project will facilitate Chinese access to the port of Mawlamyine in Burma and open an overland route not dependent on the Strait of Malacca in the Indian Ocean for energy security by 2012.[42]

Meanwhile, to minimise the potential risk to energy security, Beijing is planning to diversify transportation across alternative channels, and from different countries; projects include the establishment of a canal and pipeline across the Kra Isthmus in southern Thailand, and an oil pipeline from Sittwe in Burma to Kunming in Yunnan Province of China,[43] and cooperation with India by sharing jointly in future oil and gas exploration in Kazakhstan and other countries in Central Asia.[44] Nevertheless, it remains to be seen whether these approaches might replace the strategic importance of the Malacca Strait for China's economic energy security and evolution in the future.

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[40] Wu Lei, *Zhongguo shiyou anquan* [China's Oil Security] (Beijing: China Social Science Press, 2003), pp. 120-121.
[41] Rodolfo Severino, *Southeast Asia in Search of an ASEAN Community: Insights from the Former ASEAN Secretary-General* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2006), p. 54.
[42] Goh, *Developing the Mekong*, pp. 28-29.
[43] Zhang Xuegang, 'Southeast Asia and Energy: Gateway to Stability,' *China Security*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (2007), pp. 21-22.
[44] Wu, *Zhongguo shiyou anquan*, p. 150.

6.2.2 'Malacca Dilemma' and 'String of Pearls'

Beijing is facing a strategic dilemma in framing its future energy security. While China has abundant coal resources, it has so far had difficulty finding abundant oil or gas. China's coal mines are located a considerable distance from the main source of demand for energy and require extensive transportation. Coal has quite limited utility for infrastructure development and accounts for much of China's air pollution. Conversely, switching to oil and gas will involve extensive investments in infrastructure and will increase China's reliance on energy imports by sea from the Persian Gulf via the Malacca Strait to China.[45] This means that China's energy security would be controlled by other potential rivals in wartime, if China cannot build a blue-water fleet and multiple steps to secure its maritime energy supply.[46] For example, Beijing fears that the garrison of the US Navy's 7th fleet in Changi naval base in Singapore might threat China's oil security in the Malacca Strait.[47] This complicated situation for Beijing is so-called China's 'Malacca Dilemma', and it is clear that the Chinese economy still cannot escape from the heavy dependence upon maritime energy and resources transported through the Malacca Strait in the short-term.

The Malacca Strait is, geographically, a narrow channel between Malaysia and Indonesia, and is the shortest route between the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Due to its unique features and location, it has become one of the world's most important channels, and controls almost one-fourth of total global trade. Now, China is the heaviest user of this strait; nearly 60 per cent of China's crude oil imports travel from the Middle East and Africa through the channel. Consequently, this strait has become Beijing's vital strategic chokepoint. In November 2003, the PRC President Hu Jintao declared that certain major powers (the US, and its allies) were bent on controlling the Strait of Malacca and called for the adoption of new strategies to alleviate the perceived vulnerability. Subsequently, the Chinese press devoted considerable

[45] Barry Eichengreen, Charles Wyplosz and Yung Chul Park, eds, *China, Asia, and the New World Economy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 8-15.
[46] Economically, some authors argue that the biggest threat against China's energy security is the worldwide soaring oil prices, rather than an embargo or blockage. However, China does not yet actually have the capabilities to ensure the security of maritime energy transport and still requires international cooperation to support a maritime security setting.
[47] Li Xiaojun, 'The influence of Sea Power on China's Oil Security,' *Guoji luntan* [International Forum] (Beijing), Vol. 6, No. 4 (July 2004), p. 18.

attention to the country's Malacca dilemma.[48]

In terms of cost-effectiveness, the Malacca Strait will remain a major oil shipping route simply because of its cost, because it avoids the additional time, fuel and ships, required to use alternative maritime routes such as the Lombok Strait, or even circumnavigating Australia. Recognising this reality, the Malacca Strait is still China's first choice for maritime energy and trade transport. Undeniably, China's heavy dependence on the Malacca Strait has become an important economic-strategic concern of the Beijing authorities in recent decades. The highlight of this worry is the vulnerability of seaborne energy imports, particularly their oil supply. China today still lacks a powerful ocean-going fleet with enough advanced capabilities to protect its SLOCs. Thus, the Chinese government fears that merchant ships carrying energy resources into China could be interdicted by antagonistic naval forces (such as the US Navy), by terrorism or by regional pirates, during a national security crisis.[49] Concretely, Beijing believes this conflict scenario would be caused by the US in the event of a conflict over the Taiwan issue,[50] or by the rapidly modernising Indian Navy in the event of a conflict over SLOCs in the Indian Ocean.[51] Beijing also distrusts Japan because of historical hostility and worries about the capabilities of the Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Force for energy resources in the East China Sea.[52] Importantly, these scenarios drive much of China's blue-water strategy, and modernisation of its naval and air forces.

China's growing demand for oil imports also benefits its oil import infrastructure and shipbuilding industry. In 2005, only Qingdao, Zhoushan and Shuidong ports could directly berth tankers displacing approximately 200,000 deadweight tonnes of capacity (DWT), such as very large crude carriers (VLCC) that deliver crude from Africa and the Middle East. Consequently, China is rapidly preparing specialised facilities at China's southeast littoral ports (such as Ningbo,

[48] Shi Hongtao, 'China's Dilemma of 'Malacca Strait',' *Zhongguo qingnian bao* [China Youth Daily], 15 June 2004. Available from <http://zqb.cyol.com/content/2004-06/15/content_888233.htm>. Accessed on 10 June 2008.
[49] Ian Storey, 'China's 'Malacca Dilemma',' *China Brief*, Vol. 6, Iss. 8, (12 April 2006), p. 4.
[50] Wu Lei and Shen Qinyu, 'Will China go to War over Oil,' *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol, 169, No. 3 (1 April 2006), p. 38.
[51] Chen Angang and Wu Min, 'Malacca: America's Coveted Strategic Outpost,' *Xiandai chuanjian* [Modern Ships], December 2004, pp. 11-14.
[52] Andrew S. Erickson and Gabe Collins, 'Beijing's Energy Security Strategy: The Significance of a Chinese State-Owned Tanker Fleet,' *Orbis*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (Fall 2007), p. 670.

Quanzhou and Maoming) to manage over 200,000 DWT oil tanks.[53] In addition, connecting oil ports with industrial parks throughout the country has become a major concern that prompts Beijing to improve its internal energy transport systems and facilities, such as shipyards, state-owned tanker fleets, harbours, super highways and pipelines.

Likewise, the strong economic incentive of importing oil motivates the speedy development of China's shipbuilding industry that upholds China's entire heavy industries. According to CCP-owned *China Daily*, Beijing is worried that around 85 per cent of China's total oil imports are transported by foreign-flag tankers, and decided to have more than 60 per cent of oil imports carried by Chinese-flag tankers.[54] For sufficient energy supply and security, China is expanding its own state-owned tanker fleet. In Beijing's perspective, the shipbuilding industry is a strategic industry with implications for both economic security and military defence and is in need of special supervision and support.[55]

To resolve the Malacca dilemma, Beijing has adopted a 'string-of-pearl' strategic approach to support its regional position with the economic-military intention of protecting sea channels for oil imports and serving broader maritime security.[56] This strategic term first appeared in the report 'Energy Futures in Asia', in the Pentagon's Office of Net Assessment by Booz-Allen Hamilton in 2005. The author uses this term to describe how China is deploying several naval ports as the access points (pearls) along its SLOCs (a string) all the way to the Middle East.[57] Meanwhile, under this maritime strategy, Beijing is enhancing diplomatic ties with regional countries and developing blue-water naval capabilities for its maritime energy security.[58] In the eyes of the US, essentially, this Chinese strategy is a challenge to its politico-economic hegemony in the South China Sea, the Indian

[53] *Ibid*., p. 675.
[54] Xin Dingding, 'More Oil Tankers Taking to the Sea,' *China Daily*, 14 June 2007. Available from <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2007-06/14/content_893809.htm>. Accessed on 16 June 2008.
[55] Andrew S. Erickson and Gabriel Collins, 'China's Maritime Evolution: Maritime and Commercial Factors,' *Pacific Focus*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Fall 2007), p. 52.
[56] Juli MacDonald, Amy Donahue and Bethany Danyluk, *Energy Futures in Asia*, Booz Allen Hamilton report sponsored by the Director of Net Assessment, November 2004, p. 15.
[57] Christopher J. Pehrson, *String of Pearls: Meeting the Challenge of China's Rising Power across the Asian Littoral* (Carlisle, PA: SSI, U.S. Army War College, June 2006), pp. 3-4. Available from <http://*www.StrategicStudiesInstitute.army.mil/*>. Accessed on 17 June 2008.
[58] Lawrence Spinetta, 'Cutting China's 'String of Pearls',' *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 132, No. 10 (October 2006), p. 40.

Ocean and even in the Middle East.[59]

The Chinese strategy for seaward energy security involves constructing and upgrading ports and naval facilities in Pakistan's Gwadar and Bangladesh's Chittagong. Crucially, China's naval facilities in Gwadar have caused many concerns, since this port suggests two critical purposes. Economically, this port could act as a strategic stake for China to counter a hypothetical US blockade of the Malacca Strait during a crisis over Taiwan. This 'string-of-pearls' strategy is also supplemented by the aforementioned project of the Mekong system, for which China is building a transportation corridor between Yunnan Province of China and the Bay of Bengal through Burma for the purpose of energy security. Militarily, this port provides China with a useful installation for monitoring commercial and military traffic passing through the Hormuz Strait. Added to this, China has opened a series of surveillance out sentries on islands belonging to Burma.[60] China also has a close economic-military tie with Burma and Cambodia, these links allowing China to build transport systems across both countries to the sea. Furthermore, given the improving Sino-Thai relationship, and subsequent military-security cooperation, China is considering building a canal in Thailand for supporting this strategy.[61]

China's economic powerhouse is the foundation of its internal and external transformation from a weak Asian power to a great power. As Paul Kennedy argues, 'there exists a dynamic for change, driven chiefly by economic and technological developments, which then impact upon social structures, political systems, military power, and the position of individual states and empires.'[62] Economics are, likewise, the driving force of the Chinese sea-power ambition. When a coastal nation embarks upon a process of shifting from an inward national economy to an outward national economy, the concern with national security will begin to encompass the sea; then people, government and army will start to pay attention to sea power. For China, developing landward energy transport construction cannot immediately reduce the strategic importance of the Malacca Strait for its economy. Developing the 'string-of-

[59] Lawrence Spinetta, *'The Malacca Dilemma'—Countering China's 'String of Pearls' with Land-Based Airpower* (Alabama, Maxwell Air Force Base: School of Advanced Air and Space Studies Air University, 2006), p. 6.
[60] *Ibid*., p.7.
[61] Ian Story, 'China and Thailand: Enhanced Military-Security Ties in the 21st Century,' *China Brief*, Vol. 8, Iss. 14 (3 July 2008), pp. 6-7.
[62] Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers—Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987), p. 439.

pearl' strategy without a doubt is still the primary approach for Beijing to resolve the Malacca dilemma, but this might trigger some future struggle.

6.3 Socio-Cultural Analysis: Maritime Soft Power under China's Charm Offensive

Shaping a maritime security environment under the shadow of a security dilemma only through pursuing military dominance is more of a loss than a gain for China's rise in the Asia-Pacific. The Beijing authorities know that China's peaceful rise to sea power status needs the support of Chinese 'soft power'—Confucianism and maritime strategic culture. The 'soft power' concept has recently been underlined by the Chinese government under Hu Jintao who called for enhancing the country's soft power (Chinese culture) in his crucial speech to the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2007.[63] The term was originally coined by Joseph Nye in the late 1980s to explain national culture as an invisible form of power that could influence others without presenting threats. According to Nye's definition, it is 'the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments', which 'arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals and policies'.[64] However, this is not a brand-new concept for examining national power according to the communist class-based worldview.

The concept of 'Cultural Hegemony' is a similar notion to 'soft power' and was advanced by Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) in the early twentieth century. This Marxist cultural conception is essentially a revision of historical materialism that emphasises the importance of culture in the relations between the proletariat and bourgeoisie. According to Gramsci, this term means:

> Every class tries to secure a governing position not only in public institutions but also in regard to the opinions, values, and standards

[63] Hu Jintao, 'Full Text of Hu Jintao's Report at 17th Party Congress,' *China View*, 15 October 2007. Available from <http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-10/24/content_6938749_6.htm>. Accessed on 19 June 2008.
[64] Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), p. 10.

> acknowledged by the bulk of society. The privileged classes in their time secured a position of hegemony in the intellectual as well as the political sphere; they subjugated the others by this means, and intellectual supremacy was a precondition of political rule. The main task of the workers in modern times was to liberate themselves spiritually from the culture of the bourgeoisie and the Church and to establish their own cultural values in such a way as to attract the oppressed and intellectual strata to themselves.[65]

Gramsci argued that since cultural power was controlled by the bourgeoisie, the victory of the proletariat was impossible without a cultural victory; and for this, it needed to develop an intellectual stratum that could express the actual experiences of the masses with belief and in educated language.[66] Another important viewpoint in his argument is that the proletariat could only win if they achieved 'cultural hegemony' before attaining political power.[67] Namely, cultural hegemony is a basic and prior condition for getting political supremacy. In light of Gramsci's thought, it is really easy to explain a conspicuous phenomenon that Beijing is spreading Confucianism by establishing many Confucius Institutes in the world that teach Chinese language, literature and philosophy. This also shows China's motive of cultural hegemony behind its soft power. Generally, Nye and Gramsci both argue for the importance of cultural power in different politics. Their idea indeed provides the best approach to understand China's ambition for soft power leading to hegemony, while the term 'hegemony' has always been lacking from Beijing's rhetoric on bilateral or multilateral relations.

The influence of China's present soft power with harmonious world concept and cooperative multilateral approach—like the aforementioned ASEAN regional cooperation for the Mekong system—is towards China's southern sphere, especially some mainland South Asian countries. As in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Burma, these countries can almost be seen as China's quasi-allies,[68] Beijing has skilfully offered military assistance and low-interest loans by focusing on sophisticated infrastructure projects. Additionally, most of the studies have focused on Chinese efforts at evolving soft power by China-centred economic regionalism and multi-

[65] Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism—Volume III, The Breakdown* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978) p. 242.
[66] *Ibid*., p. 241.
[67] *Ibid*., p. 242.
[68] Ian Storey, 'China and Thailand: Enhancing Military-Security Ties in the 21st Century,' *China Brief*, Vol. 8, Iss. 14 (3 July 2008), pp. 4-7.

dimensional foreign policies.[69] The promotion of Chinese soft power in recent years has generated the good-will concept of harmonious world in the region. This image indeed helps the Chinese leadership to cooperate with other countries. The PRC President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao have explicitly applied this concept to address China's foreign policies since 2000.[70] This cultural soft power has infiltrated many facets of China's regional multilateral politico-economic relations, including China's ambition for blue-water maritime expanses.

6.3.1 Promoting the Legacy of Zheng He as the Core of Maritime Soft Power

China's seaward economic development and rising international status have gradually awakened the ocean consciousness of Chinese people and their thirst for national sea power under China's recent pragmatic nationalism. Concerning Beijing's use of soft power in the Asia-Pacific for decreasing China's perceived threat, it seems to be hard for Beijing to develop its military power directly without a clear peaceful purpose. As Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes acutely indicate, 'applying softer power to seas where Beijing may want to amass naval power—and it hopes to alleviate concerns about upsetting the naval balance—is more difficult than invoking the teachings of Confucius'.[71] Consequently, the Chinese government had no choice but to prove its evolution of sea power will be a harmonious one by promoting the legacy of Zheng He's short-lived seafaring exploits (1405-1433) of the Ming Dynasty to the world. This historical narrative has become an integral vision of Chinese maritime soft power and it has recently gained considerable definition among a variety of essentials of China's comprehensive national power.

Beijing has started to promote the idea of 'peaceful development', considering that would be the central part of its foreign policy for shaping the international security environment since the 1980s. Its current multilateral diplomacy has taken on another objective that rising China will never be a regional hegemon or threat to the Asia-Pacific region, which can be seen as Beijing's major guarantee to regional

[69] Wheeler, 'China expands its southern sphere of influence,' p. 44.
[70] Li Zhaoxing, 'International Situation and China's Diplomatic Work in 2006,' *Qiushi* [Seeking Truth] (this journal published by the CCP), No.1 (1 January 2007). Available from <http://www.qsjournal.com.cn/qs/20070101/GB/qs%5E446%5E0%5E3.htm>. Accessed on 20 June 2008.
[71] Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes, 'China's Energy-Driven 'Soft Power',' *Orbis*, Vol. 52, No. 1 (Winter 2008), p. 127.

stability. For maritime security, China's diplomacy efforts underline the concept of peaceful development and cooperation at sea in the last decade, for instance, promoting and celebrating the six hundredth anniversary of Zheng He's treasure fleet voyages during the period of Ming China.[72] Historically, Zheng once sailed across Southeast Asia, the Horn of Africa and as far as the Persian Gulf, encountering but never colonising other countries, while Zheng's voyages sometimes included violent encounters with locals according to the practice of China's traditional Confucian tribute system.[73] The historical role of the Ming sea power was certainly a very important element of stability for Imperial China's expansion of the international tribute system in Asia. However, it deserves to be mentioned that the prerequisite of stable or harmonious Asia during the Ming Dynasty was built on the Confucian hegemony.

From China's emphasis on the narrative of Zheng's large treasure fleet and seven peaceful voyages from South Asian waters via the Indian Ocean to the Red Sea in the fifteenth century, China seems to be trying to tell South Asian countries that the growth of the Chinese navy is inevitable but will be amicable, and to assuage other countries' fears of China's rising maritime might. Modern China's SLOCs for energy imports are similar to the sea route of Zheng He's voyages, which shows Beijing's resolution to secure its energy supply by building a powerful blue-water fleet. Beijing considers that this harmonious soft power will ensure a stable regional maritime environment, allowing China to enlarge its naval ambit with greater convenience for its longer-term energy security purposes. However, there is a striking geo-political implication for Beijing's soft power that 'China could make the region its own—a Chinese Monroe Doctrine for Southeast Asia would make Beijing the major influence over regional affairs and reduce US alliances in the region'.[74]

From the previously mentioned Chinese maritime soft power, it is obvious that there is an international strategic plan for Sino-hegemonic stability behind the motive of Beijing's cultural promotion of Zheng's story arguing for its peaceful maritime rise in a 'harmonious' Asia. The ambition of China will follow the approach of Ming predominance in history towards attaining a sea power status.

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[72] Kong Xiaohui, 'China's Geo-strategic Choice as A Maritime-Continental Power,' *Journal of University of International Relations* (published by Renmen University of China, Beijing), No. 2 (2008), p. 14.
[73] Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power is Transforming the World* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2007), p. 62.
[74] *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

6.3.2 Implications of the Ming Sea Power to 'Non-military' Strategic Thinking

With greater dependence on the sea to support national economic development comes the more powerful intention pushing the PRC leadership to develop sea maritime capabilities to defend seaward national interests. In a sense, Beijing has understood that naval expansion is necessary for maritime economic security, but is difficult to carry out in practice. Meanwhile, Beijing also realises that the Chinese naval build-up needs the support of diplomatic multilateralism. Hence, the Chinese government has been starting to incorporate all dimensions of national power (such as applying politico-economic and trade incentives, low-key military performance of naval capabilities and socio-cultural influence into its diplomacy in the maritime Asia-Pacific region) creating a broad outreach program.[75]

In order to demonstrate good will and the lowest military threat to maritime periphery, Beijing stresses that the development of the PLA naval build-up for a blue-water fleet will work toward the creation of a cooperative security maritime environment rather than being based on preparing antagonistic military expansion. The December 2004 tsunami was a significant development in this respect. This event seemed to provide Beijing with a rationale for arguing for 'non-combat military operations'—peacekeeping operations, humanitarian intervention, securing SLOCs, and even restraining piracy and terrorism, as the purpose of China's future naval build-up.[76] Regarding the international search-and-rescue operations following this natural disaster, Japan first dispatched a large warship for rescue purposes, which showed its international status as a great regional power. At the same time, the US dispatched the Lincoln carrier battle group to the rescue, and the Indian navy joined these non-military operations.[77] This situation really taught the PLA a lesson that the use of military forces is not only to prepare for future wars but to play the role of a responsible great power participating in international non-military operations, such as disaster relief, national construction and rebuilding. This greatly stimulated the

[75] Yoshihara and Holmes, 'China's Energy-Driven 'Soft Power',' p. 132.
[76] Andrew S. Erickson and Andrew R. Wilson, 'China's Aircraft Carrier Dilemma,' in Andrew S. Erickson, Lyle J. Goldstein, William S. Murray and Andrew R. Wilson, *China's Future Nuclear Submarine Force* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2007), pp. 245-46.
[77] Chen Zhangming, Wang Jijian and Feng Xianhui, 'Naval Operations in the Indian Ocean Tsunami,' *Dandai haijun* [Modern Navy] (this journal is published by the official PLAN newspapers), No. 3 (2005), pp. 44-45.

Beijing authorities to develop a deep-sea fleet to achieve these non-military activities abroad in peacetime.

The issue of regional piracy has been haunting China's SLOCs in the Arabian Sea. For the protection of mainly Chinese vessels, the PLAN has deployed two warships and a supply ship to the Gulf of Aden and the waters off the shore of Somalia on maritime non-traditional security in December 2008, which can be seen as China's first contribution to the global effort against piracy.[78] This implies China's high-profile achievement of blue-water navy capacities.

Under the circumstances of economic globalisation, the thinking of offshore defence seems to be insufficient for maintaining China's economy and energy security overseas. In order to mould a Chinese ocean culture, Beijing is trying to combine the historical narrative of Zheng He with the direction of the PRC's ambition for creating blue-water strategy and building a sea power with Chinese characteristics. The formation of a national strategy has, principally, three indispensable pillars, which are people, government and armed forces, in Clausewitzian terms. The Chinese government has realised the importance of being a sea power in international relations since the mid-1980s and now is instilling ocean consciousness into its people through teaching the history of Zheng He, the security of energy supply and the issue of maritime national interests and sovereignty. Although building a seaward military strength in the eyes of Beijing is always the most important pillar of sea power, it still cannot lose contact with the support from the people. National sea power certainly represents the politico-economic-military power of a nation and greatly determines the status and influence of a nation in the world,[79] but the significance of socio-cultural perception for sea power still cannot be ignored.

Briefly, the concept of sea power belongs to a part of national ocean culture and people's ocean consciousness. Ocean culture is also the values of guiding and restricting national maritime behaviour and people's marine activities.[80] It is the soft power of national sea power and the reflection of national maritime aspiration. Accordingly, a maritime nation with an unsound ocean culture must concentrate on the accumulation of various oceanic experiences of national development and China

[78] Willy Lam, 'China Flaunts Growing Naval Capabilities,' *China Brief*, Vol. 9, Iss. 1 (12 January 2009), p. 3.
[79] Gorshkov, *The Sea Power of the State*, p. 1.
[80] Liu Xinhua and Qin Yi, 'Xiandai haiquan yu guojia haiyang zhanlue' [Modern sea power and national oceanic strategy], *Shehui kexue* [Social Science], No. 3 (2004), p. 79.

is doing so. Nonetheless, whether or not China can achieve a sea power status by promoting its maritime soft power, this is the structural problem of the Chinese socio-culture. As Joshua Kurlantzick said, 'China cannot offer average people a comprehensive, inspiring vision of how to build a free, rights-oriented political system and economy, a vision that remains popular in many parts of the world'.[81] The fundamental authoritative-structural shortcoming of lacking open culture will be an obstacle for the development of Chinese maritime strategic culture, and will further restrict China's capability to transform its image in maritime Asia.

6.4 Military Analysis: 'Aircraft-Carrier School' vs. 'Submarine School'

Generally, a rising sea power must have three pillars to support its national evolution at sea: commerce, merchant and naval capability, and naval bases.[82] Among the three, naval capability is always the measure of a wealthy and politically strong power at sea. As China rises, it is on the way to developing an ocean-going fleet with a blue-water strategic ambition, while China still stresses its active defence doctrine and does not present its blue-water maritime strategy to the Asia-Pacific. However, constructing blue-water strategy is an imperative for the Chinese government to manage maritime affairs according to China's current national development and regionalism.

China has not clearly presented its blue-water maritime strategy yet, but it is obvious military orientation of building a deep-sea navy has caused two significant problems. The first problem is related to Asia-Pacific international relations. In recent years, there has been an ongoing debate among Chinese military circles regarding the feasibility of constructing a blue-water fleet that could change the balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region and even in the Indian Ocean. In this debate, Beijing's current policy is using 'China's charm offensive' approach to mitigate the regional tension. Conversely, Beijing now is facing a debate on the problem of what kind of blue-water navy China should have in the future: an aircraft carrier battle group or a submarine

[81] Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive*, p. 229.
[82] Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783* (New York: Dover, 1987), p. 71.

fleet? This problem is still controversial.

Beijing has seen the eventual development of a blue-water navy as essential to China's long-standing interests, since a strong navy can both protect China's maritime economic interests and serve as the major instrument for realising China's ambition to be an independent great regional power in the Asia-Pacific. The intention of enhancing blue-water naval capabilities has been confirmed by China's 2004 National Defence White Paper, which supports its grand strategy and maritime security environment. However, the lack of a concrete blue-water maritime strategic guideline has caused the build-up of an ocean-going PLA Navy with indistinct direction in terms of Beijing's overall military strategy.

Former PRC Admiral Liu is, unquestionably, the father of Chinese sea power and the PLA 'Aircraft-Carrier School' in the period of Deng Xiaoping's leadership. However, with his retirement from the PLA and the Central Military Commission in the mid-1990s, the PLA 'Submarine School' started to emerge from the PLA decision-making system and as a competitor of the aircraft-carrier school. Both factions advocated their respective priorities for long-term perspectives within the PLAN. The former wanted to create an aircraft carrier battle group as the first priority for maritime strategic projection, but the latter argued for giving higher priority to modernising China's submarine fleet for maritime strategic deterrence.[83] This distinct difference of naval thought between both schools for a blue-water capability became the subject of a debate over naval build-up. Notwithstanding the disagreements between aircraft carrier and submarine schools of thought, a full explanation about the PLA decision-making system and its unresolved naval factionalism is still lacking. This section aims to analyse the discrepancy between the two schools, and probable naval build-up, by exploring China's politico-military factionalism.

6.4.1 PLAN Factionalism and Decision-making System

Regarding the organisation of the PLA, its headquarters is the highest level of China's military hierarchy. However, the actual military policy-making body is the Central Military Commission of the Chinese Communist Party. Under the communist party-state system China's military power is still controlled by the Party, while military

[83] Te-men Chen, 'Assessment of the PLA Naval Modernization Based upon Its Development of Naval Strategy,' *Taiwan Defense Affairs*, Vol. 2, No.2 (Winter 2001-02), p. 12.

nationalisation has been the goal of Beijing's politico-military reform since the 1990s. Consequently, the interaction of factionalism and the power relationship in the Central Military Commission is still influencing the strategic orientation of naval establishment and military decision-making.

The elite factionalism is, fundamentally, the structure of China's informal political system, defined in terms of its working relationship to the legal bureaucratic order, which is generated from China's traditional political culture—'*guanxi*' (the patron-client network of various social connections) and '*shili*' (a group or gang of informal powers).[84] It is worth noting that whether or not a political leader can exercise official politico-military power in the CCP, and even the CMC, is almost entirely based on the strength of a leader's social networks. Namely, the struggle of PRC bureaucratic politics can be seen as the struggle between factions in which the winner takes almost all the political power and the loser takes nothing. It should be added that factions fundamentally rely on their members' loyalty and purity to the leadership to ensure each member's work for the faction is an overall benefit.[85] Therefore, the CCP's political factionalism is obviously the engine for running the political system of China. Specifically, this type of political culture is mainly based in China's authoritarian-oriented political tradition, which has become the deep-rooted matrix of Beijing's military decision-making.

In the Chinese military system, the chief of the PLAN must be trusted by the chair of the CCP and CMC. Importantly, he should belong to the chair's political faction. For example, Xiao Jinguang was chosen by Mao Zedong as the chief of the PLAN; Liu Huaqing by Deng Xiaoping; Shi Yunsheng by Jiang Zemin; Zhang Dingfa and Wu Shengli by Hu Jintao. This naval factionalism has three essential meanings in terms of policy implementation. Firstly, having a strong kinship with a political leader can help the PLAN chair to develop a concerted strategic policy through directly realising the military ambitions and goals of China's paramount leader. Secondly, under the support of the CCP leader, the PLAN chair can easily promote his military guidelines and be upheld by other power elites. Third, the most important meaning for the PLAN is that since the navy is a professional branch of China's armed forces, its build-up with the leader's trust can maintain naval professionalism and get rid of any

[84] Lowell Dittmer and Yu-Shan Wu, 'The Modernization of Factionalism in Chinese Politics,' *World Politics*, No. 47 (July 1995), pp. 469-70.
[85] Andrew J. Nathan, 'A Factionalism Model for CCP Politics,' *The China Quarterly*, No. 53 (January-March 1973), p. 42.

unnecessary political interference.

Considering the evolution of PLA Navy from the Maoist era to the mid-Dengist era, PLAN commanders Xiao Jinguang and Ye Fei had almost no naval professional training and education. Consequently, China's maritime strategy was kept on the stage of coastal defence from 1950 to 1982. Deng nominated Liu Huaqing as the PLAN Commander in 1982 and then as vice CMC chair in 1988, China started to develop the maritime strategy of offshore defence under Liu's leadership. From the 1990s onwards, the build-up of the PLAN has experienced two successive CMC chairmen (Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao) and four PLAN commanders (Zhang Lianzhong, Shi Yunsheng, Zhang Dingfa and Wu Shengli). These PLAN commanders fall into the Submarine School and the Aircraft-Carrier School, with Zhang Lianzhong and Zhang Dingfa belonging to the former, and Shi Yunsheng and Wu Shengli belonging to the latter, as the following Table 13 shows.

Table 13: Military Factions of the PLAN from Mao Zedong to Hu Jintao

CMC Chairman	PLAN Commander	Factions	Tenure
Mao Zedong (1949-1976)	Xiao Jinguang	PLA 4th field army Land power school: Coastal defence	Jan.1950-Dec.1979
Deng Xiaoping (1978-1989)	Ye Fei	PLA 3rd field army Land power school: Coastal defence	Jan.1980-Aug.1982
	Liu Huaqing	PLA 2nd field army Sea power school: Offshore defence *Aircraft-carrier school*	Aug.1982-Jan.1988: PLAN Commander 1988-1997: Vice CMC chair
Jiang Zemin (1989-2003)	Zhang Lianzhong	The PLA ground force Liu's s own clique Sea power school *Submarine school*	Jan.1988-Nov.1996
	Shi Yunsheng	The PLA air force Liu's s own clique Air power school *Aircraft-carrier school*	Nov.1996-Jun.2003
Hu Jintao (2003-)	Zhang Dingfa	The PLA navy Sea power school *Submarine school*	Jun.2003-Aug.2006: He died of an illness in 2006
	Wu Shengli	The PLA navy Sea power school *Aircraft-carrier school*	Aug.2006-

Source: Li Cheng and Lynn White, 'The Army in the Succession to Deng Xiaoping,' *Asian Survey* (August 1993), Vol. 33, No. 8, p. 766. Mel Gurtov and Byond-Moo Hwang, *China's Security: The New*

Roles of the Military (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), p. 114. Peter Howarth, *China's Rising Sea Power: The PLA Navy's Submarine Challenge* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 25. James R. Lilley and David Shambaugh, eds, *China's Military Face the Future* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe and AEI Press, 1999), pp. 11-35. *China's Navy 2007*, Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), Washington, DC, 2007, pp. 11-14.

Zhang Lianzhong and Shi Yunsheng were both from Liu's clique, but they favoured different military directions for PLAN development. In Zhang Lianzhong's tenure (1988-1996), he focused on the development of PLAN's underwater capability. Conversely, in Shi Yunsheng's tenure (1996-2003), he concentrated on developing a PLAN large surface force. However, Hu nominating Zhang Dingfa of the submarine school as the PLAN commander in 2003 made the goal of building a submarine fleet again a priority for the PLAN's build-up, following from Zhang Lianzhong's work. In a sense, this case shows that the importance of building a submarine fleet at the beginning of Hu's period was higher than building an aircraft carrier during Jiang's era. Unfortunately, Zhang Lianzhong's tenure only lasted for three years due to his death, when his position was superseded by Wu Shengli of the aircraft-carrier school. There has been a vacillation between these two schools within the PLAN since the era of Jiangist China; and these changes show the strategic vacillation of the PLAN build-up for a blue-water navy in recent years. Whether or not Wu Shengli of the aircraft-carrier school can ultimately confirm the strategic importance of building an aircraft carrier battle group in the PLA, remains to be seen.

6.4.2 Maritime Layered-defensive Concept of the PLAN

The former Soviet naval doctrine and military thought have undeniably had an enormous influence on the development of the Chinese navy. In addition to the obvious ideological coalition in the early years of the navy, and the resurgent close political relationship with Russia today, the main reason that China found the former Soviet (or today's Russian) concepts so compatible is because both countries face similar international strategic challenges, from NATO and the US. Broadly speaking, Western strategic thinking considers the seas as approaches to bring the military potential of North America to bear on Asia.[86] The realist strategic choice for the Soviets and the Chinese was to enhance their naval might to be able to repel the

[86] Michael McDevitt, 'Where is China's Navy Headed,' *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 127, No. 5 (May 2001), p. 58.

western threat from the sea. Since the direction of China's maritime threat has not changed over the past two decades, China continues using Liu's maritime layered-defensive doctrine that was copied from the former USSR in the 1980s.

Originally, the Soviet Union designed a maritime layered-defensive strategy with thresholds built at different distances from its shoreline. These thresholds were the defensive lines of its territorial waters. This land-oriented style of maritime thinking about strategy, which was designed to deny the use of the sea to the West, the US Navy and its allies especially, then formed the foundation for the evolution of Soviet naval and air capabilities in the mid-1980s. In comparing the Soviet maritime strategy of this period with Liu's idea of two-island chain maritime defence, it is clear that there are parallels between both strategic ideas. This Chinese layered-defence strategy today has been seen not only as an anti-access strategy at sea, but also a performance of sea denial.

Following Liu's layered-defensive naval doctrine, China expanded its defence line from *jiana* (in-shore) to *jinhai* (off-shore), setting up a kind of layered defence of Chinese style, and this idea was the framework of China's two-island chain strategy.[87] More concretely, China's coastline is the first layer, the first island chain is the second layer and the second island chain is the third layer. Among these defence layers, the second one, which is very significant to China's national interests, is 200 nautical miles from the Chinese coastal defence, reaching into vast expenses of waters in the West Pacific Ocean. This blue-water zone mainly covers all of the Chinese sea territories and the islands scattered in the East China Sea and part of the South China Sea. Physically, this zone stretches from the Chinese waters adjacent to Vladivostok in the north to the Malacca Strait in the south and continues to the first island chain of the West Pacific Ocean in the east.

This Chinese off-shore concept includes four vital regional straits: the Qiongzhou, Taiwan, Bohai and Malacca Straits, which were all located in the area between China's coast and the first island chain. Militarily, the first island chain is the limit of most of China's naval activities; it is difficult for China to extend its naval influence to the area between the first and second island chains for acquiring command of the sea. Except for the security of the second island chain,[88] China also

[87] Zhang Shiping, *Zhongguo haiquan* [The Chinese Navy], (Beijing: The People's Daily Press, 1998), p. 5.

[88] The second island chain in PLA thought ranges from the Japanese archipelago south to Bonin and

needs to protect its seaborne communication for economic and energy security in the waters of north-eastern and south-eastern maritime Asia. With the security environment of the Asia-Pacific turning from the land to the sea, this broad maritime range will continue to become the prime strategic area of the PLAN, the challenge to China's rise, and the stimulus to China's blue-water ambition in the twenty-first century.[89]

The progress of China's naval transformation toward modernisation has been noticeably accelerated and has undoubtedly increased PLAN's operational preparation since the beginning of the twenty-first century. There are three basic reasons for this case. Firstly, China's rapid economic expansion can provide more financial and technological supports for PLAN modernisation. Second, the Chinese military cycle believes that the future warfare will happen at sea under the informationalisation age. Third, the PLAN has obtained a better understanding of building an ocean-going navy from the West.[90] For these reasons, manifestly, a number of new and advanced PLAN major surface combatants (such as Luyang II-class air-defence destroyers and Luhu-class guided-missile destroyers) and submarines (such as the Shang-class nuclear attack submarines and two Jin-class nuclear ballistic missile submarines) that have entered service from 2000 to date have more than doubled that of the whole decade of the 1990s.

Although the comprehensive capability of PLAN is evidently rising toward an ocean-going navy, the question is how can PLAN break through the restriction of the first island chain to protect SLOCs. This has become a controversial issue between the aircraft-carrier school and the submarine school of the PLAN.

6.4.3 The Strategic Direction of the PLAN Aircraft-carrier School

Developing aircraft carriers is not only a naval question, but also a primary question of national strategy and national defence policy.[91] For China's leadership, the aircraft

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Marshall islands and finally to the Palau group for politico-economic interests.

[89] Erickson and Wilson, 'China's Aircraft Carrier Dilemma,' pp. 232-33.

[90] You Ji, 'China's Naval Strategy and Transformation' in Lawrence W. Prabhakar, Joshua H. Ho and Sam Bateman, eds, *The Evolving Maritime Balance of Power in the Asia-Pacific—Maritime Doctrines and Nuclear Weapons at Sea* (Singapore: World Scientific, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies of Nanyang Technological University, 2006), pp. 80-81.

[91] Liu Huaqing, *Liu Huaqing huiyilu* [The Memoirs of Liu Huaqing], (Beijing, Liberation Army Publication), p. 481.

carrier is a symbol of sea power and can act as a mobile maritime territory and freely navigate the high seas by breaking through the limit of offshore defence. Importantly, the Chinese ambition for building aircraft carriers to become an actual great maritime power and securing maritime rights is based on the Chinese improvements in technology and nationalism. In general, the aircraft-carrier school originated from the Revolution of Military Affairs School of the PLA since the 1990s; the main military aim of this school is to prepare high-technological warfare with strong power projection and extension overseas.[92]

The study of aircraft carriers in China began when Liu assumed the position of PLAN commander in 1982. Liu argued that the development of the PLAN should have two steps. The first step is to build a Chinese navy with green-water capabilities; the second step is to enhance the PLAN blue-water capability, thus increasing China's maritime strategic projection in the region. For this purpose, the development of an aircraft carrier became the main strategic concern for PLAN build-up.[93] In 1985, Liu established an aircraft carrier training course for commanders at the Guangzhou Naval Academy. This could be seen as China's ambition to follow the former Soviet Union or the US model by selecting aircraft pilots, as opposed to surface warship captains, to command the system of an aircraft carrier battle group.[94]

At that point, China had already purchased four decommissioned aircraft carriers for research and training; one was an ex-Australian carrier and three were ex-Soviet carriers. In 1985, a Chinese stated-owned company purchased the 15,000 tonne Majestic-class HMAS Melbourne aircraft carrier from Australia. This acquisition at the time helped the PLAN's research and development program in two respects. On the one hand, the PLAN architects and engineers were able to learn how it had been designed by observing the dismantling of the carrier for scrap; conversely, the flight deck was kept undamaged, and utilised by PLAN pilots for carrier takeoff and landing training.[95] Nevertheless, the priority of Liu's aircraft carrier program was downgraded under the PLAN Submarine School, led by Admiral Zhang Lianzhong.

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[92] Refer to Chapter Three for details of the RMA School of the PLA.
[93] Andrew Pinkov, 'The Chinese Navy and Russia Aircraft Carrier,' *Kanwa Intelligence Review* (7 November 1998). Available from <http://www.kanwa.com/english/981107c.html>. Accessed on 23 June 2008.
[94] Andrew F. Diamond, 'Dying with Eyes Open or Closes: The Debate over a Chinese Aircraft Carrier,' *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Spring 2006), pp. 39-40.
[95] Bernard D. Cole, *The Great Wall at Sea: China's Navy Enters the Twenty-First Century* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2001), p. 108.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Beijing started to shift its strategic focus from its north towards maritime Southeast Asia, which manifested the importance of developing an ocean-going fleet for China's maritime defence. This strategic shift definitely gave greater priority to the PLAN aircraft carrier program. When Shi Yunsheng of the PLAN Aircraft Carrier School became the PLAN commander, he successfully purchased two decommissioned Soviet aircraft carriers, the Minsk in June 1998 and Kiev in May 2000, but after research and examination by PLAN personal, both ships have been turned into highly popular tourist attractions in Shenzhen and Tianjing.[96] China also successfully purchased the Kuznetsov-class carrier Varyag, an unfinished 67,500 tonne aircraft carrier, from Ukraine in 1998, which arrived at the Chinese north-eastern port of Dalian in March 2002.[97] Whether the purpose of this ship is for entertainment or for military uses is still unclear; many PLA watchers believe that the Varyag is the most likely candidate if an incomplete carrier is to be made operational for protecting the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea.[98] However, to refit this ship for military purposes is still a heavily debated issue in the PLAN circle due to the weakness of China's recourses, time, technology and experience for this ship, while this ship was already 70 per cent complete in 1992.[99]

With the emerging awareness of China's ambition for an aircraft carrier in the 1990s, two European countries approached Beijing with air carrier design and technology. The Spanish shipbuilder Empresa Nacional Bazán in 1995 offered China two designs of low-priced 23,000 tonne SAC-200 and 25,000 tonne SAC-220 light carriers. The price of SAC-220 would be $350 million dollars, which would

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[96] Tian Ying, 'The PLAN Approached the Minsk Aircraft Carrier in 1979,' *Jianzhai wuqi* [Ship borne Weapons], (January 2005), pp. 87-89. Li Weiqun, 'The Record of the Retired Russian Aircraft Carrier 'Kiev' Braving the Journey,' *Zhongguo yuanyang hangwu gongzao* [China Ocean Shipping Monthly], No. 10 (2000), pp. 62-64.

[97] Ian Storey and You Ji, 'China's Aircraft Carrier Ambitions—Seeking Truth from Rumours,' *Naval War College Review*, Vol. 57, No. 1 (Winter 2004), pp. 83-84.

[98] Erickson and Wilson, 'China's Aircraft Carrier Dilemma,' p. 238. Compared with China's peer competitor India, China's experience of operating aircraft carrier is quite limited. The Indian Navy has operated ex-British carriers for many years and has considerable carrier experience. In this sense, China's ambition for an aircraft carrier with blue-water naval capability still has a long way to go.

[99] Cole, *The Great Wall at Sea*, p. 108. Regarding the experience of operating aircraft carriers, the US Navy is an example to the PLAN. Aircraft carriers cannot be built in a short amount of time; the former Soviet Union spent about 30 years developing carriers. For the training of carrier operations, it involves the loss of many costly fighters and pilots. The USS carrier training lost around 800 fighters in 1954, and lost only 22 in 1999. This loss was the sunk cost of a matured aircraft carrier battle group. Thus, if China wants to develop aircraft carriers, it must afford the expensive sunk cost and even time. Refer to Sandra I. Erwin, 'Navy Aims to Curtail Aviation Mishaps Caused by Crew Error,' *National Defense*, October 2000. Available from <http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/issues/2000/Oct/Navy-Aims.htm>. Accessed on 25 June 2008.

accommodate up to 21 conventional-take-and-landing fighters, like the MiG-29K,[100] but China only showed provisional interest in that proposal. By the end of 1995, France offered the design of 32,700 tonne carrier Clemenceau to Beijing; however, again China, only expressed its interest in that proposal.[101] After that, nothing came of these cases. However, Beijing did not give up its ambition to have aircraft carriers. During the visit of, Yasukazu Hamada, the Minister of the Japan Self-Defence Force (JSDF) to Beijing in March 2009, the current Minister of PRC National Defence Liang Quanlie hosted a welcoming ceremony for him, in which Liang said to him, 'China is the only one power without aircraft carriers among great powers in the world, and China will never give up building aircraft carriers forever.'[102] This is the first time that the highest Chinese official of national defence stated an intention to build aircraft carriers. This PRC official statement clearly shows Beijing's resolution to build aircraft carriers.

Although the plan of building aircraft carriers was still not confirmed in the China's recent Defence White Paper,[103] PLAN war-fighting capabilities have increased remarkably since the late 1990s. In order to make up for the intrinsic naval weakness of anti-air warfare and anti-submarine warfare systems, the PLAN in 2000 acquired some regional air-defence capabilities, the supersonic anti-ship missiles (SS-N-22), for two Sovremeny-class destroyers. In 2003, the PLAN enhanced the anti-ship and ASW systems of two Luhu-class destroyers for blue-water missions of regional maritime defence. In 2004, two Luyang-class destroyers were equipped with the Chinese Aegis system, and installed with China's first indigenous cool-launch vertical systems. They can be seen as the main forces of an ocean-going fleet. Since 2003, the PLAN also improved and enhanced its Maanshan-class frigates with strong stealth features and the Jiangwei-class frigates as well.[104] These are the evidence that China still considerably intends to strengthen the capabilities of its major surface combatants, while a Chinese aircraft carrier remains unavailable in the short-term.

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[100] Storey and You, 'China's Aircraft Carrier Ambitions,' pp. 80-81.
[101] Nayan Chanda, 'No-Cash Carrier,' *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 10 October 1996, p. 20.
[102] Mao-Sen Chang, 'PRC Minister of the Ministry of National Defense to Manifest Building Aircraft Carrier,' *The Liberty Times*, Taipei, 22 March 2009. Available from <http://www.libertytimes.com.tw/2009/new/mar/22/today-int1.htm>. Accessed on 23 March 2009.
[103] Cheng-yi Lin, 'China's 2008 Defense White Paper: The View from Taiwan,' *China Brief*, Vol. 9, Iss. 3 (5 February 2009), p. 12.
[104] You, 'China's Naval Strategy and Transformation,' pp. 81-82.

6.4.4 The Strategic Direction of the PLAN Submarine School

The Submarine School had its origins in the Limited War School of the PLA since the end of the 1970s, and is based on military deterrence by executing active defence on China's periphery. This school still cannot escape from Maoist land-oriented military thought and even become the challenge of the rise of the Revolution of Military Affairs School.[105] For the military evolution of PLA doctrine, the Limited War School has always played a major role in China's military circle, and never been replaced by the RAM School. In this sense, the PLAN submarine school is still superior to the aircraft-carrier school. The submarine school was guided by the former PRC Admiral Zhang Lianzhong. Under the military doctrine of 'active defence', submarines for the PLAN are the means for maritime defence according to China's socialistic characteristics and Maoist military thought; on the contrary, Zhang in 1988 stated 'in a military sense, offshore defence should include a broader implication, including to maintain offshore security and remain free from maritime attacks, for which the navy not only should enlarge its offshore coverage and strategic depth, but also must develop interceptive and destroying capabilities in the event of a hostile attack.'[106] Under Zhang's tenure, he transformed the build-up of the PLAN submarine fleet from a defence force to an ocean-going one.

For the development of PLAN's submarine force, China has fruitful experience in operating submarine fleets since the 1950s through learning from the Soviet's technology and naval doctrine. Between 1962 and 1984, China built over 80 of the conventional Soviet designed Romeo-class submarines (Type 033) and continues to operate about one third of them. China operates almost 20 Ming-class submarines (Type 035), which were launched between 1971 and 2001.[107] However, because of the serious problem of ageing, noise and obsolescence, some of these old ships are being upgraded and some are being replaced by advanced modern diesel-electric submarines, such as the Chinese Yuan-class submarines (Type 041),[108] Song-class submarines

[105] Refer to Chapter Three for details of the Limited War School of the PLA.
[106] Shen Shungen, 'Oceangoing Capability: An important Sign of Navy's Combat Power—An Interview with the Chinese PLA Navy Commander Mr. Zhong Lianzhong,' *Junshi shijie* [The Military World], Vol. 1, No. 2 (September/October 1988), pp. 13-14.
[107] William S. Murray, 'An Overview of the PLAN Submarine Force' in Erickson *et al*., *China's Future Nuclear Submarine Force*, p. 60.
[108] Yuan-class submarine is the newest class of diesel-electric submarine and was launched as of 2005 by the PLAN.

(Type 039) and Russian Kilo-class submarines.

China's maritime strategy to date still relies heavily on submarines to patrol the littorals, blockade the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea, secure seaborne communication, and even stalk US aircraft carriers. Hence, the PLAN submarine fleet can be seen as the main Chinese maritime deterrent force. China's nuclear submarine force has been upgraded, under the PLAN submarine school, since the time when Zhang Lianzhong was the PLAN commander. During his tenure, there were five Type 093 Han-class nuclear attack submarines (SSN), which entered service. Before Zhang Dingfa's death in 2006 (his tenure was from 2003 to 2006), the PLAN launched two new Type 093 Shang-class SSNs during 2002 and 2003, which are viewed as a replacement for the ageing PLAN Han-class SSNs.[109] In relation to nuclear guided-missile submarine (SSBN), the Type 094 Xia-class SSBN is the PLAN's first strategic ballistic missile submarine and was launched in 1981.[110] China decided to launch a new Type 094 Jin-class SSBN with the capability of at least 9,000-km-range submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM), so-called JL-2, in 2008.[111] This will diversify China's nuclear deterrence strategy and may further enhance its limited deterrence toward effective deterrence.[112] Strikingly, it has been estimated that this SLBM can strike targets on the west coast of the US from the offshore of China.[113]

The evolution of China's advanced underwater force can also be demonstrated by the following two cases. In October 1994, the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk was operating with its battle group in the Yellow Sea when it detected an underwater contact. Thus, the US Navy began tracking the contact, which turned out to be a PLAN *Han*-class submarine returning to its port. In 2006, twelve years after the previous encounter, the same USS aircraft carrier was again at sea when a PLAN *Song*-class submarine that had been shadowing the carrier surfaced around five miles away near Okinawa, where it was spotted by one of the carrier's planes.[114] Undeniably, these cases show that the PLAN has greatly improved its submarine technology and

[109] *Jane's Fighting Ships 2007-2008*, p. 31.
[110] *World Submarine Challenges 1997*, pp. 21-23.
[111] Lyle Goldstein, 'China's Subs Lead the Way,' *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, Vol. 129, No. 3 (March 2003), p. 59; Robert A. Manning, Ronald Montaperto and Brad Robert, eds, *China, Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2000), p. 20.
[112] Michael S. Chase, Andrew S. Erickson and Christopher Yeaw, 'The Future of Chinese Deterrence Strategy,' *China Brief*, Vol. 9, Iss. 5 (4 March 2009), p. 6.
[113] Michael D. Swaine and Loren H. Runyon, *NBR Analysis: Ballistic Missiles and Missile Defense in Asia* (Seattle: The National Bureau of Asian Research, 2002), p. 19.
[114] Bernard D. Cole, 'Beijing's Strategy of Sea Denial,' *China Brief*, Vol. 6, Iss. 23 (22 November 2006), pp. 2-3.

can cause a threat to the US Navy. The PLAN advanced stealth attack submarines would make the US think twice about sending its aircraft carriers into China's nearby waters.[115]

After the collapse of the former USSR in 1991, China shifted its main security attention from the USSR threat to the US threat. Since 2000, Beijing-published white papers on national defence all clearly point out that the US is China's most significant potential foe. Therefore, China believes it has to prepare for a possible military clash at sea with this superpower through developing asymmetric warfare. In this context, having a powerful submarine fleet is a vital strategic choice for limited maritime deterrence. Alastair I. Johnston once indicated that China's limited deterrence was based on two major beliefs on the part of the PLA elites who crafted it. First, the PLA believes 'the advent of nuclear weapons does not fundamentally change the nature of war', [116] and second, 'deterrence rests on the operational usability of nuclear weapons'.[117] Thus, the PLA believes that nuclear weapons systems will not have a lesser role in future warfare and their effectiveness will essentially increase. These can be seen as reasons for China's recent development of Shang-class and Jin-class nuclear submarines.

The geo-strategic reality that China faces is that the vast majority of its conspicuous sovereignty and unresolved strategic tasks are seaward in nature, such as: the Taiwan issue; the maritime dispute with Japan; the territorial issues in the South China Sea; China's security of littoral; the security of SLOCs for energy imports and maritime commerce. After the 2004 tsunami disaster, overseas non-combat military operations for peacekeeping and disaster relief seemed to become additional tasks of the PLAN. From the lesson of this natural disaster, Beijing has started to assess the utility of aircraft carriers, which might be better than submarines in the task of non-military operations. From the above description of China's tasks at sea, it shows that the necessity of a blue-water PLAN is the wherewithal to shape China's maritime security setting. Although building an aircraft carrier battle group for blue-water strategic purposes is the best approach to achieve these tasks in terms of the Chinese Aircraft-Carrier School, the weak PLA information technology system, the limited

[115] Hugo Restall, 'China's Bid for Asian Hegemony,' *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. 170, No. 4 (16 May 2007), p. 11.
[116] Alastair Iain Johnston, 'China's New 'Old Thinking': The Concept of Limited Deterrence,' *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Winter 1995-96), p. 12.
[117] *Ibid*., p. 16.

military budgets, the lack of sound blue-water maritime strategic thinking and experiences might be the major restrictions of this approach. Zhang Zhaozhong, scholar at China's National University in Beijing, indicated 'even if the PLA did not eat, buy new clothing or equipment for six to seven years, China would still not be able to afford one USS Nimitz'.[118]

Since there are many infeasible conditions for the aircraft-carrier school, the submarine school can maintain its strategic superiority in the PLA inner debate for the direction of the PLAN build-up. However, from the current arrangement of Admiral Wu Shengli as the PLAN commander in Hu's era, it is quite understandable that China still has not abandoned any possibility of developing aircraft carriers. China's future security is to protect energy security, economic development and regional stability. Hence, building a larger naval operation platform according to China's national conditions will become Beijing's maritime strategic goal and the potential candidate might be a large advanced destroyer, a light carrier, or an amphibious carrier.

6.5 Summary: Appraisal of China's Blue-Water Maritime Strategic Ambition

While Beijing has not formally presented its blue-water maritime strategy to the public yet, its ambitions are discernible in many aspects of its behaviour, such as those that have been discussed in this chapter. The economy is irrefutably the basis for China's comprehensive national power. As the centre of the world economy has shifted to China, this economic phenomenon has caused the Chinese economy to become an engine for the growth of the whole Asia-Pacific region as well as creating a rising China. This Chinese example manifests a fact that economic strength is the basic perception of a rising power in a realist international environment.

Subsequently, China's highly developing economy has become a heavy burden on its limited natural resources. In order to cope with this resources problem, China has been enlarging its seaward national economy rapidly; this situation has shaped its

[118] Ge Shubin, 'Further Discussion on 'Trend of Aircraft Carrier'—Interview with Zhang Zhaozhong, Associate Research Fellow at the Naval Equipment Proving Research Centre,' *Bingqi zhishi* [Knowledge of Weapons], No. 10 (October 1996), pp. 2-5.

maritime security setting pragmatically since the 1990s. With the heavy dependence on the maritime economy and foreign energy supply over the last decade, China is now rapidly emerging as a maritime power with global commercial and regional military influence in a Sino-centric Asia-Pacific region. This has become an imperative for the Beijing government for China's contemporary blue-water strategic ambition.

China is forming cultural soft power and enhancing military hard power to match its rapid politico-economic rise at sea in the region. Considering the Chinese soft power, the Confucian harmonious philosophy is always seen as the context for Beijing's peaceful foreign policies, such as foreign aid, trade concessions, cultural exchanges and peacekeeping operations, which can be called China's charm offensive diplomacy. From the phenomenon of Beijing's promotion of Confucianism in the world, it is clear that China's intention is building itself as an Asian colossus; like the Ming Dynasty, who strengthened their Sino-centric tribute system by sending Zheng He overseas, practising Ming's Confucian good-neighbour policy (according to Beijing's rhetoric). Of course, many Asia-Pacific countries are still wary of China's intention of creating an Asian maritime hegemony.

For the Chinese naval power, the PLAN is transforming its green-water fleet into a blue-water fleet. After fifty years' evolution, the PLAN has made great progress in its naval power projection and extension, while what kind of blue-water PLAN China would have is still unclear. However, what can be confirmed is that reinforcing an ocean-going submarine fleet is the PLAN's short-term military goal, and building an aircraft carrier battle group will be its long-term military goal. Additionally, when it comes to China's ambition for an ocean-going fleet, the Beijing authorities like to take Zheng He as an example on many occasions, while the rise of Ming sea power was actually an exception in China's continental-oriented strategic culture. This case really shows that Beijing's urgent desire to recover China's splendid sea power is an example of Chinese nationalism.

For the limits of building a blue-water PLAN, constructing a blue-water maritime strategy in the Asia-Pacific region is increasingly important for Beijing's regionalism and maritime security environment, while Beijing sometime denies its blue-water maritime ambition because of the big gap between China's blue-water maritime rhetoric and its real naval capabilities. However, Beijing also fears that this ambition would present a threat to challenge the status quo of the region, which might

adversely affect its multilateral diplomacy. Militarily, the PLAN's weaponry structure and systems prohibit it from undertaking any blue-water military of non-military missions, because many of its current large platforms are too small, and proper logistical and C4ISR systems are seriously lacking, which causes the weakness of naval regional AAW and ASW systems. Accordingly, if China wants to build a blue-water navy as its ultimate maritime strategic goal, it must overcome the major problem of its backward military technology.

Further, China's emerging ambition for blue-water maritime security is planned to protect its SLOCs for resources imports; any disturbance to the free flow of energy resources into China's coasts could upset economic development. Thus, Beijing aims to maintain its regional legitimacy by pursuing its desire for great power status in the Asia-Pacific. This ambition is also designed to remove the maritime strategic status of Taiwan since Taiwan impedes China's access to the West Pacific Ocean. From Beijing's perspective, the pursuit of both maritime strategic objectives at one time is understandable. The naval power projection and extension are both undoubtedly in Beijing's interests.

It is important to recognise that the Beijing authorities still have not clearly proclaimed their blue-water maritime strategy, but the orientation of this strategy has been confirmed in its National Defence White Papers since 2000. Despite the fact that the kind of ocean-going navy will China have is still vague, the PLAN almost undoubtedly will play an increasingly important role in the calculus of PRC maritime security interests in the twenty-first century. This is not because the recent Chinese outlook of being a sea power has completely reversed centuries of land-oriented strategic culture, but rather for the more prosaic but real reasons of maritime national interests, threat orientation at sea and unresolved sovereignty problems.

PART III
IMPACT

John Hay, US Secretary of State, said in 1889, 'The Mediterranean is the ocean of the past, the Atlantic, the ocean of the present, and the Pacific, the ocean of the future'.[1] It is now approved as a historical prediction. The Asia-Pacific region has emerged as the maritime strategic centre in the post-Cold War era. The power system of the region is essentially a multipolar framework with the continued hegemonic dominance of the United States and a rapidly emerging China. Against the background of the US as a pre-eminent power in the region, the American military presence has been central to the regional balance of power. This shapes a politico-economic security setting for regional stability, pragmatic economic development and even military cooperation. For the thriving maritime economic activities of the region, the prosperous seaborne trade of resources and merchandise has pushed the region to go toward economic interdependence and cooperation at sea. However, these activities have also caused maritime security vulnerabilities due to the struggle of various maritime interests over sea routes, waters, resources, straits and islands.

Maritime struggles and disputes in the Asia-Pacific are a particularly complex aspect of international politics. The shakiness of this region could be traced back to three reasons. First, the increased demand for food, mineral and energy resources by seaborne trade was related to surging economic growth rates; maritime security was needed to protect this trade, and hence the increases in naval power were a by-product of economic growth. Second, maritime transport and naval defence in territorial waters increased the politico-strategic importance of the seas. Third, the 1951 San Francisco Peace Conference refrained from transferring all territories renounced by Japan to the jurisdiction of other regional states. However, the legal status of several islands remained unclear, leading to many overlapping claims for territorial waters. These reasons point out the competitive environment of the Asia-Pacific. Paradoxically, the need for maritime stability seems to provide a common interest in coexistence in the region.

[1] Alvin Toffler, *Powershift: Knowledge, Wealth, and Violence at the Edge of the 21st Century* (New York: Bantam Books, 1990), p. 179.

In this competitive, but coexistent, Asia-Pacific maritime setting, China's rapid politico-economic rise as a maritime power could be deemed as a key variable as to whether the region will continue to develop in relative peace and wealth, or alternatively fall into the anxiety and tensions associated with hegemonic realpolitik in the Asia-Pacific system. Beijing's recent assertive aspiration to develop a blue-water maritime strategy in the Asia-Pacific has generated important concerns about how it may threaten regional maritime security, which also raised questions about the future of peace and stability in the region, questions driven somewhat by uncertainty about how China will employ its growing naval might and how regional states will respond to it. The continuing evolution of China's maritime strategy for naval power projection and extension shows that China's long-term maritime goal, given its role as a rapidly growing economic powerhouse, has been to launch a comprehensive strategy at sea to become a leading maritime power in Asia. It can shape the international security environment and protect national interests through its own worldview as an Asian great power rather than just react to it.

In accordance with the development of China's maritime strategy from coastal defence via offshore defence towards building a blue-water maritime strategy, it is clear that Beijing's maritime strategic benefits (maritime national interests of islands, sea lanes, food and energy) have greatly exceeded the expected maritime strategic costs (military modernisation and naval build-up). Consequently, the incentive of maritime benefits can be seen as the driving force for the expansion of Beijing's sea power. In addition, China's drive to develop offensive naval capabilities and expand its maritime strategic direction has motivated other Asia-Pacific states to adjust their maritime strategy and had an impact on regional maritime security. With the purpose of understanding the relationship between China's expanding maritime strategy and maritime security in the power system of the Asia-Pacific, this part addresses the last sub-question of this thesis: 'what is the impact of China's rising maritime power on the security of the Asia-Pacific region?'

Chapter 7

The Impact of China's Expanding Maritime Strategy on Maritime Security in the Asia-Pacific

Historically, rising land powers have pursued territorial expansion as one means by which to provide for their national security. Likewise, expanding control at sea for national security, economy and survival has become the *sine qua non* of maritime powers' strategic orientation. Today, the concept of the 'Naval Forward Presence' (NFP)—also known as forward engagement or, simply, naval presence—has become a primary mission of naval forces engaged in sea control operations during peacetime.[2] The NFP constitutes the most visible commitment of national military forces to the protection of national security and economic interests in distant regions. Traditionally, forward presence had been limited to naval exercises, joint naval patrols, the sharing of maritime intelligence and surveillance, and combined efforts towards humanitarian rescue missions. Decisively, the NFP now also reinforces expeditionary operations in coercive missions, and has enhanced strategic 'deterrence' (discouragement through fear of punishment) and 'compellence' (encouragement through application of punishment) in terms of maritime crisis.

In China's evolving maritime strategy, the People's Liberation Army Navy has been focused on the operational concept of NFP, projecting the PLAN as a strategic force of China's national defence at sea in order to secure greater strategic depth. Modern China's maritime strategy aims to assert China's image as a regional maritime power armed with an ocean-going surface fleet and a tactical submarine fleet that has the capability of limited nuclear deterrence. The current tasks of China's naval capability are nothing more than to protect its blooming littoral economy and to secure its maritime sovereignty. Principally, it seeks to accelerate maritime technological development in both military and economic applications through the naval modernisation program. Moreover, it aims to take full advantage of the navy's strategic functions in national defence planning and in building a three-dimensional

[2] Geoffrey Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century* (London, Frank Cass Publishers, 2004), pp. 277-84.

defence system.

Due to pursuing its blue-water maritime ambition, the PLAN has developed a significant surface and underwater fleet, both of which have been the subject of important modernisation in the last decade, to turn it from a largely coastal force into a truly ocean-going navy. From the perspective of Asia-Pacific maritime security, the impact of China's expanding maritime strategy with its upgraded naval capabilities in the region can be divided into four salient sections for examination including: (1) Politics—power equilibrium at sea; (2) Economics—energy security; (3) Military—regional navalism; and (4) Institutions—maritime security building. The first section analyses changes in the distribution of regional equilibrium as it applies to understanding the relationship between rising Chinese maritime power and the balance of power in the Asia-Pacific maritime realm. The second section explores the Chinese threat to regional maritime economy and energy security. The third section provides an assessment of the increase of regional navalism. The fourth section considers the challenges of China's maritime ambition to the formation of maritime security building.

7.1 Determining the Changing Distribution of Regional Strategic Equilibrium

Since the collapse of the former Soviet Union in the Asia-Pacific, China has gradually been filling the power vacuum in the region, becoming the leading Asian power since the 1990s. Due to China's rapid politico-economic emergence as a great power, both China and the US today can be seen as the two leading powers of the region, establishing a potential bipolar structure in the multilateral Asia-Pacific system. Inevitably, they will not be strategic partners; instead, they will be strategic competitors, engaged in a traditional great power struggle for security and influence. As Robert S. Ross once indicated, the grand strategies of China and the US in the Asia-Pacific have involved a land power (China) being countered by a sea power (the US).[3]

[3] Robert S. Ross, 'The Geography of Peace: East Asia in the 21st Century,' *International Security*, Vol.

In this region, the US and its allies maintain many military bases and facilities, from the west coast of the US to Hawaii and Guam, and from South Korea and Japan in the north through Southeast Asia down to Australia in the Indian Ocean. Under the competitive context of American maritime dominance, China's maritime security strategy for defence against the US is to maintain strategic deterrence via a credible second-strike capability, thereby defending China's territory, littoral waters, and islands. This Sino-US maritime strategic contest has been shaping a structure of continental-maritime strategic equilibrium and regional stability in the twenty-first century.

Although the end of the Cold War greatly reduced the likelihood of an international war in the Asia-Pacific, it did not end many limited/local conflicts in the region. The emerging maritime competition in the post-Cold War era has raised the possibility of low-intensity maritime conflicts between the US, China, and other Asian countries. For example, this region has many flash points involving potential territorial disputes, particularly in areas around archipelagos and islands with the most serious tensions over resources and waters acquisition among China, Japan and the ASEAN countries likely to arise near the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands and the Spratly Islands. In addition, the acceleration of China's economic development has increased the strategic value of the Indian Ocean, through which energy is supplied to this region, especially from the Middle East. This also raises security concerns for India. In this sense, China's escalating maritime power and strategic ambition can be seen as an important factor in determining the changing distribution of regional strategic balance at sea.

7.1.1 Sino-US Maritime Strategic Balancing in the Western Pacific Ocean

With double-digit increases in its annual defence budgets, China's expanding maritime military is a principal security concern of the Asia-Pacific. From Washington's concern, the regional power structure is moving slowly towards a bipolar one, in which rising China is seen as the greatest threat to challenge the post-Cold War global structure of American unipolarity. In fact, despite China's recent development, it still cannot match the military and economic capabilities of the US.

23, No. 4 (Spring 1999), pp. 109-10.

However, Washington still bases its strategic planning on the security assumption that Beijing is striving for strategic parity, and so maintains a strong military presence in the region specifically for deterring any future threats from China. Similarly, from Beijing's point of view as with Washington's, China's rise as a leading power has challenged the US superpower in the region and led to the emergence of a possible regional bipolar structure, even though China is committed to multi-polarity.[4] Added to this, the strategic interaction between continental China and maritime America almost determines the power equilibrium of the region. This maritime strategic balance can be examined at two levels—the diplomatic and the military.

On the diplomatic level, generally, the US, as a world superpower, often plays the role of a strategic and military balancer in the Western Pacific Ocean, maintaining the regional status quo to counter any Asian great power that might arise. The maritime strategic interest of the US in the Western Pacific Ocean is based on its maritime policy of freedom of the high seas. The right of free passage in international waters and airspace is a requirement of sustained military operations, and is required to maintain easy access to the US network of allies and regional commercial interests. Therefore, the US cannot be expected to stand passively by in the face of the growing military challenge to the freedom of the high seas posed by China in the Asia-Pacific maritime region. Similarly, the US cannot quietly stand by while China expands its political and military influence in its contiguous regions.

In order to counter the rising threat of Chinese maritime power, the US has enhanced military cooperation with South Korea and Japan in Northeast Asia, and the 1997 new US-Japan Defence Guidelines clearly imply that the US intends to maintain military and strategic balance in the region, to discourage Beijing's use of force. The objective of these guidelines is 'to create a solid basis for more effective and credible US-Japan cooperation under normal circumstances, in case of an armed attack against Japan, and in situations in areas surrounding Japan.'[5] In a sense, this strategic purpose is not only designed exclusively for a possible emergency on the Korean peninsula, but also for China's expansion at sea near Japan. In Southeast Asia, although the US has closed its military bases in the region (such as Clark Air Field and Subic Bay in the Philippines in 1991), it still maintains military cooperation agreements and

[4] Ross, 'The Geography of Peace,' pp. 83-84.
[5] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 'The Guidelines for Japan-US Defence Cooperation.' Available from <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/guideline2.html>. Accessed on 10 November 2008.

maritime security initiatives for naval facilities with many Asian countries, in order to address the complicated situation in the South China Sea, to counter maritime terrorist activities, and to uphold regional stability.[6]

On the military level, for Asia-Pacific maritime stability, the US has accumulated massive military superiority in the region, building a Pacific Fleet that includes six aircraft carriers and 27 nuclear-powered submarines. This naval force connects the US allies of East Asia, from Japan to the South China Sea.[7] In part as a consequence of this overwhelming naval strength, China sees the US as a worldwide hegemon that stands in the way of attempts to complete the Chinese process of nation building and ensuring territorial integrity.[8] Hence, China's military doctrine toward the US is one of 'limited nuclear deterrence' (LND)—that is, an ability and willingness to use nuclear weapons at the tactical, theatre, and regional levels in order to deter potential rivals and control further escalation.[9] Concretely, the majority of this deterrence is aimed specifically at countering and defeating US power in, and extension into, the Western Pacific Ocean and China's waters.

In recent years, China's development and deployment of its two (at least) Jin-class 094 nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBN) is one obvious indicator of this military direction. Each of the stealth 094 SSBNs carries 12 JL-2 submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) with a range of approximately 10,000 kilometres.[10] This missile is the submarine-launched version of the DF-31 inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBM) that are able to deter US intervention in the event of a regional dispute and crisis by striking targets on the US west coast from waters near China.[11] This advanced naval capability has been difficult for the US to

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[6] Refer to Liselotte Odgaard, *Maritime Security between China and Southeast Asia: Conflict and Cooperation in the Making of Regional Order* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).
[7] David Rosenberg and Christopher Chung, 'Maritime Security in the South China Sea: Coordinating Coastal and User State Priorities,' *Ocean Development & International Law*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (January 2008), p. 53.
[8] Paul Dodge, 'Circumventing Sea Power: Chinese Strategies to Deter U.S. Intervention in Taiwan,' *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 23, No. 5 (2004), p. 396.
[9] Alastair Iain Johnston, 'China's New 'Old Thinking': The Concept of Limited Deterrence,' *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Winter 1995/1996), pp. 11-13.
[10] Claire Taylor and Tim Youngs, 'China's Military Posture,' Research Paper 08/15, International Affairs and Defence Section, House of Commons Library, London, 12 February 2008, pp. 38-39. Available from <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2008/rp08-015.pdf>. Accessed on 13 November 2008.
[11] Michael S. Chase, Andrew S. Erickson and Christopher Yeaw, 'The Future of Chinese Deterrence Strategy,' *China Brief*, Vol. 9, Iss. 5 (4 March 2009), pp. 6-8. Michael Swaine and Loren H. Runyon, *NBR Analysis: Missiles and Missile Defense in Asia* (Seattle: The National Bureau of Asian Research, 2002), p. 19.

target and detect, which may also result in the underwater setting becoming a realm of dangerously close approach between USN attack submarines and PLAN SSBMs.[12] While Beijing has relatively weak naval capabilities, it still can deter the American military deployment and strategic planning in the region with its limited nuclear deterrence. Remarkably, this situation might cause an asymmetric Sino-US nuclear balance at sea.

In addition, the PLA is making a policy of 'strategic modernisation,' including the modernisation of a system of C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computer, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance), which will enable the PLA to have full control of its nuclear capabilities.[13] This has greatly enhanced the operational usability of the Chinese LND to counter the US deployment of a national missile defence system and aircraft carrier battle groups in the region. Compared with US military capabilities, China's military is still relatively weak. However, with the PLA's rising capability of limited deterrence, China has almost established an asymmetric Sino-US military balancing in Asia. In this new regional equilibrium, the US is no longer a hegemon, but is sharing power with China in the Western Pacific Ocean.

7.1.2 The Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands and Spratly Disputes in Sino-Japan-ASEAN Balancing

The Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands consist of five uninhabited islets in the East China Sea, which are claimed by China, Japan, and Taiwan. Japan formally incorporated these islets into its territory in 1895. After World War II, the US took administrative control of these islets in 1953, in line with arrangements determined under the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 8 September 1951.[14] In 1971, Beijing declared ownership of the

[12] Arthur S. Ding, 'Sino-U.S. Competition in Strategic Arms.' Working Paper, No. 157, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, 24 April 2008, pp. 22-24.
[13] Mark Stokes, *China's Strategic Modernization: Implication for the United States* (Carlisle: US Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 1999), pp. 58-59.
[14] According to the Article 3 of the Treaty, 'Japan will concur in any proposal of the United States to the United Nations to place under its trusteeship system, with the United States as the sole administering authority, Nansei Shoto south of 29deg. north latitude (including the Ryukyu Islands and the Daito Islands), Nanpo Shoto south of Sofu Gan (including the Bonin Islands, Rosario Island and the Volcano Islands) and Parece Vela and Marcus Island. Pending the making of such a proposal and affirmative action thereon, the United States will have the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of these islands, including

Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands, but in 1972, the US handed over control of the islands to Japan, along with Okinawa, situated 200 nautical miles east of the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands. This not only provoked a protest by China against the US decision at that time, but the situation became a focus of maritime conflict between China and Japan that persists even today.

Japan asserts that it occupied the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands from 1895 and argues that before this period they were '*terra nullius*'—unoccupied islands with no owner.[15] China counters by citing historical references to justify its claim that the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands have been Chinese territory since ancient times. China notes that the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands are located around 120 nautical miles northeast of Taiwan, and argues that they should be considered a natural part of this island; thus, following from the 'one China' principle—Taiwan is a part of China—the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands are Chinese territory.[16] With the different arguments concerning the ownership of the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands, and their increasing research activities and naval operations by China and Japan in the nearby exclusive economic zone (EEZ), this conflict has increased maritime tensions in Sino-Japanese relations, and might bring the navies of the two sides into a dangerous confrontation.

Due to the complicated historical background of the dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands, Japan sees China as a potential maritime threat to regional security. China appears to desire the economic and military capabilities of a great power, but it is slow in revealing whether reunification with lost territories is a higher priority than peaceful coexistence with neighbouring states.[17] Japan wishes China to behave as a responsible great power, committed to the non-use of force when disputes happen. At the same time, Japan does not wish to accept primary responsibility for grooming China as a responsible great power. Instead, it prefers to count on Washington to push Beijing to accept international norms of national behaviour, and to play the role of mediator between China and Japan. This desire is reinforced by China's view that Japan is a regional power with no legitimate right to wield dominant

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their territorial waters.' Refer to the San Francisco Peace Treaty (also known as the Treaty of Peace with Japan). Available from <http://www.taiwandocuments.org/sanfrancisco01.htm>. Accessed on 15 November 2008.

[15] Liselotte Odgaard, 'Perception, Pragmatism, and Political Will: Maritime Disputes and Balances of Power in the Asia-Pacific,' *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2002), p. 129.

[16] *Ibid*., p. 130.

[17] Xinbo Wu, 'The Security Dimension of Sino-Japanese Relations: Warily Watching One Another,' *Asian Survey*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (March/April, 2000), pp. 304-7.

influence on Asia-Pacific security.[18]

Although the 1951 Treaty of Peace with Japan noted that 'Japan renounces all right, title and claim to the Spratly Islands and to the Paracel Islands,'[19] it did not nominate a new owner. As a result, several new claimants from Southeast Asia entered the maritime argument over sovereignty, causing several military disputes between China and some maritime Southeast Asian states. Thus, for example, in 1971 the Philippines claimed the eastern part of the Spratlys and occupied three features. The Filipino action triggered a scramble for effective occupation. South Vietnam began occupation in 1973. In 1983, Malaysia claimed the southern part of the Spratlys, and Brunei claimed the same maritime space after 1988.[20] Meanwhile, China started to join the scramble for effective occupation, precipitating several naval conflicts in this region in the 1980s. Meanwhile, the development of a prosperous regional economy has increased the strategic importance of the South China Sea. Thus, current maritime security concerns in the South China Sea involve three main areas: the struggle over overlapping EEZ resources; control of the significance of the world's busiest international SLOCs, and the ongoing modernisation of regional naval forces.

In related to the strategic shift from coastal defence to offshore defence since the 1980s, the expansion of China's maritime strategy and its naval forward presence in the South China Sea have become a security concern for Southeast Asia. In order to prevent China's maritime threat, in 1992 the foreign ministers of some Southeast Asian states for the first time called for the US to preserve a stable military balance by maintaining a military presence in the region. In 1995, the ASEAN member states issued a condemnation of China's occupation of Mischief Reef (part of the Spratly islands), and called for a resolution of the problems caused by development in this area.[21]

Within the emerging Sino-US bipolar structure in the Asia-Pacific, Southeast Asian governments, like Japan, have begun to recognise that they cannot avoid the reality of Sino-US strategic competition in the region. The US diplomatic and military presence in Southeast Asia provides an opportunity for regional security cooperation

[18] *Ibid*., p. 308.
[19] The Article 2 (f) of the Treaty. Available from <http://www.taiwandocuments.org/sanfrancisco01.htm>. Accessed on 20 November 2008.
[20] Odgaard, 'Perception, Pragmatism, and Political will,' p. 124.
[21] *Ibid*.

and power balancing between China and Southeast Asia.[22] To reduce regional maritime conflicts in the South China Sea, both China and regional states avoid negotiating complicated military-strategic issues concerning the sovereignty of islands, but they do talk about the common interests of economic security and cooperation. This impression was confirmed in the 2002 'Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea,' which affirmed the Southeast Asian states' commitment to a range of CBMs designed to mitigate tensions and defuse crisis escalation,[23] and which declared their intent to exercise 'self-restraint' in avoiding sensitive activities that would escalate conflicts in the South China Sea.[24] Beijing's current policy for the South China Sea is to promote as a first priority common economic cooperation and development, because regional coexistence is more pragmatic than confrontation. In this light, Beijing seems to agree that states of the region should be allowed to pursue their national interests at sea, as long as they do not jeopardise the principle of regional maritime security.

7.1.3 The Indian Ocean Competition between China and India

In geopolitics, the structure of power in Sino-Indian relations includes many complex factors, such as the political-military status of Tibet, Nepal, Burma, and Bangladesh; the capabilities and orientation of Pakistan; the political-military regime of the Indian Ocean; the political-military status of the southern slope of the eastern Himalayan region; and so on.[25] These factors have created a mutual security dilemma in Sino-Indian relations. With the increasing need for the oil of the Middle East, the economic-strategic value of the Indian Ocean is increasing for the countries of the Asia-Pacific. Undeniably, the main concern animating Chinese interests in the India Ocean is the security of SLOCs for energy supplies, which has also prompted Indian concern for maritime security.

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[22] Rosenberg and Chung, 'Maritime Security in the South China Sea,' p. 53. In order to prevent potential maritime military conflict in the South China Sea, the US deployed approximately 190 ships, 1,400 Navy and Marine Corps aircraft and 35 shore installations in the region.
[23] J. Marshall Beier, 'Bear Facts and Dragon Boats: Rethinking the Modernization of Chinese Naval power,' *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (August 2005), p. 306.
[24] Amy Kazmin, 'China Agrees Pact on Disputed Islands,' *Financial Times*, Nov. 5, 2002. Available from <http://www.saigon.com/pipermail/vnforum/2002-November/000365.html>. Accessed on 22 November 2008.
[25] Carolyn Pumphrey, *The Rise of China in Asia: Security Implications* (Carlisle: SSI, U.S. Army War College, 2002), p. 267.

Energy supply is the Achilles' heel of China's economic development. With its greatly increasing energy consumption in recent decades, for Beijing, any disruption of foreign energy supplies would act as a brake on its economic development.[26] According to a 2003 prediction of the US Energy Information Administration, overseas energy supplies will fuel 75 per cent of Chinese demand by 2020. In 2004, US National Intelligence Council projected that China's consumption will have to increase by 150 per cent by 2020 in order to sustain a healthy rate of economic expansion.[27] Considering these estimates, the security of the sea routes stretching from China's coastlines, via the Indian Ocean, to the Persian Gulf has definitely taken on special strategic importance for China. This might lead to maritime competition in the Indian Ocean between Beijing and New Delhi.

India's rapid rise to strategic prominence in the Asia-Pacific has been aided by its absence in the history of disputes in the region. India has no territorial claims in the region, unlike China, the US, Japan and some Southeast Asian states, and so is perceived as having no military-strategic ambition in the region. India is perceived as a rising power that could play a kind of balancing role, *vis-à-vis* a rising China in particular, without posing a direct threat.[28] Nevertheless, as its economy and trade with ASEAN and China grows, India has an increasing economic-security incentive to keep regional SLOCs open in Southeast Asia for international seaborne trade, shipping, and resource supply.

This also can be seen as the dynamic of India's recent 'Look East' policy since the mid-1990s, which has focused on expanding India's maritime interest beyond the Indian Ocean.[29] The main purpose of India's look-east policy is, in general, to build a good relationship, based on economic and security cooperation, with ASEAN, including:[30] establishment of politico-strategic connections with ASEAN through joint maritime operations to secure SLOCs and pooling resources against common threats; development of strong economic bonds with the region, including showcasing India's

[26] Charles Wolf Jr., K. C. Yeh, Benjamin Zycher, Nicholas Eberstadt and Sung-Ho Lee, *Fault Lines in China's Economic Terrain* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2003), pp. 105-6.
[27] James R. Holmes and Toshi Yoshihara, 'China's Naval Ambitions in the Indian Ocean,' *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (June 2008), pp. 367-94.
[28] Broadly speaking, the impact on South Asia of China's enhanced naval power would be to prompt India to assert forcefully its regional power status, pushing India to emerge as the pre-eminent naval power in the India Ocean with the support of the US and Western powers.
[29] G.V.C. Naidu, 'Looking East: India and South Asia,' *Asia Pacific Forum* (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 2005), pp. 190-204.
[30] *Ibid*., pp. 196-97.

economic potential for investments and trade; and, construction of a number of confidence-building measures to enhance regional multilateralism.

Given India's status as a rising politico-economic power in South Asia, its primary national interest is to assure maritime security; thus, the Indian Navy's slice of the defence budget rose from US $7.5 billion for the period 1997 to 2001, to US $18.3 billion between 2002 and 2007.[31] In 2004's *Indian Maritime Doctrine*, New Delhi states that India must safeguard its interests in the EEZ as well as trade, and notes that keeping SLOCs open in peace or war is a primary national maritime interest.[32] This statement greatly increases the role of the Indian Navy in the Indian Ocean, and challenges China's maritime ambition to ensure commercial routes and control the energy lifelines of the region.

To balance the emergence of India as an Asian power, China established close naval cooperation with Burma, Pakistan and Iran, to guarantee the security of SLOCs in the Southeast Asian seas and the Indian Ocean. There was concern in India that the Chinese naval assistance in developing Pakistan's Gwadar port could constitute a vital threat to shipping routes, that China's support of the modernisation of Burma's naval bases was designed to enhance PLAN submarine operations.[33] Obviously, the objectives of this Chinese strategic arrangement are not only to protect China's future economic interest in South Asia, but also to monitor Indian and US naval activities in the area.[34]

7.2 Potential Threat to Regional Maritime Economic Energy Security

The Asia-Pacific has the world's largest and most dynamic economies, as well as the greatest power competition in international politics. Maritime geo-strategic trends in the Asia-Pacific are driven by robust energies of economic globalisation, predicated

[31] David Scott, 'India's Drive for a 'Blue Water' Navy,' *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Winter 2007-08), p. 14.
[32] Government of India, *Indian Maritime Doctrine* (New Delhi: Integrated HQ, Ministry of Defence (Navy), 25 April 2004), p. 63.
[33] Report of a Conference Organised by the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS), 'Maritime Balance of Power in the Asia-Pacific,' 8th-9th March 2005, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, p. 17.
[34] Lee Jae-hyung, 'China's Expanding Maritime Ambitions in the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean,' *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (December 2002), p. 552-53.

on seaborne trade, and an impressive regional economic growth and integration. In the light of geo-economics, Beijing sees the region as a nearby, and strategic, maritime and economic centre, and securing sources of natural resources and goods is vital to China's prosperous littoral economic development. Regional natural resources vital to continued Chinese economic growth include Australian iron ore, Philippine copper, Malaysian palm oil, Indonesian lumber, Burmese teak, and Thai rubber. Most important among the cargoes arriving by sea are China's energy supplies, which are increasingly becoming a major concern in China's continuing economic growth and affluence.[35]

Beijing's anxiety about its growing economy and energy security is driving an expanding 'string-of-pearl' maritime strategy, spearheaded by an advanced Chinese navy, to secure SLOCs for future oil supplies. Moreover, the rim of the Western Pacific Ocean has become China's main arena for its economic development and security. Hence, the protection of EEZs has become part of the evolving mission of the PLAN. Beijing's maritime anxiety is rooted in a deep-seated fear that pressure from a disruption of external energy supplies and price spikes could undermine China's rapid economic growth, which might shake internal social stability and so threaten continued CCP authority in China.[36] In PLAN modernisation programs since the mid-1980s, Beijing has changed its approach to maritime rights for offshore waters. Maritime expansion today is the main approach to secure China's outward economy. Conversely, this has created a potential threat to the regional security of seaborne traffic and EEZs.

7.2.1 SLOCs and Regional Energy Security

Energy security can be defined as 'assuring adequate, reliable supplies of energy at a reasonable price and in ways that do not jeopardize major national values and objectives'.[37] This definition has three essential elements. The first is that energy must be available at a confirmed location (where the energy supply exists naturally, or where the energy is going to be consumed) with access to fossil fuels, such as

[35] David Zweig and Bi Jianhai, 'China's Global Hunt for Energy,' *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 5 (September/October 2005), pp. 25-38.
[36] Evelyn Goh and Sheldon W. Simon, *China, the United States, and Southeast Asia: Contending Perspectives on Politics, Security, and Economics* (London: Routledge, 2008), pp. 73-74.
[37] Daniel Yergin, 'Energy Security in the 1990s,' *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (Fall 1988), p. 111.

petroleum, natural gas and coal, in order to satisfy consumption needs. Second, energy must be affordable. Third, energy security equals military assurance.[38] With the growth of the global economy, the economic and strategic values of the Western Pacific Ocean are increasing. The growing importance of this region creates the following issues:[39] (1) In order to guarantee the security of the SLOCs of the region, many maritime states are engaging in defence build-ups. This precipitates the emergence of sea lanes, increases the dangers of a naval arms race and heightens the risk of naval confrontation. (2) States of this region will compete to acquire food and energy from the seas. Disputes over the sovereignty of islands and overlapping waters will increase insofar as they guarantee food and energy. (3) The economic success of most regional states is based on a maritime economy and seaborne trade, which are becoming more dependent upon the security of SLOCs. (4) While the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) should guarantee the principle of the freedom of the seas for all maritime states, in practice this principle is actually only enforceable for regional great powers.

China's maritime threat to regional energy security is mainly related to sovereignty issues concerning Taiwan and the South China Sea, which pose direct threats to the security of regional SLOCs. As regards Taiwan, Beijing insists that the island is part of China's territory, while Taipei insists that it has its own sovereignty. The dispute is particularly dangerous because of the potential for US military intervention to ensure Taiwan's independence. The immediate impact on SLOC security would be that any dispute over Taiwan could exacerbate disputes with Japan and complicate maritime cooperation prospects with the US and its allies.[40] It is an obstacle to possible future maritime cooperative efforts.

As to the South China Sea, this area is contested by China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei and the Philippines.[41] The conflicts in this area are particularly sensitive, because control of the waterways would constitute a potential threat to the region's primary SLOCs, via the Malacca Strait (or the Sunda Strait and the Lombok

[38] Bernard D. Cole, 'The Energy Factor in Chinese Maritime Strategy,' in Gabriel B. Collins, Andrew S. Erickson, Lyle J. Goldstein, and William S. Murray, eds, *China's Energy Strategy: The Impact on Beijing's Maritime Policies* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2008), p. 342.
[39] Young-Sun Song, 'Review of Recent East Asian Security Environment and Asia-Pacific Maritime Strategy,' *Korea Observer*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (Spring 2002), pp. 151-152.
[40] Bernard D. Cole, *Sea Lanes and Pipelines: Energy Security in Asia* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2008), p. 92.
[41] Mark J. Valencia, 'China and the South China Sea Disputes,' *Adelphi Paper 298* (London: IISS, February 1996), pp. 25-49.

Strait), to the oil energy resources of the Middle East. The US also has stated that any attempt to declare the area as sovereign territory (China is the only likely claimant) would be considered a violation of the principle of the freedom of the seas, and would be unacceptable.[42]

Although Beijing has not actively launched any warfare in these two areas after the Cold War for its maritime interests and sea rights, its expanding maritime strategic behaviour and emerging ocean-going naval capabilities have triggered a regional focus on the security of Asian seaborne traffic for energy supplies, which also has caused a regional fear of China being a threat at sea. In order to prevent national threats to energy transport, this security issue will require effective multilateral efforts to resolve international disputes, such as coordinated patrols, maritime air patrols (also known as 'Eyes in the Sky' initiatives) and information sharing.[43] Thus, the concept of coexistence for protecting SLOCs and energy security might play a positive role in reducing China's maritime threat.

7.2.2 EEZs and Regional Economic Security

It is necessary to further examine the long-standing maritime disputes between China and its neighbouring states in the context of UNCLOS. In UNCLOS, the design of EEZs attempts to build a maritime order that will accommodate the competition between maritime states wishing to maintain control over their offshore resources, and maritime powers wishing to maintain their traditional freedom of action in areas beyond their own territorial waters. It provides littoral states with the rights to extend their sovereign jurisdiction under a set of maritime norms, authorising expansion of their territorial waters to twelve nautical miles, while limiting the contiguous zone to 24 nautical miles. In addition, it also declares that EEZs shall not extend beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured, and that continental shelves may not be extended beyond a limit of 350 nautical miles from territorial baselines.[44] Within the range of EEZs, littoral states only can exercise their sovereign rights for peaceful use of the sea. Specifically, an

[42] Cole, *Sea Lanes and Pipelines*, p. 92.
[43] Joshua Ho, "The importance and security of regional sea lanes," in Kwa Chong Guan and John K. Skogan, eds, *Maritime Security in Southeast Asia* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 29-31.
[44] Article 57, 1982 UNCLOS III. *Official Text of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea with Annexes and Index* (New York: United Nations, 1983).

EEZ is a special area, neither high seas nor territorial waters, through which there is freedom of navigation and overflight, subject to the principle of 'due regard' and 'non-abuse of the rights of others'.[45]

This has precipitated overlapping claims and maritime disputes over 200 nautical-mile EEZs in East Asia; accordingly, China has declared that the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands in the East China Sea are part of its territory,[46] and that China has exclusive historic rights in most of the South China Sea.[47] Similarly, the Philippines has claimed the largest area of the Spratlys as its territory, Malaysia has extended its continental shelf to include the Spratlys, and Brunei has established its EEZ to include the south of the Spratlys. Among Southeast states, Beijing's claims to the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea are disputed by the Philippines, Malaysia and Vietnam (See Appendix F). According to China's 1998 law on its Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf, it states that the legislation will not affect the state's 'claim of historic rights.' This suggests that China may maintain its claim to historic rights and waters within the South China Sea. However, it also shows that China no longer regards the waters within the line as its historic waters, since historic waters can only be seen as internal waters or territorial seas according to the third conference of UNCLOS (UNCLOS III) in 1982, which China ratified in 1996.[48]

Nevertheless, the UNCLOS III does not necessarily guarantee to resolve all the economic and strategic disputes arising from EEZs. In the 1990s, Beijing started to claim maritime sovereignty for its '*haiyang guoto*' (maritime territory) according to UNCLOS III. This seems to be supported by China's emerging ocean mentality and strategic ambition, specifically including securing its long shoreline of 18,400 km, the over 6,500 islands to which it lays claim, and its 3.5 million square kilometres of territorial waters—around one million square kilometres of which have been occupied and is being developed by neighbouring states.[49]

The regional tensions over EEZs are nothing more than expressions of concern

[45] Kwa Chong Guan, "Reflections on the changing maritime security environment," in Kwa and Skogan, eds, *Maritime Security in Southeast Asia*, p.192. These ambiguous UNCLOS provisions on EEZ caused an increase in many maritime states' naval intelligence gathering and military activities in EEZs, which has led to the potential crisis; the 2001 Sino-US EP-3 incident is a good example.
[46] Mark J. Valencia, 'Asia, the Law of the Sea and International Relations,' *International Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 2 (1997), p. 271.
[47] Ning Lu, *Flashpoint Spratlys* (New York: Dolphin Books, 1995), pp. 5-35.
[48] Michael Richardson, *Energy and Geopolitics in the South China Sea: Implications for ASEAN and its Dialogue Partners*, ASEAN Studies Centre Report 8, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Studies (ISEAS), April 2009, pp. 5-8.
[49] Song, 'Review of Recent East Asian Security Environment,' p. 161.

over economic security, and the potential of controlling rich oil and natural gas deposits, seaborne trade, EEZ delimitation, and fisheries. Control of the Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands, for example, has a potentially high economic value, as the chain includes around 7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 100 billion barrels of oil.[50] In the South China Sea, the Spratlys and the Paracels are considered of economic and strategic significance as bases for sea-lane defence, interdiction, and surveillance, which have also contributed to friction among some Southeast Asian states. In 1992, Beijing declared that its Law on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone would include these disputed islands, which has raised the spectre of a Chinese threat to the neighbouring littoral states. In the early 1990s, importantly, Indonesia indicated that it was willing to negotiate to solve the Spratlys issue, but it gave up after Beijing's claims seemed to extend to Indonesia's EEZs and continental shelf, including the gas fields near Natuna, currently exploited by Indonesia.[51] China's claims annoyed the Indonesian authorities, and they protested what they considered China's aggression. At that point, Indonesia halted negotiations on the issue of the South China Sea.[52] In an effort to maintain a good relationship with the ASEAN states, in 1997 Beijing indicated its willingness to discuss the issue multilaterally, instead of on a bilateral basis, but its attitude continued to imply that China's policy toward South East Asian states was oriented more towards power than negotiation, with the goal of building a Sino-centric order in the region.[53]

The PLAN's ability to project conventional military power beyond its two island chains is still limited. With the increasing reliance on the sea for economic needs, China can be expected to continue its assertive naval presence, along and within the EEZs of neighbouring states in the East and South China Seas, according to its national interest. The ghost of China's threat will keep haunting the maritime area of the Asia-Pacific, since maritime sovereignty is a vital national interest, and since maritime competition actually is a zero-sum game among nations. Thus, the potential maritime struggle among China and its neighbours for EEZs and SLOCs might not be

[50] United States, Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress—Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2008* (Washington DC: US Department of Defense, 2008), p. 11.
[51] Ralf Emmers, 'Maritime Disputes in the South China Sea: Strategic and Diplomatic Status Quo.' Working Paper No. 87, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, September 2005, p. 5.
[52] Ian Townsend-Gault, 'South China Sea' in Sam Bateman and Stephen Bates, eds, *Regional Maritime Management and Security* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1998), p. 161.
[53] Susan Willett, 'East Asia's Changing Defence Industry,' *Survival*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (Autumn 1997), pp. 109-11.

resolved in the short-term.

7.3 Accelerating the Emergence of Potential Regional Navalism

From a geo-strategic standpoint, China's recent politico-economic-military rise has unquestionably made it more influential in world politics and the Asia-Pacific region than any time in the modern era. Given its regional great power, it will not only keep developing a strong economy and an influential political presence, but it will also translate its economic muscle into becoming a military powerhouse in the region. As China's economy continues to grow, the Beijing authorities will continue to have additional resources to contribute to military modernisation. In the 2005 *Annual Report to Congress* on China's military power, the US Department of Defense estimated that in 2025 China's economy would have grown to $6.4 trillion from about $1.8 trillion, which means that China could be a formidable military power by 2050.[54]

In the maritime domain, the essential aim of PLA power projection capabilities is either to gain control of an area, or, at the least, to deny control to imagined rivals—specifically the US and its allies.[55] Although the US military presence in the region is an important factor contributing to regional stability and security, the reality of China's expanding maritime strategy has still precipitated a regional security dilemma and potential regional arms race. This situation has stimulated the emergence of regional navalism, focused on pursuing advanced naval capabilities for maritime security, and so has triggered a maritime arms race.

An arms race by definition is an abnormally intense condition in relations between states reflecting either or both active political rivalry and mutual fear of the other's military potential.[56] Logically, an arms build-up to defend oneself is a normal behaviour for security-conscious states. However, if this military behaviour becomes a concern for other states, and stimulates an arms competition, this behaviour will be

[54] United States, Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress—the Military power of the People's Republic of China* 2005 (Washington DC: US Department of Defense, 2005), p. 20.
[55] Harold Brown, Joseph W. Prueher, and Adam Segal, *Chinese Military Power* (New York: Council of Foreign Relations, 2003), p. 28.
[56] Barry Buzan and Eric Herring, *The Arms Dynamic in World Politics* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), p. 78.

defined as abnormal, which will lead to a security dilemma. Explicitly, as long as the security dilemma is evident, a competitive military interaction among states to gain security and reduce threats will take place, and as Bruce Russett points out 'it is the element of competition, or interaction that makes the race.'[57]

From a Mahanian viewpoint, a navy *per se* is an offensive force at sea. In the situation of a naval arms race under a maritime security dilemma, it is hard to determine whether a navy is a defensive force or an offensive one, because which it is greatly depends on the way in which the weapons are used by leaders. Eric Grove indicates, 'Naval capabilities cannot be divorced from the political context in which they work. Their degree of defensiveness or offensiveness is more reflection of the intentions of their owners than of the weapons and platforms themselves.'[58]

According to Chinese national defence white papers of 2004 and 2006, it is clear that Beijing has seen the PLAN as a very important means of extending its offshore capabilities and increasing its strategic maritime depth for sea use, denial and control. With an expanding maritime strategic ambition, China's current strategic focus is on its southeast littoral waters. According to the US Department of Defense 2007 assessment of China's military power, around 64 per cent of the PLAN destroyer fleet and 85 per cent of PLAN frigates are deployed in the Chinese East and South Fleets for use in any potential offensive operation across the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea.[59] Even though Beijing always states that its military strategy is a defensive one, and that it has no intention to join a naval competition, its offence-oriented naval build-up (especially its strategic nuclear-powered submarines, large warships and amphibious forces) for securing its maritime interests and dealing with maritime affairs has been accelerating the emergence of potential regional navalism and a naval arms race. Compared with the development of major navies in the Asia-Pacific between 1992 and 2009 (according to IISS *The Military Balance*), as Table 14 shows, the development of the PLAN has created a really formidable navy in the region.

[57] Bruce Russett, *The Prisoners of Insecurity: Nuclear Deterrence, The Arms Race, and Arms Control* (New York: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1983), p. 70.
[58] Eric Grove, 'Naval Technology and Stability,' in Win A. Smit, John Grin and Lev Voronkov, eds, *Military Technological Innovation and Stability in a Changing World* (Armsterdam: VU University Press, 1992). p. 212.
[59] Taylor and Youngs, 'China's Military Posture,' p. 30.

Table 14: Numbers of Vessels and Personnel in 2008 and (in 1992)

	SSBNs	Submarines	Destroyers	Frigates	Amphibious	Personnel
China	3 (1)	62 (94)	28 (19)	50 (37)	244 (61)	255,000 (260,000)
India	-	16 (17)	8 (5)	15 (21)	17 (9)	55,000 (55,000)
Indonesia	-	2 (2)	-	11 (17)	81 (14)	45,000 (42,000)
Japan	-	16 (17)	44 (6)	8 (60)	25 (6)	44,100 (44,000)
Malaysia	-	1 (0)	-	2 (4)	1 (2)	14,000 (10,500)
Philippines	-	-	-	1 (1)	7 (7)	24,000 (23,000)
S. Korea	-	12 (4)	10 (9)	9 (26)	48 (14)	68,000 (60,000)
Singapore	-	4 (0)	-	9 (0)	38 (5)	9,000 (4,500)
Taiwan	-	4 (4)	4 (24)	22 (9)	19 (26)	45,000 (30,000)
Thailand	-	-	-	10 (6)	22 (8)	44,751 (50,000)
Vietnam	-	2 (0)	-	5 (7)	29 (7)	13,000 (31,000)
The US	14 (34)	71 (121)	52 (49)	22 (97)	334 (65)	339,453 (584,800)

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance* 2009 (figures in brackets are from *The Military Balance* 1992).

7.3.1 Modernising Large Surface Combatants

East Asian naval build-up has grown dramatically since the 1990s. According to statistics from *The Military Balance*, the number of major warships in this region increased from 198 to 300, or 52 per cent between 1980 and 2001.[60] The average size and aggregate tonnage of those warships increased even faster in this period. Importantly, the average age of surface combatants decreased from 23 to 21 years during the same two decades. In contrast, during the same period, the number of major warships in non-US NATO fleets decreased by approximately eighteen per cent, South American fleets dropped by seven per cent and the US fleet was reduced by one

[60] International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance, 2001-2002* (London: IISS, 2001) and Richard Sharpe, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships, 2001-02* (Coulsdon: Jane's Information Group, 2001).

third.[61] This statistic indicates the degree to which the strategic importance of the West Pacific Ocean is increasing, which also implies a potential naval competition in this region.

For example, consider some of the major littoral states of Northeast Asia. For large surface warships, China's maritime rise and increasing blue-water strategic ambition from the 1980s to date has motivated regional states to readjust their maritime strategy and naval build-up. China wishes to become the second navy in Asia, to acquire large surface combatants like the Sovremenny-class Guided Missile Destroyers (DDGs) and even aircraft carriers, which are already deployed by Thailand, which introduced an 11,500 tonne Chakri Naruebet-class light aircraft carrier in 1997.[62] Especially noteworthy in this regard is that if the PLAN owns an aircraft carrier battle group, the range of its naval activities will include the second-island chain and the Indian Ocean.

In Japan, the Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force (JMSDF) has acquired four 7,200 tonne Kongo (US Arleigh Burke)-class Aegis destroyers.[63] The JMSDF has also introduced three 8,900 tonne Osumi-class Landing Platform Dock (LPD) vessels since 1998, which have helicopter platforms and can transport 330 troops, 90 tanks and 2 Air Cushioned Landing Crafts (LCACs). The JMSDF now is designing two 13,500 tonne Hyuga-class helicopter-destroyers.[64]

In geopolitics, South Korea not only must face the threat of North Korea, but also face the maritime threats offered by China and Japan. For its surface naval forces, South Korea finished three KDX-2 DDGs in 2004, and is planning to order three KDX-3 Aegis-class DDGs. Taiwan, likewise, has acquired four decommissioned US Kidd-class DDGs, seven Cheng Kun (US Perry)-class frigates and six Kang Ding (French La Fayette)-class frigates.[65] The Taiwanese Navy is now attempting to

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[61] Eric Heginbotham, 'The Fall and Rise of Navies in East Asia: Military Organizations, Domestic Politics, and Grand Strategy,' *International Security*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (Fall 2002), pp. 88-90.
[62] Tamotsu Fukuda, 'Managing the Security Dilemma in East Asia: The Potential and Performance of Confidence Building Measures,' Technical Report, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, Canberra, December 2002, p. 11. Available from <http://dspace.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/39966/2/Managing_the_SD_in_EA.pdf>. Accessed on 27 November 2008.
[63] Desmond Ball, 'Security Trends in the Asia-Pacific Region: An Emerging Complex Arms Race' Working Paper No. 380, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, The Australian National University, November 2003, p.17.
[64] Commodore Stephen Saunders RN, ed., *Jane's Fighting Ships 2002-2003* (Surrey: Jane's Information Group, 2002), p. 390; p. 632.
[65] Ball, 'Security Trends in the Asia-Pacific Region,' p. 22.

acquire a dock landing ship (LSD) Anchorage to replace two existing old LSDs.[66]

In Southeast Asia, Thailand has built up its navy proportionally faster than any other state in East Asia. Thailand started its maritime military shift after 1987, when even naval leaders saw no major naval threat on the horizon. Relative to its neighbours, Thailand's military position was strong, and its largely positive outlook on China was revealed both in its close diplomatic relationship with Beijing, and in the fact that six out of nine of its major warships purchased after 1987 were built in China. [67] Therefore, compared with its littoral neighbours in Southeast Asia, Thailand's naval power was vastly superior, with more than twice the naval tonnage of Vietnam and three times that of Malaysia.[68]

Indonesia's navy arose in the late 1990s. Due to the argument over the Natuna Islands with China in the South China Sea, China's maritime threat pushed Indonesia to focus on naval development rather than its ground force.[69] For the security of the Malacca Strait, Singapore obtained six Lafayette-class Frigates from France in 2005. Singapore has also commissioned four 8,500 tonne Endurance-class LPDs, each of which can transport 350 troops, eighteen tanks, 20 vehicles and four Vehicle Personnel Landing Craft (LCVPs).[70] Added to this, under 'Project Delta' in March 2000, Singapore's navy planned to collaborate with French engineering group DCN in building six new 3,200 tonne stealth frigates (Lafayette-class), which will enter service by 2009.[71] Until then, these advanced frigates will be the largest surface warships of Singapore's navy for maritime defence.

In South Asia, India is an important maritime state, with the world's fifth largest navy. China's rise indeed has triggered India's concern over being encircled in and around the Indian Ocean. This has stimulated India's security concern to strengthen its maritime power, which since the late 1990s has increased in pace, India has shifted the focus of its naval build-up from a brown-water navy to a formidable blue-water navy, in order to create an appropriate *de facto* sphere of influence in the Indian Ocean to balance China's expanding maritime behaviour. Concretely, India's naval

[66] Billy Ruffian, 'Going Down to the Sea in Big Enough Ships,' *Defender* (Australia), Autumn, 2005, p. 32.
[67] Heginbotham, 'The Fall and Rise of Navies in East Asia,' pp. 91-92.
[68] *Ibid*.
[69] *Ibid*.
[70] Saunders RN, ed, *Jane's Fighting Ships 2002-2003*, p.390; p. 632.
[71] Richard Scott, 'Singapore Reveals Project Delta Frigate,' *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 27 November 2002, p, 14.

rise has been in part a reaction by India to China's blue-water intentions and appearance in the Indian Ocean, where India not only tries to shape its maritime security, but from which it also works to project its naval presence further eastwards into the South China Sea and beyond.[72] That is why India needs an ocean-going navy.

In the case of large surface combatants, India's drive for aircraft carriers is envisaged as a priceless tool of power projection.[73] Under political considerations of the Indian blue-water programme, India's existing aircraft carrier INS Viraat-class is being extended in service until 2012, and two aircraft carriers are under construction (one is Indian indigenous INS Vikrant-class, and another is Gorshkov-class, which was brought from Russia in 2004 and renamed as INS Vikramaditya-class). According to India's 'Project 71', the Indian navy plans for a completely new generation of indigenous aircraft carriers, and will have a three carrier fleet by 2017. Subsequently, India might deploy two carrier task forces at sea, while allowing a third ship to be under maintenance or refit.[74] Predictably, Indian naval presence will be noticeable in the Asia-Pacific.

7.3.2 Acquiring Advanced Submarine Fleets and Naval Aircraft

The primary role of the conventional/diesel-electric submarine was, militarily, in anti-surface ship warfare, inserting and removing military forces, and gathering intelligence for sea denial and control. In the 1950s, nuclear power partially replaced diesel-electric propulsion, which greatly increased the strategic-deterrent role of nuclear-powered submarines. With the development of sophisticated sensor systems, the submarine has become an effective-deterrent platform and a stealth underwater naval force, which can carry SLBMs for nuclear strategic deterrence in global range. In the face of a maritime security dilemma, it is actually a powerful naval force for maritime defence of a littoral state, but for other neighbouring states, it is a formidable offensive weapon that can threaten their waters.

Although China's naval expansion is a recent reason for the competition of regional navies for acquiring submarines, this phenomenon can be traced back to the

[72] Scott, 'India's Drive for a 'Blue Water' Navy,' p. 9.
[73] Dean Matthew, 'Aircraft Carriers: An Indian Introspection,' *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 23, No. 12 (March 2000), p. 2135.
[74] Admiral Arun Prakash, 'India's Quest for an Indigenous Aircraft Carrier,' *RUSI Defence Systems*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (July 2006), pp. 50-52.

Cold War period. Under the background of US-Soviet military-strategic competition after WWII, submarine proliferation with prosperous global submarine sales in the Third World (even in many decolonised, newborn countries) posed a serious threat to maritime stability. For example, during the period between 1946 and 1983, the US sold 77 submarines, with almost two-thirds of them going to Third World countries. During the same period, the former USSR supplied 116 submarines to the Third World, 95 of them to China.[75]

Submarine sales triggered a trend in submarine proliferation from the 1960s, with countries of the West selling to Third World and newborn countries; thus, France and West Germany began building new conventional submarines for export, and in the 1980s the Netherlands also began selling submarines. Consequently, since 1971, Algeria, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Libya, Rumania, South Korea and Taiwan all obtained submarines for the first time.[76] With the former Soviet Union's naval assistance during the 1950s and the 1960s, China became the first Third World country to sell submarines in the Third World market.

Given such a context of submarine proliferation and the competition of regional economic interests, China's naval build-up of a large submarine fleet in East Asia in the post-Cold War period has challenged the regional maritime security and may eventually lead to a clash with its neighbours at sea. In Northeast Asia, while relations between China and Taiwan have improved to some extent, China's naval scenario is to blockade Taiwan's seaborne trade by employing its large submarine force in order to prevent Taiwan's independence.[77] In Southeast Asia, the South China Sea is a controversial area with many unresolved territorial disputes over the potentially oil-rich waters and fisheries, and is connected with major crucial international SLOCs by way of the Malacca Strait.[78] China's naval scenario in this region is to declare its sovereign rights by presenting its submarine force for limited deterrence at sea.

China's ambition to proclaim its sovereignty over this area, especially combined with its growing subsurface naval power, has been accelerating regional navies' needs for more advanced submarines to address their maritime security dilemma. From 2002

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[75] Michael D. Wallace and Charles A. Meconis, 'Submarine Proliferation and Regional Conflict,' *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (1995), p. 80.
[76] *Ibid*.
[77] Prasun Sengupta, 'Southeast Asian Naval Programmes, Part III,'*Naval Forces*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (1993), pp. 22-41.
[78] David Miller, 'The Maritime Importance of the South China Sea,'*Naval Forces*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (1993), pp. 32-38.

to date, China has launched new Type 093 Shang-class nuclear powered attack submarines (SSNs), implying that the PLAN not only desires to achieve regional military dominance in Asia, but also allowing Beijing more options for global naval exercise.[79] In recent years, China's rapid naval build-up of underwater forces has had undeniably significant strategic implications for the region, and has stimulated regional competition for submarines.

For example, the Singapore Navy (RSN) signed an agreement with Sweden for the supply of two Västergötland-class submarines in 2005.[80] The Malaysian Navy (RMN) ordered two Scorpène-class submarines from the French in 2006.[81] In 2007, the Indonesian Navy planned to purchase two Russian-made Kilo-class conventional submarines, with a further twelve to be bought by 2024 (however, the order has been cancelled).[82] The Vietnamese Navy plans to buy two or more Kilo-class conventional submarines from Russia before 2015.[83] At the same time, the Indian Navy (INS) is planning to purchase six Scorpène-class and six DCNS submarines from France,[84] and to lease one Akula-class nuclear attack submarine from Russia. Importantly, the INS expects to launch the 'Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) Submarine Project' for building six SSNs in 2009, to be commissioned by 2010.[85]

Therefore, in this context of submarine proliferation within this region, states must enhance their naval capability of anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and their Early Warning Systems (EWS) for the demands of maritime surveillance in EEZs, and in order to monitor the details of new weapons systems. This has led to regional states having to increase naval investments in the field of military technology, including

[79] Taylor and Youngs, *China's Military Posture*, p. 59.
[80] Richard Scott, 'Singapore Considers Purchase of Swedish Submarines,' *Jane's*, October 6, 2005. Available from <http://www.janes.com/defence/naval_forces/news/jni/jni051006_1_n.shtml>. Accessed on 30 November 2008.
[81] M. Jegathesan, 'Arms Race Feared as M'sia Joins Exclusive Submarine Club,' *Malaysiakini*, June 6, 2002. Available from <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/11681>. Accessed on 1 December 2008.
[82] Ron Matthews and Curie Maharani, 'Advanced Fighter Purchase: Heralding Thai Military Modernisation Programme?' *RSIS Commentaries*, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University (18 February, 2008), p. 3. See Khairil Azmi, 'Kilo Class (Project 636) Diesel-Electric Submarine, the "Black Hole",' TANDEF—Think and Act for National Defense, 3 April 2009. Available from <http://www.tandef.net/kilo-class-project-636-diesel-electric-submarine-black-hole>. Accessed on 6 May 2009.
[83] Tom Hyland, ''Arms race' leaving our Subs all at Seas,' *The Sunday Age*, May 6, 2007, p. 9.
[84] The DCNS (Direction des Constructions Navales Services) is a French naval weapons systems company.
[85] T. S. Subramanian, 'ATV Project: India Crosses Major Milestone,' *The Hindu*, November 25, 2005. Available from <http://www.hindu.com/2005/11/25/stories/2005112502201400.htm>. Accessed on 5 December 2008.

national strategic and tactical technical intelligence systems (for example, SIGINT),[86] multi-role fighter aircraft with maritime attack capabilities as well as air superiority capabilities (for example, F-16s and F-18s),[87] maritime intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft (for example, P-3 Orions), [88] electronic and information warfare capabilities, and so on.

In the 1990s, China purchased six Russian Tu-154M airliners, and has modified four of them with electronic intelligence (ELINT) system; it has also ordered six Russian A-50E Mainstay Airborne Early Warning (AEW) aircraft. These aircraft will give the PLAN Air Force an extensive boost in its offensive air capability against its rivals near China's waters, including Taiwan and the South China Sea.[89] Similarly, Japan has purchased thirteen E-2C Hawkeye Airborne Early Warning and Control Systems (AEWCS), five EP-3 Orions, and four American Boeing E-767 AWE aircraft. Like Japan, South Korea also acquired four Boeing E-767 AWE aircraft, and ordered ten Raytheon Hawker 800SIG signals intelligence (SIGINT/ELINT) aircraft from the US since 1996. For the improvement of air reconnaissance capability in the Taiwan Strait, Taiwan has purchased four American-made E-2T Hawkeye AEWCS and Pave Paws radar in 1999.[90]

Rising navalism, with a naval arms-race phenomenon in the Asia-Pacific region is, strictly speaking, the result of an action-response process in the context of competing national maritime interests. Due to China's expanding maritime strategy, the region still sees China as an important element of regional instability. According to the realist self-help international system, the naval forward presence became the main and common approach for regional powers to protect their national interests at sea. Although China's maritime rise in Asia has inevitably caused a regional naval arms race, it has also encouraged regional maritime cooperation for collective security along more rational lines.

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[86] Desmond Ball, *Signals Intelligence in the Post-Cold War Era: Developments in the Asia-Pacific Region* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1993), pp. 102-6.
[87] Department of Defence, *Defence 2000: Our Future Defence Force* (Canberra: Defence Publishing Service, 2000), p. 87. Available from <http://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper/docs/WPAPER.PDF>. Accessed on 6 December 2008.
[88] Wendell Minnick, 'Taipei Considers 12 Orions from USA,' *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 10 April, 2002, p. 14.
[89] Stephen J. Flanagan and Michael E. Marti, eds, *The People's Liberation Army and China in Transition* (Washington DC: National Defense University Press, 2003), pp. 158-60; pp. 144-45.
[90] Fukuda, 'Managing the Security Dilemma in East Asia,' pp. 9-10.

7.4 Challenges to Maritime Security Building

The necessity for naval cooperation and maritime security is highlighted by both the continuing maritime insecurity and the build-up of navies in Asia, but the crux of the issue is that the international mutual trust must be established among powers, and insecurity must be overcome before the potential maritime confidence-building measures (CBMs) are realised. In recent years, the maritime security building among states in the Asia-Pacific region has been a seemingly feasible approach to increasing collective security through reducing threats at sea, but problems within the mechanism are evident politically, strategically and even technically, just because the security perceptions of regional powers differ and some powers are suspicious about the capabilities and intentions of their neighbours. In particular, there are no natural naval partners existing in the region, and tentative steps towards naval cooperation between the US and its allies risk sending the wrong signals to Beijing. While China is enhancing its foreign military relations with its Asian maritime neighbours, attempting to create mutual understanding since the 1990s, the problem of China's military transparency is still a serious concern to regional confidence building. This situation is also challenging the creation of maritime security building in the region.

7.4.1 Regional Naval Cooperation Mechanisms and Maritime Security Initiatives

Although naval activities by Russia and the US in the waters of the Asia-Pacific have decreased over the past decade, the regional navies of China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, India, Australia and some Southeast Asian states are now of more consequence. Regional waters are a more complex operating area for navies than they were in the past, in accordance with the increasing importance of maritime interests and rights.[91] Accordingly, there is an increased risk of incidents between naval forces, with large surface warships, sophisticated submarines and advanced aircraft of so many different states operating in similar areas of relatively restricted waters.

[91] See Mark J. Valencia, 'Northeast Asia: Navigating Neptune's Neighbourhood,' in Nenjamin L. Self and Yuki Tatsumi, eds, *Confidence-Building Measures and Security Issues in Northeast Asia* (Washington, DC: The Henry L. Stimson Center, February 2000).

Therefore, 'frictions can be expected not from the size of the fleets in question, but from their size proportional to the waters they operate in.'[92] In order to build a regime for regional security, naval cooperation and dialogue have been cited recently as possible means of reducing naval competition.

In general, naval cooperation encompasses all military activities associated with the sea. Its scope ranges from low-key confidence building activities, and progresses through exercises and peacetime operations that are more ambitious, bilateral or multilateral exercises, avoidance of maritime incident agreements, naval peacekeeping and cooperation, until cooperative parties reach the high-confidence activities of combined operations for cooperative maritime surveillance and SLOC protection. Principally, the region has three major mechanisms for naval dialogue and security cooperation:

(1) The Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS). Formed in 1988, it brings together leaders from the navies of the Western Pacific (including the navies of the US, China, Japan, South Korea, the ASEAN states, Australia and New Zealand) to discuss any issues of common maritime security concern over, and problems about, marine safety, search and rescue, disaster relief, and marine environment protection.[93] China is a founding member of US-inspired WPNS, but the PLAN did not participate in this naval symposium until 2007.

(2) The biennial Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC). This is the world's largest international maritime exercise, conducted by the US Navy off Hawaii, and since 1971 the major multilateral naval exercises at present conducted in the region. The RIMPAC naval exercises include Japan, South Korea, Canada and Australia. Other regular participants are Chile, Japan, Peru and the United Kingdom. In 2006, Ecuador, India, Malaysia, and Singapore became observer nations. Its main purpose is to enhance interoperability between Pacific Rim naval forces, as a means of promoting stability in the region, to the benefit of all participating nations for avoiding potential armed conflict, such as threats by China and North Korea.[94]

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[92] Paul Bracken, 'Naval Cooperation in Northeast Asia,' *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Summer 1997), p. 205.
[93] Dick Sherwood, 'The Navy and National Security: The Peacetime Dimension,' Working Paper No. 109, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (Canberra: Australian National University, 1994), pp. 61-64.
[94] 'Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC).' Available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/rimpac.htm> and <http://www.c3f.navy.mil/RIMPAC_2008/RIMPAC_2008.html>. Accessed on 10 December 2008.

(3) The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which is a formal, official, multilateral dialogue in the Asia Pacific region beginning in 1994. In its maritime dimension, ARF members have established coordinating agencies to improve maritime security through promoting regional naval cooperation.[95] Many representatives attended the inaugural ARF Maritime Specialist Officials Meeting (MSOM) in Honolulu in 1998, where they considered and discussed methods and means for the ARF to add value to existing activities in the fields of maritime safety, law and order at sea, protection and preservation of the marine environment, information sharing about substandard vessels, oil spill response arrangements, marine information data exchange, and so on. In 5-6 March 2009, the ARF held the first Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ARF ISM on MS/ISM) in Surabaya for many regional maritime security issues.[96] Importantly, China prefers this regional multilateral dialogue for its maritime security to the US-led WPNS and RIMPAC.

The maritime factors of a prosperous global economy are becoming vital. Today, about 80 per cent of the world's trade is carried by ship with more than 1.3 million seafarers on 120,000 vessels in the global maritime fleet. In addition, there are over 2,800 ports in the world, including 361 ports in the US.[97] Due to the emergence of non-traditional threats such as Al Qaeda, maritime terrorism represents a new category of threat, and has become a major security concern in the world. The main threat of maritime terrorism is that a ship could become an agent of proliferating weapons of mass destruction (WMD), with terrorist shipping fleets and even a unit of terrorist delivery systems for dangerous maritime cargoes (DMCs). These could cause a direct threat to the global maritime economy. After the attacks on 11 September 2001 (9/11), the US, under the Bush administration, started to launch three major international maritime security initiatives for countering Al Qaeda terrorist activities, preventing WMD proliferation, and enhancing global maritime security cooperation in general:

(1) The Container Security Initiative (CSI). The CSI, a global initiative first proposed by the US Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in 2002, has as

[95] Cole, *Sea Lanes and Pipelines*, p. 168.
[96] "Co-Chairs' Summary Report of the First ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM on MS), Surabaya, Indonesia, 5-6 Maech 2009." Available from <http://www.aseanregionalforum.org/PublicLibrary/ARFChairmansStatementsandReports/tabid/66/Default.aspx >.
[97] Donna J. Nincic, 'The Challenge of Maritime Terrorism: Threat Identification, WMD and Regime Response,' *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (August 2005), pp. 621-22.

its main purpose countering the high-risk posed by the large number of shipping containers delivered to the US every year.[98] The initiative allows US Customs inspectors to work with the contents of suspicious cargoes before they are placed onto ships bound for the US. Its core features are as follows:

> Using intelligence and automated information to identify and target containers that pose a risk for terrorism; pre-screening those containers that pose a risk at the port of departure before they arrive at US ports; using detection technology to quickly pre-screen containers that pose a risk; and using smarter, tamper-evident containers.[99]

The CSI is a reciprocal agreement. From the standpoint of maritime security, many states have followed the CSI requirements, due to its economic security incentives.[100] This US-centric CSI web offers its participant states the reciprocal opportunity to protect their own incoming shipment security from a maritime terrorist strike or catastrophe, and many countries are currently taking advantage of this reciprocity.[101] China is no exception and two of its cities—Shanghai and Shenchen—are full participants.[102] Until 2006, around 50 ports were certified as CSI compliant, accounting for two-thirds of all trans-Pacific containers shipped to the US.[103]

(2) The Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI).[104] The design of the PSI aims to seize shipments of WMD and missile-related equipment and technology by sea, land and air, before they fall into the hands of terrorist organisations worldwide. It mainly builds on efforts by the international community to prevent proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. Participating states must agree to share information and resources to strengthen existing national and international laws, in order to allow the aggressive interdiction of vessels suspected of carrying WMD.[105] To date, about

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[98] Rosenberg and Chung, 'Maritime Security in the South China Sea,' pp. 53-54.
[99] 'The Introduction of the Container Security Initiative (CSI).' Available from <http://www.customs.gov.hk/eng/csi/index.htm>. Accessed on 15 December 2008.
[100] The CSI Participants are Belgium, Britain, Canada, China, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka and Sweden.
[101] CSI partners can send their customs officers to major US ports to target ocean-going, containerised cargo to be exported from the US to their countries. Likewise, CBP shares information on a bilateral basis with its CSI partners. Japan and Canada are currently taking advantage of this reciprocity.
[102] Peter A. Dutton, 'Charting a Course: US-China Cooperation at Sea,' *China Security*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Winter 2009), pp. 15-16.
[103] Nincic, 'The Challenge of Maritime Terrorism,' p. 635.
[104] The PSI participants include Australia, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, Poland, Portugal, Russia and Spain.
[105] W. Lawrence S. Prabbakar, 'Maritime Strategic Trends in the Asia-Pacific: Issues and Challenges' in W. Lawrence S. Prabhakar, Joshua H. Ho, and Sam Bateman, eds, *The Evolving Maritime Balance of*

75 states around the world support the PSI. However, support for the PSI is weak in the Asia-Pacific, where only Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore and Thailand have publicly indicated their support for this initiative. Some key maritime powers have not joined, including China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia and even South Korea. The main reason is that the PSI is an extra-regional proposal, containing a set of interdiction principles allowing states to conclude bilateral reciprocal boarding arrangements for their vessels, and permission to board in international waters would be expedited in case of suspicious activity. Given the high sensitivities of protecting national sovereignty, the involvement of extra-regional navies in the interdiction of shipping in regional waters is viewed as interference in the sovereign rights of the maritime powers.[106] For China, Beijing's objection to the US-dominated PSI is because it believes that the Bush government's pre-emptive strategy is an aggressive-coercive mechanism,[107] which is lacking a solid basis in international law, China also objects to a direct role in PSI activities for the US National Security Council.[108]

(3) The Regional Maritime Security Initiative (RMSI). In 2004, a third round of the so-called 'Shangri-la Dialogue' was held in Singapore, with three agendas: maritime security, North Korea's nuclear threat, and the RMSI. Among these agendas, the US-centric RMSI was the critical issue. In March 2004, Admiral Thomas Fargo, then commander of the US Pacific Command, mentioned RMSI as a US initiative to support the PSI and claimed RMSI was required because there were vast stretches of global ocean that were uncharted territory, unmanaged by the US, which needed to be put under firmer control, including allowing the US to share information and implement standing operation procedures in East Asia.[109] The purpose of the RMSI is to prevent ships carrying WMD and DMCs from threatening ports, SLOCs and EEZs. For the prevention of threats from terrorist and pirate activities in the South China Sea, the US regarded it as necessary to provide assistance to the states along the Malacca Strait, to help them maintain international navigational security.[110] In contrast with

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Power in the Asia-Pacific—Maritime Doctrines and Nuclear Weapons at Sea (Singapore: Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, Nanyang Technological University, 2006), p. 53.

[106] *Ibid*.

[107] Mingjiang Li, 'China's Gulf of Aden Expedition and Maritime Cooperation in East Asia,' *China Brief*, Vol. 9, Iss. 1 (12 January 2009), p. 7.

[108] Dutton, 'Charting a Course,' pp. 19-20.

[109] Gaye Christoffersen, 'Chinese and ASEAN Responses to the US Regional Maritime Security Initiative,' in Guoguang Wu and Helen Lansdowne, eds, *China Turns to Multilateralism: Foreign Policy and Regional Security* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 129.

[110] Sung Yen-hui, 'U.S. 'Regional Maritime Security Initiative' to Taiwan's Maritime Security,' *Haixun*

both the CSI and the PSI, the RMSI, proposed by the US, caused considerable consternation in the South China Sea.

Strictly, the PSI and the RMSI are related, but as the PSI is a global effort to stop proliferation, it does not address other transnational threats. In contrast, the plan of the RMSI will be focused on maritime transnational threats in the Asia-Pacific region, but it was controversial and never implemented. For the security of the Malacca Strait, Singapore agreed to this American proposal for maritime security, but Malaysia and Indonesia strongly opposed it. Both states were concerned that the initiative would infringe the sovereignty of their territorial waters, and believe that the security of the strait is the responsibility of the strait's littoral states. The Malaysian government claimed that the US presence in the strait was a source of instability but not a force for security because the US was a magnet for terrorists rather than a deterrent. Indonesia also feared RMSI because it had been referred to as a 'failed state' by the US for a long time, indicating that the country might be a target rather than a partner in the war on terror.[111]

For China, this US initiative seemed a potential maritime security umbrella for its seaborne energy supply. However, China doubted whether the RMSI was really designed to deal with terrorism, or whether the real intention was to block China's critical SLOCs.[112] This indeed was China's bitter experience of interdiction at sea in July 1993, in the so-called *Yinhe* (the Milky Way) incident.[113] It was during 2003 and 2004 that China developed a 'Malacca Strait predicament' that constituted a crisis requiring several measures that would create alternative routes to the SLOCs passing

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[Coast Guard], No. 11 (2004), p. 22.

[111] Christoffersen, 'Chinese and ASEAN Responses to the US RMSI,' p. 133.

[112] Ji Guoxing, 'U.S. RMSI Contravenes UN Convention on the Law of the Sea,' *PacNet*, No. 29 by Pacific Forum CSIS, Honolulu, Hawaii, (July 8, 2004). Available from <http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/pac0429.pdf>. Accessed on 18 December 2008.

[113] On 7 July 1993, the Chinese *Yin He* freighter had already departed Tianjin and was on its way to Kuwait. On 23 July, the US accused Beijing of sending to Iran Chemical materials that might be used for making chemical weapons, and demanded that an inspection be conducted. Due to the US pressure, the *Yinhe* was refused permission to anchor in port and remained on the high seas outside the Persian Gulf for over one month. In the end of August, China finally agreed to check the containers on board together with US experts and the Saudi Arabia representative, but the investigation proved that there were no chemical materials. On 4 September 1993, the Beijing government therefore issued a statement condemning the US hegemonic behaviour and its groundless accusation. See 'Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China on the 'Yinhe' Incident, Dated 4 September 1993.' Available from < http://www.nti.org/db/china/engdocs/ynhe0993.htm>, and Patrick E. Tyler, 'No Chemical Arms aboard China Ship,' *The New York Times*, 6 September 1993. Available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F0CE7DD133BF935A3575AC0A965958260>. Accessed on 19 December 2008.

through the Malacca Strait,[114] such as building an oil pipeline from China to Burma to bypass the Strait.

7.4.2 China and Limited Maritime Security Cooperation

Maritime security in the Asia-Pacific region relies heavily on American politico-military supremacy. The structure of naval cooperation is also deeply founded on US multilateral relations with the region. Given China's emergence as a great Asian power, it is starting to challenge the US in the Asia-Pacific region. Thus, in the region the US is no longer an absolute superpower in determining any regional security affairs, but rather it has become a limited one. Under the situation of an emerging Sino-US bilateral structure in the region, Beijing prefers building its Sino-centric regional security order to complying with the American regional security rules. Added to this, Beijing is also concerned that Washington is using antiterrorism as a stratagem to exercise more direct control over the maritime international corridors and high seas, in order to contain China's expanding maritime power. This is the dynamic for why China may pose a challenge to regional maritime security cooperation.

Constructing maritime security building involves nothing more than navy-to-navy contacts, regional fleet review, naval exercises, joint training periods, naval peacekeeping, humanitarian relief operations, search and rescue and so on. For traditional maritime security cooperation (WPNS, RIMPAC and ARF), there are many problems with strengthening regional naval cooperation, which result from maritime tensions that are apparent throughout the region, arising from the suspicions held by some powers concerning the naval capabilities and intentions of their neighbours. Generally, these traditional maritime cooperative mechanisms are designed for coping with traditional (state) threats and reducing regional maritime conflicts. However, a possible bilateral security threat is perceived to be present when any pair of powers is lined up against each other in a series of intersecting and potentially threatening relationships, such as Japan and Russia, South Korea and Japan, Russia and China. This is the most notable difficulty in the development of naval coalitions.

Moreover, there are problems with common doctrine and interoperability of equipment. Regional navies acquire their ships from a wide range of sources. The

[114] Christoffersen, 'Chinese and ASEAN Responses to the US RMSI,' p. 135.

different technological levels of regional navies become a problem to naval cooperation. In the maritime dimension, there are many disputes over waters in East Asia, and some powers still have very ill feelings toward each other,[115] like China and Japan, South Korea and Japan, China and Vietnam, which complicates maritime confidence building in this area. Importantly, military technical deficiencies in some navies may significantly restrain cooperation with the less advanced navies being reluctant to engage in operational cooperation for fear that their deficiencies will be too apparent. The level and use of combat data systems are, likewise, particular areas in which differences might appear.

Despite the above described problems of regional maritime mechanisms, China has selectively supported some American-centric maritime cooperative security in this region, for promoting its peaceful rise and multilateralism in recent years. Nevertheless, Beijing's ultimate ambition is to try to create Sino-centric maritime confidence building, comparable to its successful case of a continental-oriented confidence building—the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).[116] Beijing employs the PLAN as an instrument of statecraft through a carefully considered combination of non-use and use, deploying its powerful navy to send messages, protect claims, and assert rights and sovereignty at sea. Beijing also employs the PLAN in more conventional ways for maritime confidence building, including ship visits to foreign ports, bilateral and multilateral exercises with other navies, and exchanges of visits by senior officers.

(1) Port visits. One of the most visible symbols of China's military confidence building is ship visits. During the 1980s, Beijing conducted only one visit covering three countries, while it hosted ports calls from 35 foreign warships. However, in the 1990s, the PLAN started to send warships to visit more than 20 countries, and hosted port calls from seventeen countries.[117] Illustrating the caution and hesitancy involved, PLAN combatant ships did not visit the US until 1997, with subsequent visits in 2000 and 2006. The PLAN visited Europe (France, Italy, Germany and the UK) in 2001,

[115] Hyun-Ki Kim, 'The Possibility of Naval between Korea and Japan' in Choon Kun Lee, *Sea Power and Korea in the 21st Century* (Seoul: The Sejong Institute, 1994) p. 184.
[116] The SCO is an intergovernmental mutual-security organization which was found in 2001 by the leaders of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The organization also has four observers (India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan) and three guest attendees (Afghanistan, ASEAN and CIS).
[117] Kenneth W. Allen, 'China's Foreign Military Relations with Asia-Pacific,' *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 10, No. 29 (2001), pp. 659-60.

and Australia and New Zealand in 1998 and 2007.[118] Without exception, visits to Pakistan and India have diplomatically been paired in 1993, 2001 and 2005. Politically, PLAN port visits show Beijing's good neighbour diplomacy. Militarily, they are PLA naval training for ocean-going capability.

(2) Bilateral and multilateral exercises with other navies. Exercises present several opportunities, including routinely providing earlier notice of exercises (military transparency), and exchanging military observers at national naval exercises. Concerning actual exercises at sea, naval tactical exercises based on exercising war-fighting doctrine would be too sensitive, but low-level exercises (humanitarian search and rescue, anti-piracy and disaster relief exercises) involving two or more navies may be feasible. The PLAN's first bilateral exercises were mainly with the Pakistani and Indian navies in 2003. The number of multilateral exercises has increased in the post-Cold War period. Many multilateral exercises in the region involve the US. In the Asia-Pacific, major exercises include Cope Thunder, Cope Tiger,[119] Team Challenge,[120] Pacific Reach,[121] Western Pacific Mine Countermeasure Exercise (MCMEX) and Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC),[122] but China has only participated, and expressed interest, in Pacific Reach, which is a low-level exercise. Remarkably, while Beijing was only interested in low-level naval exercises, the PLAN participated in the WPNS multilateral naval exercise in May 2007. It was the first time that China had sent a PLAN Jiangwei-II frigate (FFG-567 Xiangfan) to engage in this naval exercise with 20 warships from twelve countries, including the US, Australia and France.[123]

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[118] Qian Xiaohu and Zhu Guangyao, 'Chinese Naval Vessels Wrap up European Visit and Long-voyage Training,' *PLA Daily*, October 19, 2007. Available From <http://www.english.chinamil.com.cn>. Accessed on 20 December 2008.

[119] Zalmay Khalilzad, David T. Orletsky, Jonathan D. Pollack, *et al*., *The United States and Asia: Toward a New U.S. Strategy and Force Posture* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001), pp. 75-77. *Cope Thunder* and *Cope Tiger* are annual air combat exercises.

[120] Christopher W. Hughes, 'Exercise Cobra Gold—Going Multinational,' *Asia-Pacific Defense Forum*, Winter 2000/01, pp. 3-13. *Team Challenge* is a multilateral exercise which combines three of the largest bilateral exercises in East Asia including *Balikatan* (Philippines-US), *Cobra Gold* (Thailand-US) and *Tandem Trust* (Australia-US).

[121] Compiled by Asia-Pacific Defense Forum Staff, 'Exercise Pacific Reach,' *Asia-Pacific Defense Forum*, Fall 2001, pp. 4-9. *Pacific Reach* is a biennial multilateral submarine rescue exercise held in the Asia-Pacific.

[122] *MCMEX*, *Pacific Reach* and *RIMPAC* are multilateral naval exercises aimed at maintaining the safety of international waterways. Among the three, *RIMPAC* is the oldest exercise, having been conducted since 1971. The objective of the exercise is to enhance the tactical capabilities of the Pacific Rim to ensure the safety of SLOCs. Its usual participants are Australia, Britain, Canada, Chile, South Korea and the US.

[123] Lu Desheng and Li Gencheng, ''Xiangfan' returns in triumph after joining maritime exercise of WPNS,' *PLA Daily*, May 24, 2007. Available from <http://english.pladaily.com.cn/site2/news-channels/2007-05/24/content_825510.htm>. Accessed on 10 January 2009.

(3) Exchanges of visits by senior naval officers. According to a 2007 US Office of Naval Intelligence publication on the Chinese navy, which offered an analysis based on China's defence white papers, Beijing's purposes for naval exchange are to improve political and military relations with foreign countries, to enhance China's military and defence modernisation by acquiring foreign technology and assistance, and to help China's military leaders, officers and civilian cadre acquire modern military knowledge and training.[124] With the pattern of PLAN visits to foreign ports, Chinese naval officers generally make a trip abroad each year. However, the long gap from 2003 to 2006 was unusual, and ended with the April 2007 visit of PLAN Admiral Wu Shengli to the US. Even during that long gap, the PLAN welcomed visits to China by the heads of foreign navies. After Wu's US visit, two of the US's most senior naval officers visited China; Admiral Timothy Keating, who was the overall US Pacific commander, visited in April, and Admiral Michael Mullen visited in August.

The CSI aside, China's reluctance to join in international agreements designed to prevent non-traditional (non-state) maritime threats—terrorism and piracy in EEZs and SLOCs—can be understood from some different perspectives. First, China has been reluctant to join the PSI out of concerns about its legality in terms of international law. Beijing announced in 2005 that it was concerned that actions taken under the PSI might break the regime of UNCLOS III. In 2006, China restated that Chinese reservations about the PSI had not changed, despite Beijing's agreement in principle to international initiatives to stop the spread of WMD. In the meantime, China also rejected participation in the PSI joint exercise near the South China Sea. Again, China in 2007 refused to join in a joint exercise with the US and Japan for the interception of vessels suspected of harbouring WMD in the littoral of Japan.[125] Second, Chinese objections to the PSI and the RMSI cited its weak links to the UN Security Council, concerns over sovereignty issues, and the consequences of an interdiction based on a false alarm, as well as the fact that the PSI put too much emphasis on military solutions to WMD proliferation.[126] Third, Beijing has an

[124] Office of US Naval Intelligence, *China's Navy 2007* (Washington, DC: ONI, 2007), pp. 113-17. Available from <http://militarytimes.com/com/static/projects/pages/20070313dnplanavy.pdf>. Accessed on 12 January 2009.
[125] Xuegang Zhang, 'China's Energy Corridors in Southeast Asia,' *China Brief*, Vol. 8, Iss. 3 (31 January, 2008), p. 5.
[126] James Yoshihara and Andrew Winner, 'Maritime Counter-Proliferation with Chinese Characteristics,' *Defence and Security Analysis*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (March 2006), pp. 5-21.

enduring fear that these initiatives may give the US navy dominant control over Chinese waters, and would provide it with essentially a strategic chokehold on the Asia-Pacific and China, while US-led maritime cooperative security could provide a guarantee to China's maritime security.[127]

These arguments indicate that China still has doubts about the possibility for abuse of international regimes in relation to maritime trade, and still has concerns about its politico-economic sovereignty in its relations with the West. From this stance, it is inevitable that Beijing will not rely on a US-led maritime security framework, and will continue to expand its maritime strategy with blue-water naval capabilities. In addition, China's rejection of these security building measures not only could restrict the institution of antiterrorism measures, but also might cause a chain reaction of regional non-cooperation among states. Therefore, this situation can pose great challenges to the development of US-led maritime security cooperation in the region. This also means that China is trying to build its own maritime security norms for its strategic needs, and the security environment of a great power.

7.5 Summary

China's escalating maritime power has been a global focus for more than two decades, since China has shifted its national defence strategy from land-oriented military build-up to sea-oriented naval expansion since the 1980s. From the standpoint of a realist balance of power, China's escalating comprehensive national power (CNP) is not exclusively a concern of the US. Its accelerated CNP build-up has caused regional and even global worries that strategically border on China's peripheries. The power balancing of the Asia-Pacific region is impacted by a rising China. Even Moscow, in spite of its strategic partnership with Beijing, cannot remain strategically unconcerned with China. For Europe, likewise, in order to respond to China's expanding military power, Chinese ICBM capabilities especially, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has enlarged its military presence in China's peripheries. Undeniably, China's remarkable economic powerhouse is the foundation of the PLA build-up. Its rapid

[127] Zhang, 'China's Energy Corridors in Southeast Asia,' pp. 5-6.

economic development certainly provides the ability to afford a costly armed force—specifically, a navy. Politically, as a great power, China is increasing its influence in regional waters, where Beijing is trying to establish its own international maritime order for security, instead of only following Washington's security arrangement at sea.

The establishment of maritime security mechanisms in theory is a feasible approach to increase security and decrease threats, in order to pursue common economic interests at sea. In reality, however, the sovereign issue of EEZs and SLOCs means that maritime security building can only remain as low level political cooperation among states in the maritime Asia-Pacific. From the American perspective, US-led maritime confidence building provides the main foundation of constructing Asia-Pacific security, and Washington will continue to enhance its naval power to support regional stability. For China, Beijing can only partially support any US-led security structure, because Beijing is afraid, strategically, that US-designed maritime security building could limit its seaward national development and might control its sea routes for energy supply. Without full mutual trust between China and US-centric allies, China still prefers to increase and upgrade the naval arms for its maritime security by expanding its maritime strategy.

For other regional states, because there are many controversial sovereignty problems at sea between them and China, they not only expect Washington to play a key positive role in regional balancing, but they also anticipate that Beijing will live up fully to its ambition to be a constructive member and a responsible great power. However, their recent claims for urgent naval modernisation seem to be a direct response to the emergence of China's maritime power.

Finally, the impact of China's maritime strategic expansion on the Asia-Pacific multi-polar system has caused a security dilemma that might generate a zero-sum power struggle between powers in terms of realism. However, given that creating a cooperative security environment is a common interest for regional economic development, the realist assumption of a power struggle seems to have been replaced by the actual phenomenon of coexistence, based on a pragmatic power equilibrium. In the context of coexistence, maritime strategic competition is still inevitable but quite limited. The US cannot absolutely dominate the Western Pacific Ocean, but is obliged to share its regional power with China. In the short-term, China's pursuit of greater maritime power, and the trend towards naval arms races among regional maritime states, will not be stopped. This is the standing obstacle for maritime security and

naval cooperation in the region. Conversely, if China's maritime power keeps rising, in the long-term the region perhaps will become an actual bipolar system, in which Beijing and Washington will dominate maritime security affairs in the region, while also being strategic competitors to each other.

Chapter 8
Conclusion

Traditionally, China, as a land power, has had a land-oriented defence culture and had few interests in oceanic adventure. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, Admiral Zheng He's seven voyages from China's south coastal to Africa via the Indian Ocean can only be seen as a transient miracle of ancient China's sea power in the imperial era of the Sino-centric tributary system. After that, China's ambition and activities for sea power were stopped for a long time until the twentieth century, when modern China started to realise the strategic importance of the ocean in safeguarding China's maritime security and maintaining the sovereignty of its territorial waters, along with its maritime rights and interests.

In theory, the thinking of maritime strategy grows out of the economic uses of the ocean and the significance of those uses to the state. From the time the CCP came to power to the present, in fact, China's escalating economic uses of the sea have triggered off a noteworthy transformation of maritime strategic direction from the Maoist coastal defence operations with a brown-water navy to an offshore defence strategy with a green-water navy in the 1980s. Importantly, Beijing today is developing blue-water maritime capabilities for far sea defence. Undeniably, the stable international environment is the base of economic growth. Given China's high priority of economic development, Beijing has changed its maritime behaviour from military antagonism toward multilateral coexistence for shaping its security setting in the highly interdependent Asia-Pacific.

Although the thrust of Beijing's blue-water maritime ambition is mainly based on its economic development and energy security, it still sees the United States and its allies as China's major regional adversaries at sea. Given that the US has shown no sign of withdrawing its security initiatives in the region, China has to integrate into the region through making more friends and to hedge against a potential US comprehensive blockade of China. Therefore, developing coexistent relations with the region and all-round blue-water maritime strategic capabilities for far sea defence has gradually become Beijing's underlying maritime strategic orientation in the twenty-

first century. This has strongly demonstrated China's increasing self-confidence in being a leading power that plays a diplomatic role, a constabulary role, and a military role for maritime security and stability.

8.1 Succeeding Zheng He's Historical Voyages

One thing that can be assumed about the nearly six decades of development in China's maritime strategy is that Chinese international behaviour is largely determined by Beijing's pragmatist grand strategic direction toward the constantly changing international system. Concretely, the external environment is China's major concern in its strategic thinking and actions for security. When facing the outside setting, Beijing's strategic posture is always on the defensive, which can be seen as the vital feature of Chinese strategic culture. The PLA strategic principle of no-first-use of nuclear weapons is a good example. In regard to maritime strategy, Beijing has actually been little by little adjusting its defensive concept from continental-border defence to maritime-interest defence under the principle of coexistence. Therefore, it would be better to say that Beijing's maritime strategic direction with Chinese characteristics is the outcome of the interaction between Chinese strategic culture and the international security environment.

The Maoist strategy of national defence, historically, was merely designed to concentrate on the security of territorial borders, the boundaries between China and the Soviet Union particularly. During the Maoist era, Beijing did not view maritime defence as a core of its continental strategic concern for maritime-oriented security and interests. Likewise, because of the competitive triangle-relations between Maoist China, the former Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold-War period, Beijing could only stress continental defence for the concern of political-military security rather than economic security. This continental strategic thinking not only restricted the development of maritime strategy, but also limited the build-up of the PLAN on the stage of coastal defence. Strictly speaking, the military thinking of coastal defence was not a maritime strategy but merely a naval strategy for inshore operations.

In the Dengist era, the moment of reconciliation in Sino-USSR-US relations changed the tense Asia-Pacific international system in the mid-1980s; Beijing's worry over Soviet military intrusion on China's territory was decreasing, and then their relationship began to go from enmity to amity and toward normalisation. Relations between Beijing and Washington improved as well. Deng Xiaoping once described the issue of this mitigating international setting as the era of peace and development, in which economic development was the first priority of all national development. Meanwhile, Deng highlighted that China must keep a low profile by never taking the lead in national-security, diplomatic, and maritime strategic issues while it remained a developing country. Under Dengist open-door policy, importantly, the build-up of the PLA must serve the overall national goal of economic construction. In order to uphold economic development and political stability, China's national strategic thinking then started to focus on its vast maritime economy instead of its limited traditional continental economy. This shift of China's national strategic weight from the land to the sea contributed greatly to the establishment of China's maritime strategy of offshore active defence with a deep-water navy for executing sea use, sea denial and sea control.

After Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, who succeeded Deng as the core of the third generation of Communist Party of China leaders, continued to follow the direction of Dengist national development of enhancing economic growth toward the goal of building a rich and strong country in Asia. In the context of the rapid rise of China's national economy and gross domestic product since the 1980s, this continuing economic growth has contributed to a steady two-digit increase in China's military spending for the build-up of a modern PLA. In the mid-1990s, when the Jiangists came out with the new security concept for coping with non-traditional (non-state) threats, the strategic guidelines of a modern PLA has been adjusted from dealing with traditional threats to facing the challenges of non-traditional threats. The transformation of the security concept emphasised the importance of China's littoral and maritime economic security. Thus, protecting the EEZs, islands, natural resources and the SLOCs in contiguous maritime areas has become the key part of Chinese maritime strategy.

For energy supply, the issue of ensuring energy security has become a core task of China's maritime strategy. In order to satisfy the great needs of economic construction, China is largely dependent on its oil imports from overseas to feed its

huge oil consumption and this continues to increase. Notably, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, about 80 per cent of China's oil imports have traversed the Malacca Strait. In response to this, Beijing has an obvious reason to be worried about the maritime security that piracy and maritime terrorism pose to the energy security of its oil supply. When Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao became the fourth generation of the PRC leadership in 2004, the Hu-Wen China began to think about how to enforce the security of oil transportation routes in the Strait by combining energy security policy with maritime strategy and building a blue-water fleet to patrol the sea routes from the south coast to the Middle East and East Africa via the Strait. Obviously, this implies that China's politico-economic power is contingent upon access to and use of the sea, and that a strong navy is required to defend such access.

Given the aforementioned orientation of China's maritime strategic development since 1949, Beijing, with China's rising sea power in the Asia-Pacific region, is slowly but surely expanding its range of maritime security from its coastal waters to the high seas to cover any possible maritime interests by developing a wide, far, and deep range of effective naval weapons systems.[1] From China's geo-strategic map of the maritime Asia-Pacific, its maritime strategic thinking is to enlarge its command of the sea not only from the first island chain to the second island chain in the West Pacific Ocean, but also from the South China Sea to the Arabian Sea (which is the so-called 'string-of-pearl' strategy). Strictly speaking, Beijing's two-island chain strategy in the West Pacific Ocean is a strategy with complicated politico-economic-military implications for East Asia. This PLA strategic arrangement has caused much concern about a maritime security dilemma. For many regional states, the American-led Asia-Pacific security structure is thought to be the guarantee of maritime security. On the contrary, for Beijing, it is a major obstruction to the expansion of its maritime power projection and extension. For the avoidance of maritime containment and foreign isolation, Beijing consequently tries to keep a calculated maritime co-existence in the region in response to unexpected and changing circumstances.

Beijing always views oil as a politico-strategic commodity that requires a national policy to ensure its reliable flow from outside China. The Chinese 'string-of-pearls' strategy actually is an economic-energy security strategy, which is designed to

[1] In John Frederick Charles Fuller's views, the range of effective action was by far the most significant characteristic of weapons. Refer to Colin S. Gray, *Explorations in Strategy* (London: Greenwood Press, 1996), p. 18.

maintain China's prosperous economic growth by means of deploying naval forces at sea. Since the security of SLOCs in the Malacca Strait is a common security interest in Southeast Asia, Beijing has a sufficient reason to protect its oil sea routes from the threat of piracy and terrorism by developing far sea defence and naval multilateral security cooperation through actively participating in bilateral and multilateral joint training exercises.[2] Although Beijing does not demonstrate clearly its blue-water maritime strategy to date, its actual naval operations moving south by southwest have shown its ambition and attainment of far sea defence; an example is the support for the construction of new port and airfield facilities in Burma and Pakistan, in which the PLAN can secure sea routes in the Indian Ocean. For the anti-piracy mission, Beijing has deployed naval forces to the Gulf of Aden near the coast of Somalia for protecting sea routes in the Arabian Sea.[3]

Indeed, there is an apparent similarity between modern China's 'string-of-pearls' strategic direction and the route of ancient Zheng He's splendid blue-water voyages. However, this situation can be regarded as a coincidence of history rather than as Beijing's purpose-built plan for recovering China's sea power according to their different maritime strategic purposes and national interests in different ages.

8.2 Expanding China's Maritime Leverage

Estimating China's maritime strategic power is also an important part of this section. In theory, the concept of power in international relations can be defined according to the means used to implement it, including politico-military coercion, economic-material inducement, and cultural-intellectual motivation. Alternatively, 'power can be constraining, remunerative, or normative—expressing, to put it crudely, guns, money, or ideas.'[4] Undeniably, China's emerging maritime leverage in military, economic, and cultural dimensions of the region is a natural outgrowth of its rising

[2] Information Office of the State Council of the PRC, *China's National Defence in 2008* (Beijing: January 2009). Available from <http://www.fas.org/programs/ssp/nukes/2008DefenseWhitePaper_Jan2009.pdf >. Accessed on 8 February 2009.
[3] Richard Weitz, 'Operation Somalia: China's First Expeditionary Force,' *China Security*, Vol. 5, No, 1 (Winter 2009), pp. 27-42.
[4] David M. Lampton, 'The Faces of Chinese Power,' *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 1 (2007), p. 116.

comprehensive national power. According to this, the purpose of China's power would not simply concentrate on securing its boundaries of continental territory. Instead, it would project its power to where its interests are located overseas. Specifically, the concept of China's territorial boundaries has been gradually replaced by the boundaries of national interests for its great power status.

Unquestionably, pursuing national interest is always the motivation of the expansion of powers. Rising China's national interest has gone beyond its land, sea and air territories to include areas like the vast oceans traversed by Chinese cargo ships or oil tankers as well as outer space. In this sense, the range of China's maritime power is to safeguard not only its continental territorial boundaries, but also the boundaries of national interests at sea. Whether focusing on land or sea borders, China has changed its approach across much of the world, and in the Asia-Pacific region especially, from threats to opportunities, from jeopardy to benefactor. This grand strategic transformation allowed Beijing to suggest to the international system that it can be a great powerhouse, even a quasi-superpower,[5] in the region. Based on the definition of power above, this section appraises the power characteristics of China's maritime strategy in three essential categories to form a conclusion.

First, China's maritime strategy is a restricted iron-fist strategy. As China has established a global strategy with its intention of Sino-centric security, it also has developed more sophisticated military influence, which it deploys across the Asia-Pacific region. Militarily, this maritime military strategy has some main purposes; they are territorial defence, power projection, deterrence and reassurance. With the support of prosperous economic strength, the Chinese military budget has been growing at double-digit rates since the 1990s. This significantly contributes to the build-up of the Chinese navy to match its maritime strategic needs of safeguarding national interests. From recent Chinese defence white papers since 2000, it is clear that China is trying to enhance its capacities for these strategic purposes. However, the bottleneck of PLA military technology is still the restriction on its maritime power projection. Politically, China has the status of a rising great power in Asia and is not worried about the danger of a land invasion from any other continental powers. For Beijing, a possible threat comes from the US and its allies at sea. With the aim of

[5] Willy Wo-Lap Lam, 'China's Leaders Seek Boost.' Available from CNN.com/WORLD website: <http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/asiapcf/east/10/12/china.rocket/index.html>. Accessed on 18 February 2009.

discouraging the American invasion from the sea, Beijing is upgrading the remaining PLA armed forces at a significant pace for having capabilities to conduct joint operations with naval and air forces.

Beijing owns a large navy with many sophisticated weapons systems for its vulnerable coastal areas, but the naval effectiveness of its two-island chain strategy is still quite limited in maritime strategic depth; nevertheless Beijing's maritime activities and naval operations are still seen as a challenge or a potential threat to regional security. In order to avoid regional maritime hostility toward China, which might frustrate China's economic growth, Beijing tends to maintain a status of maritime equilibrium with the American-led allies through engaging the region in terms of multilateral coexistence, even though its ultimate maritime strategic aim is to expand naval strength over the two island chains in the rim of the West Pacific Ocean. Given power balancing in the region, the sensitivity of the international system is the barrier to the development of China's maritime military behaviour.

Second, China's maritime strategy is an economic-energy security strategy. Protecting economy security has been seen as the first priority of overall national interests in the Chinese grand strategic thinking since the Dengist era. The striking growth of the Chinese economy has not only confirmed the CCP regime's legitimacy, but has also made China the economic hub in the Asia-Pacific. In recent years, affluent maritime natural resources, disputed islands and waters are not China's only motivation for going south. Nevertheless, the main incentive is that China's reliance on import energy and raw materials from abroad continues to grow. Accordingly, maritime economic security has become an indispensable requirement of China's maritime strategy. In general, the threat to maritime economic security is a non-traditional one, such as the non-state actors of piracy and maritime terrorism. In order to deal with the threats, Beijing has two strategic approaches to enhance its maritime economic-energy security. The first is to enhance multilateral diplomatic relations with littoral countries through military and defence cooperation in the South China Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the Arabian Sea. The second is to upgrade its green-water navy with blue-water capabilities for securing its sea-lanes of communication. Put concisely, the existing problem of ensuring security for sea routes of energy supplies has forced Beijing to recognise clearly the maritime vulnerabilities in its SLOCs and the necessity of blue-water capabilities.

Third, China's maritime strategy is a velvet-glove cultural strategy. China's

cultural promotion of harmonious Confucianism and Zheng He's narrative for its peaceful rise at sea are part of a broader effort at the realpolitik of international relations. This characteristic of power under Chinese cultural moralism is so-called soft power or idea power. In the pursuit of its maritime ambitions since the 1980s, the Beijing government has been purposefully educating Chinese people in the importance of oceanic consciousness to create a common social awareness that the ocean is not an obstacle, but an opportunity for national survival and development. Hence, the development of maritime strategy and the build-up of the PLAN can have great support from domestic nationalism and social opinion.

Although developing military might is a necessary part of maritime strategy, Beijing tries to create a velvet glove for its iron fist to mitigate and reduce regional anxieties and reactions toward rising maritime China. Beijing is utilising harmonious symbolic, ideological, diplomatic and cultural resources to package its military expansion and coexistent idea through promoting the peaceful features of China's strategic culture and arguing that it can contribute to peace and cooperation in the region. In the post-Cold War international system, briefly, China's military strength has a limited role to execute in its maritime strategic aspiration. Conversely, economic and ideological strengths are a more effective means to accomplish its maritime strategic goals.

Overall, the expansion of China's maritime behaviour is greatly restricted by the international system itself, while Beijing's vision is trying to pursue a Sino-centric dominant status at sea with blue-water capabilities in the Asia-Pacific. Since China's maritime emergence in the region is an inevitable and predictable phenomenon, many powers have been decreasing their hostility toward China for cooperative maritime security with the expectation that China can play a role as a responsible stakeholder for regional maritime security. Equally, Beijing's policy also shifted from distrust and non-participation to regional maritime multilateral cooperative activities throughout much of the 1990s by convincing the regional states that China's rise will not threaten their stability and will contribute to regional economic and maritime security institutions. This international situation indeed pushes the relationship between China and regional states from antagonism and containment to coexistence and cooperation, such as naval joint operations, maritime cooperation and naval diplomacy. Explicitly, China and many maritime powers are sharing power with each other in the region to enhance maritime security. Hence, this multilateral regional interaction for maritime

coexistence can be seen as the politico-economic limit to Beijing's maritime strategic behaviour.

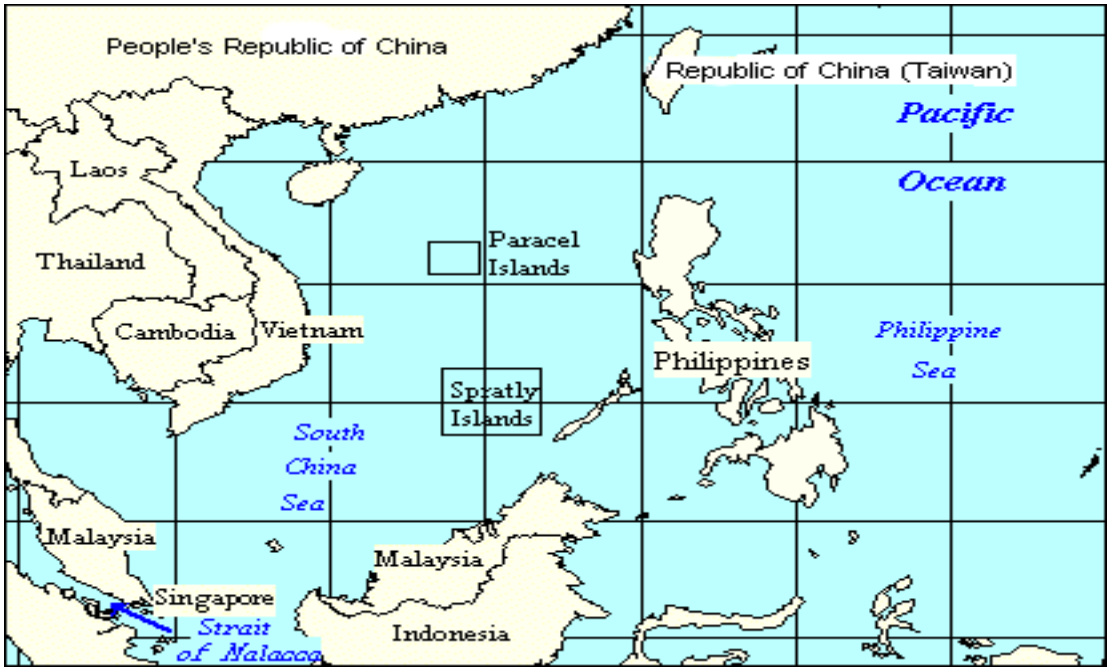
While Beijing's maritime strategic direction is toward multilateralism and coexistence, it will continue to enlarge and enhance its naval capabilities for protecting its various national interests in far seas. In a sense, the thought of Mahan on sea power might have been proved correct; his thought has drawn much attention to the relationship between the economic uses of the seas and military strength deployed upon them. That is to say, as the economic forms of sea use become ever more globalised the military uses of the sea may have to become more globalised as well. Given China has emerged with a global status corresponding to its comprehensive national power, the PLAN may not simply seek advanced weapons systems, but be continually prepared for modern armed confrontation at sea to defend its remote national interests. In recent years, the Chinese leadership has made it understandable in speeches and in policy statements that it requires a modern ocean-going navy, and has started to develop a fleet that is capable of effective power projection far from China's shores. Seen in this light, without question, Beijing in the past has focused its military forces on Taiwan and the West Pacific Ocean, but its maritime ambition today is looking south into the South China Sea and beyond the Malacca Strait to the Persian Gulf. The Somalia mission in the Gulf of Aden since December 2008 has shown Beijing's confidence in its blue-water maritime capability for non-traditional threats and could help Beijing determine whether to build an aircraft carrier force. Decisively, the blue-water strategic direction of coexistence might encourage China to play a role as an important security stakeholder and power balancer in the Asia-Pacific region.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: The Map of China's Two-Island Strategy

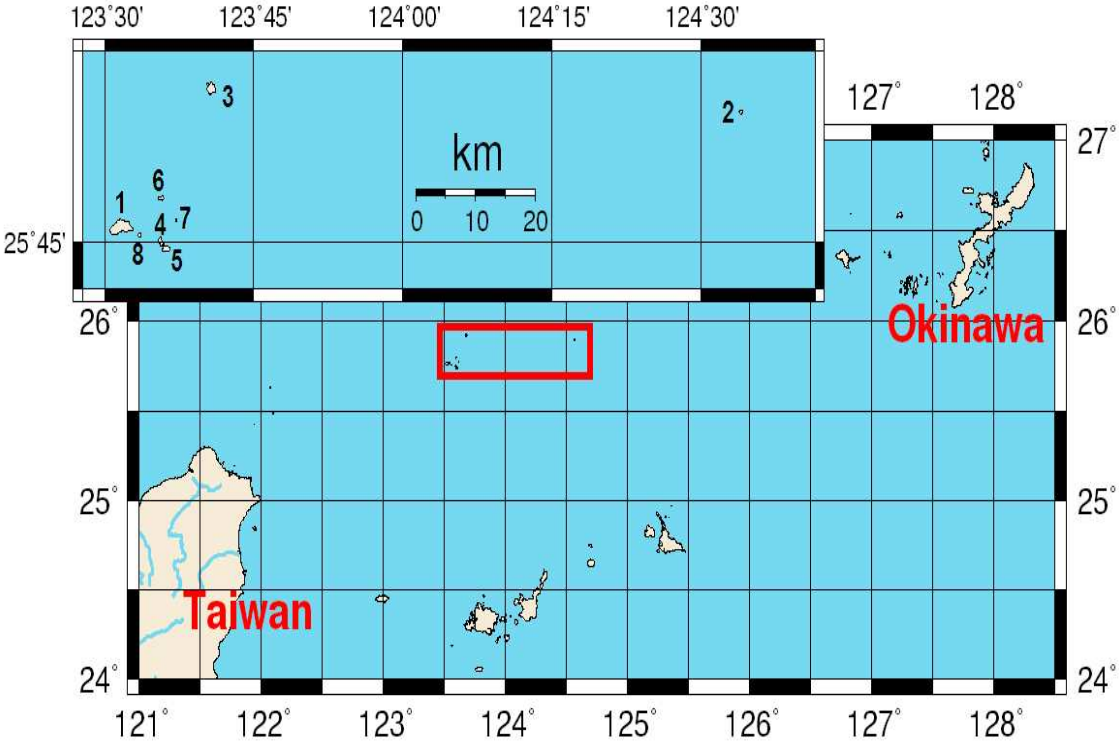
Source: Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress 2008: The Military Power of the People's Republic of China* (Washington DC, 2008), p. 25.

Appendix B: The Location of Paracel and Spratly Islands in the South China Sea



Source: US Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook*. Available from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/reference_maps/southeast_asia.html>.

Appendix C: The Location of Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands



Source: Map of the disputed Diaoyutai/Senkaku Islands. Available from <http://gmt.soest.hawaii.edu/>.

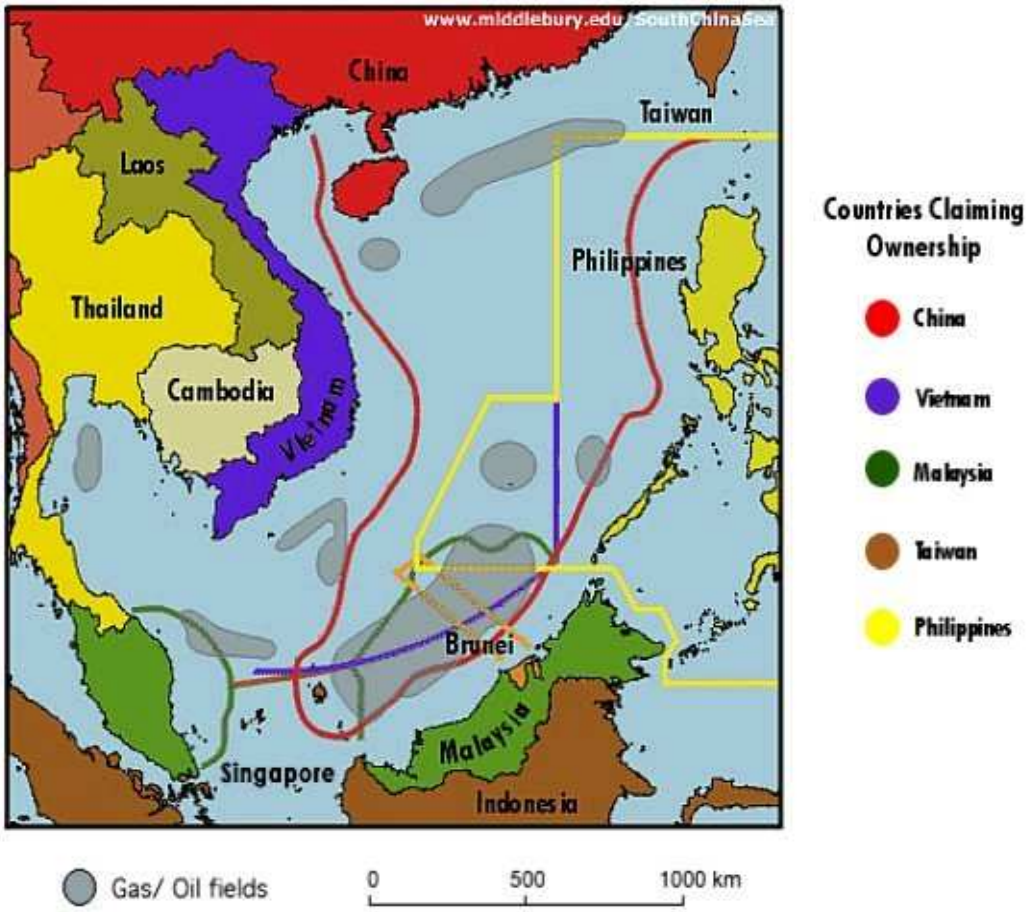
Appendix D: The Map of China's Sea Routes

Source: Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress 2008: The Military Power of the People's Republic of China* (Washington DC, 2008), p. 12.

Appendix E: China's Naval Units

Source: Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress 2008: The Military Power of the People's Republic of China* (Washington DC, 2008), p. 55.

Appendix F: Countries Claiming Ownership in the South China Sea



Source: Richardson, Michael, *Energy and Geopolitics in the South China Sea: Implications for ASEAN and Its Dialogue Partners*, ASEAN Studies Centre Report 8, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Studies (ISEAS), April 2009.

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