

CHAPTER I  
CHINA. NEW POWER DYNAMICS  
IN THE XXI CENTURY



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### A. INTRODUCTION

#### I

The issues of development and growth, under their different perspectives, have suffered the exhaustion of their results and the difficulty of their sustainability in recent times. Today in most countries, in particular in the West, one of the most pressing questions for governments and their public policies is the question with regard to the strategy to follow in order to achieve a more equitable development in the long term.

For example, from 1945 to the 1970s in most of the Western World an economic model that privileged the commitment to welfare policies dominated. These welfare policies were known in the United States as the Era of Paul Samuelson (Sachs, 2012, p. 27), and in Europe as the Keynes or Welfare State, which combined, without any *existential* problem, market policies with the committed involvement of the State (mixed economies), leading to one of the periods of greater stability and economic growth in the global economy.<sup>10</sup> As is known, this policy was replaced as of the crisis of the seventies and early eighties by another economic paradigm, which with time became a para-dogma that in its central story abolished the participation of the State from all economic activity, turning it from a strategic ally into an *enemy*.

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<sup>10</sup> From 1950 to 1974, the global economy grew by an annual average of 5%, similarly, during the same period its trade climbed to a record annual average of 7.4% (Ocampo, 2017).

On this trend that has dominated the western economic strategy during the last four decades, Escalante summarizes,

Clearly, the neo-liberal program lives somewhat off-peak hours after the crisis of 2008. On the other hand, after thirty years, the economic results, regarded globally, are very poor. The increase in inequality is obvious, strident, offensive. Some of the basic ideas of the model appear clearly indefensible and nevertheless, neo-liberalism survives, and more; it remains the dominant model, and there seem to be no alternatives. The crisis did not lead to any significant change in economic policies nor on legislation. The phenomenon is remarkable. It suggests that the neo-liberal era has a considerable future despite everything. However, it is not obvious why (Escalante, 2015, p. 295).

Why? Escalante wonders, like Judt, who with European perspective questions himself,

Why do we find it so difficult even to imagine another type of society? What prevents us from conceiving a different manner of organizing ourselves that mutually benefits us? Are we condemned to stumble eternally between a dysfunctional *free market* and the much-publicized horrors of *Socialism*? —adding— “Our ineptitude is discursive. Simply put, we do not know how to speak about all this” (Judt, 2013, p. 295).

Clearly, the Western economic thought, as a result of its insufficient and inequitable economic results,<sup>11</sup> lives an identity problem, which is snared in its own inertia. It cannot imagine new scenarios that offer alternatives for a century with unprecedented challenges of a political, economic and global nature. Worse still, in the light of its main exegetes (Stiglitz, Sachs, Rodrick, Escalante, Rifkin, Judt, and many others), more than the lack of audacity in imagining the new, the problem remains mainly frozen in an

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<sup>11</sup> 1% of the world population controls 50% of the world gross domestic product (GDP), and 10% have 90% of the GDP (Credit Suisse, 2015).

old debate that was born along with the Industrial Revolution, which is defined epistemologically by the old unresolved State-Market equation,<sup>12</sup> through which, by way of synthesis, there was a desire to circumscribe the narrative of a broad generation of authors who have dealt with justifying the preeminence, form, degrees of participation, or total absence of each of the two categories.

The debate, of course, overflows the academic cubicles and is embedded in the different schemes of the political-economic power, for reasons both ideological and of economic interest, which hijack not only the construction of a new, more comprehensive and inclusive offer, but even avoid the possibility of an open debate.

This old-new-debate, between State-Market, which is currently happening in most Western countries and their periphery, typical of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, is one of the main causes of the blockage to generating a new public policy in economic matters, both nationally and in the global sphere. Hence, the importance of inserting into the analysis, by way of a benchmark, the countries of East Asia, in this case, China, which lives removed from this old antinomy, having resolved it since the first centuries before our era, and which it continues doing successfully today.

## II

In the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, China presents itself as the second world economy and has the most audacious project for holding the hegemony during the first half of the century, without the global society that surrounds it being able to identify, with a

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<sup>12</sup> The participation of the State in the economy is born in different ways, together with the State itself. The opinion that is sought in this essay, when referring to the category of State, is the one of its participation in the economic and industrial endeavor, in its different modalities.

higher degree of certainty, what happened as of 1978, the date in which the Asian country experienced a dramatic change to its millenary tradition of solving its internal problems through its endogenous resources, whether economic, political or social.

In the debate of the hegemonies of a new era, and three decades before arriving at the first half of the century, China continues to enjoy the privilege of a lack of a solid diagnosis that provides the West with an adequate response. How is that a country marked by famines, where at the beginning of the second half of the last century (1958-1960), during its *Great Leap Forward*, about 30 million Chinese died for lack of food, can be in 2018 the economic force with the greatest impact on the global economy (30%)?

China, the advocate for the *Free Market*, Xi Jinping tells us at the Forum of Davos, Switzerland, of 2017. China, the protectionist, Trump accuses, while he sends the first legal notice (disclaimer) that detonates the trade war between the two nations (April 2018). “China S.A”; Fishman defines for us. “China, Red Capitalism”, clarifies Aguirre: “China and Global Capitalism”, translates Li Chun, while he describes “The transformation of Chinese Socialism”. Coase and Wang, for their part, explain with more diligence, “How China became Capitalist”. Woetzel, for his part, gives his version of the “Capitalist China”. Zhu Ling joins the versions of Chinese capitalism with his work “China Inc.”. If there were doubts about Chinese capitalism, despite the foregoing, Napoleoni (Maonomics) substantiates the reason why China makes a better capitalism than the United States.

Under this infinite line of free interpretation on how China has become a powerful *capitalist* and *free-market* nation, there are also competing views such as that of Fukuyama, who predicted that the Chinese success would collapse during the last century (Trust), or as that of Chang Gordon (Coming Collapse of China), which predicts the Chinese collapse during the 21<sup>st</sup> century, among others.

Still far from a generally accepted definition by most global specialists, since its first opening in 1978<sup>13</sup> to the present day (2018), China continues to enjoy the privilege that its economic (but also political) strategy, which during the period has generated an annual average growth of 8%, has not been sufficiently explained. In spite of this, the global community is still debating whether the nature of the Chinese economic phenomenon is socialist, whether it is a true economic capitalist power, or whether the experiment alluded to by Deng is exactly that, a new expression of the combination of these two trends, that does not find any theoretical framework on which the construction of a new global paradigm can be based.

### III

In this work, which tries to generate an opinion on the possible capacity of China as a Developer State, from the construction lines of Chinese power, we will give priority to the analysis of its first category of differentiation due to the nature of the hypothesis, that of the *Chinese State*, to the extent that under an analysis of the political power, the nature, the organization, and the vision of that State (cosmivision), or of any other State, is the one that decides the public strategy in economic matters, as well as the forms and policies for its application.

Thus, more than the particularities of its capacity as a *Developer*, which in some way is the result of the power and the vision of the State itself and which are widely known, in the next sections, we will analyze the origin of the Chinese State, its nature, its construction lines, its different modalities, etc.; and we will even try to underline some of its most relevant differences with regard to the Western reality, which as was already mentioned,

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<sup>13</sup> The second opening, to Central and Western Asia, occurred in 2013, in the face of the announcement of the Belt and Road Initiative by China, through which it invited about 70 nations to a new partnership project.

lives in a general manner the divorce of its economic policy from the State's participation, to which in more than a few instances it takes as the enemy that must be defeated.

The previous proposal takes on greater significance in light of the major phenomenon of a Chinese State that for more than 2200 years presents itself, among the different countries of the world, as the longest-lived, and in many ways current, political entity.<sup>14</sup>

In the following sections, we will try to deliver and develop the hypothesis, and the issues raised.

## B. CHINA AND ITS CIVILIZING FORCE

The Western analysis of China, in general, originates from contempt; from the disdain that a region that was living *the end of history* at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century felt for a *distant* country that during that same century had been marked by the end of its Empire (1911), its multiple social movements (1912-1949), and by famines that caused it millions of deaths. Under that perception of China, this country *could not*, as it does today, be a rival to the Western order: neither politically nor economically. When the West, already near the beginning of this millennium, with great delay, decides to respond to the Chinese challenge, the depth of a powerful civilization, still in force, has hindered the path, to the extent that today there is no agreement among specialists, but neither among the major developed economies, on how power works in China, what is the nature of its economic strategy and in a special way what China wants with the established *Western global order*.

This discussion escalates when the Western analysis is made from the platform of its own tools, whether political or economic,

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<sup>14</sup> During this essay, because of the objectives set out, we will try to analyze and describe the forms of construction of power and of the Chinese State, without entering into the issue of its qualification with regard to Western political parameters.

in most cases resulting in large gaps where the Chinese reality does not fit into the Western molds, or it cannot be explained using the West's instruments of the reason.

The force of the Chinese civilization as a central element of its analysis is presented, then, as an inescapable element of its study. Not as a referential or erudite historical element, but as part of a current dialectic that today still explains sufficiently the construction of power in China, and from there, the action and objectives pursued in a global world that did not belong to it, but that since 1978 decided to open itself to it. China has gone from learning and implementation to proposing a new dream and international order to the world based on the cosmogony of the Chinese State.

China —Graham tells us— has been producing, until the present century, the singular spectacle of an empire that survives from the time of Egypt and Babylon, and that preserves a pre-alphabetic writing as an instrument of continuity and unity, legible through millennia by speakers of mutually unintelligible dialects. At the same time that the first Emperor sought the elixir of life, China discovered the secret of the Immortal Empire, the social organism impossible to kill (Graham, 2012, p. 23).

To accept or not that the essential elements of the oldest civilization in the world are still current and operate in the construction and performance of its political power and economic behavior of today, is a question that lacks a clear answer. In absence of the foregoing, alternatives are used, such as the idea that the Constitutional Reform of March 11, 2018, defines our knowledge of China today. Or, maybe this starts in 2012/13 with the arrival of Xi Jinping to power; or Hu Jintao's scientific development prevails through the present day, or perhaps the 1978 opening of Deng Xiaoping is our starting point. Alternatively, would we have to refer to the triumph of the Maoist Revolution of 1949 as the oldest antecedent to explain it? "China —adds Leys— is the oldest living civilization on Earth. An exceptional entity like

that implies a very complex relationship between the people and their past” (Leys, 2016, p. 307). And with the global community, we could add to what was noted by Leys.

Cheng, points out on the subject, “This political culture that clings to the ancient, cosmic, and holistic vision of an orderly and hierarchical world, far from having been obscured in oblivion like Europe, continued to inform the spirit of the institutions until the last century, in which the emperor continued to be widely perceived as «Son of Heaven» and as a kind of axis mundi that united the three orders of Heaven, Earth, and man” (Cheng, in Relinque Eleta, 2009, p. 48). Leys closes bluntly: “And whoever remains ignorant of that civilization, can only achieve, ultimately, a limited understanding of the human experience”.

The economic and political *domination* that China is carrying out in the Western world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, finds one of its main explanations in the lack of the West’s adequate knowledge about China. However, this is also because the West does not end up agreeing on the force and effectiveness of its postulates and whether they remain an important part of the construction of the Chinese power and its State Policy.

### C. THE CHINESE COSMOVISION AND ITS INTERPRETERS

The other challenge to understanding it is not only to accept the force of the millenarian Chinese civilization as a significant part of its current reality, which does not happen with any other country in the world, but to understand that that reality is in many cases different from the world-view and Western life. In that regard, to look at the *other* and to accept *the other*, to try to understand the *other* in its own conceptual framework, becomes the second requirement of preliminary motions to anyone who attempts to interpret the Chinese entity, in cultural, political or economic terms.

It is true that China and the region itself have abused this Oriental differentiation. That, in its name, a sophisticated soft power policy has been deployed to control the West. Similarly,

the West's ignorance of the Chinese culture has not given it the necessary tools to diagnose adequately the terms and modes of this relationship in both economic and political terms; China has gotten the advantage in most cases. The West still turns cautiously to that which it does not know; it reasons with doubt about that which is alien to it. For this reason, in most cases, the West adjusts to a ceremony and protocol that do not belong to it, but in response to its lack of proper knowledge, the West fears to offend them. China has been a direct beneficiary of this vacuum.

However, the difference seems to be real and starts with the complexity of the language and the language signs, and rises to the different concept of the universe, ethnicity, the *existence* of a god or the forms of the society and political power. Leys outlines on the differences between China and the West,

The core of this perception was not so much that China was enigmatic, complicated and strange, but more specifically that it was a world upside down: the Chinese did everything in exactly the opposite way to our normal uses and procedures. For example: “when the Chinese build a house, they start with the roof”; “when they are mourning, they wear white”; “they write from top to bottom and from right to left”; “when they greet someone, they press their own hand”, etcetera. None of these observations is actually wrong. And the general conclusion is basically valid. This is, in fact, the secret of the inexhaustible attraction that China and the West have always exerted towards each other: within the human experiment, they are the antipodes of each other (Leys, 2016, 338).

China and East Asia are not part of the Western Culture; a truism that is easily forgotten when dealing with Chinese issues. Moreover, they are part of a millenarian debate where the expectations of both sides seek to signify the pre-eminence of one over the other, generating confusion on a subject that is already complex.

Morris, in a comprehensive study on the hegemonic debate between the West and the East, ventures to say that “...our conclusion, in line with this theory, would be that the West has been the technological leader of the world for a million and a half years” (Morris, 2014, p. 71). Jaspers, despite his great contributions to the understanding of universal thought, dared to ensure that,

The West has behind it, in the depths of time, the longest and most certain historical tradition. Nowhere —he says— history exists before Egypt and Mesopotamia. The West has printed its stamp on Earth in the last centuries. The West has the clearest and richest articulation of its history and its creations, the most sublime spiritual struggles, the maximum abundance of great, visible, and palpable men (Jaspers, 2017, p. 108).

Beyond this confrontation, that is born with time itself, and given the transcendence of these two cosmovisions, the fact is that Jaspers himself, together with Lasaulx and Viktor Von Strauss, generate the theory of the axial age, which Armstrong explains in an objective manner:

Since about 900 to 200 BCE (before our common era) four different regions saw the light of the great world traditions that have continued to nourish humanity: Confucianism and Taoism in China; Hinduism and Buddhism in India; Monotheism in Israel and philosophical Rationalism in Greece. It was the period of Buddha, Socrates, Confucius and Jeremiah, the mystics of the Upanishads, Mencius and Euripides. During this period of intense creativity, some spiritual and philosophical geniuses opened the way to a totally new type of human experiences.

“The axial age —Armstrong concludes— was one of the most influential periods of intellectual, psychological, and religious changes in history that we remember” (Armstrong, 2006, p. 14).

The axial age, in addition to being one of the most lucid stages of human beings, also determined the evolution of two cosmogonies and two different cultures, which from that moment to date have built their own explanation of the world and life; but also of its social, political and economic order, under different parameters and criteria, generating two parallel histories of mankind, that despite finding themselves in diverging moments of their history, have never joined.

China, within the framework of its historical *isolation*, determined both by its geography and its cosmovision, lived a traditional pre-imperial period (Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC), among the concerns of primitive questions, the sky and the rites, the bones and the bronzes, as the beginning of a social ordering. However, from very early on,

...instead of imposing an external moral law on society, that would awaken respect for the freedom and life of every human being, the founding myths of the ancient Chinese opted, from the beginning, not to dissociate virtue and politics, to the point of confusing one with the other (Cheng, in Relinque Eleta, 2009, p. 37).

This antecedent of a *golden age* based on the reign of morality gave rise to the emergence of the father of Chinese thought, Confucius. He was the author of a political-social narrative that although it was inspired by his relationship with Heaven (Tian), landed his central concerns in a solution of man based on ethics and virtue. In the axial age, China, with Confucius, places the Chinese civilization in a civilizational line, that from the God creator transits, in a sensitive time, to a naturalism of things determined by man, to which it invokes, not as an individual entity within the framework of its freedom, but as a social being determined by an idea of group, of family, of social issue; that was ordered vertically where the state was placed at its upper point and the person at the bottom, before passing by the subject; the

father and the son; where the State was the father and the people the children, which have reciprocal obligations.

Unlike the foregoing, the West, on an opposite route, from the pre-Socratic and Aristotelian naturalism transits to a civilizational line determined by the will of Heaven, where society, state, and person, were grouped under a divine order of reward-punishment that prevailed under its different modalities until a period of Renaissance (16<sup>th</sup> century) and Illustration (17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>).

This difference in the conception of the cosmovision of China and the West, in relation to the social order and the construction of the power of the State, marks a structural difference whose consequences survive until today.

The Chinese thought, acting, and reasoning. The entire cultural expression in Asia, which has lasted more than 2000 years, results in an ethnicity difficult to comprehend by a Western culture that during the same period has lived everything, except *continuity*. On the contrary, its current narrative finds itself confronted with resolving, socially, the enormous gap that was left by the abandonment of a *theocracy* that gave an explanation to its social order. The certainties of its political progress that it presumes today coexist together with the ghosts of its unresolved individuality.

The continuity of the Chinese empire. The unity and *harmony* of what is experienced could be an explanation principle of the Chinese economic predominance during 90% of the modern era. In this section, we only emphasize it as a structural difference between China and the West, which invites us to be cautious in the use of the concepts, or the political, economic or social categories, especially in the use of the political idea of the State.

Similarly, as Jaspers points out, this difference in cosmovisions also informs us of other possibilities that we have not achieved and puts us in touch with the true origin of a different human being, which we are not and yet, also which we possibly are, and that is truly irrepresentable with historical existence; which calls us to rethink the idea of a universal history as a closed circle (Jaspers, 2017, p. 109).

## D. THE CONSTRUCTION OF POWER IN CHINA

### I

Political power in China is born as in any human group: from chaos. From barbarism, from horror, from war, from death, from the struggle of the strong against the weak. From the moment in which this reality is transformed into a state of tension, and the human group itself, in an act of good sense, decides to organize itself and generate a political power that serves as a force that manages and controls the prevailing chaos.

China had this concern since its first social organizations. However, its transcendent narrative begins with the period of the three pre-imperial kingdoms, with which began a historical and political story of order and longing, despite the multiple conflicts that occurred during this era. The Xia Kingdom, distant and nebulous in its memory (21<sup>st</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> BC). The Shang Period, as the starting point for the path of its integration (1600-1045 BC) and the Zhou Dynasty, Western and Eastern (1045-256 BC) as the freshest memory and experience for the Chinese philosophers, who turned to the past<sup>15</sup> in the belief of a golden age based on righteous and virtuous kings (King Wen, Duke Shou, etc.) to begin the construction of a theory of power and social organization.

These three pre-imperial periods, in their political and social effervescence, intertwine, and even give rise to an era of enlightenment (551 to 221 BC) where the “Chinese philosophy will get to know its maximum development and will achieve a flourishing that has never been equaled since” (Preciado, 2015, p. 48).

It is in this vast period of almost half a millennium that the period of the “100 schools” emerges, so called because of the con-

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<sup>15</sup> Benjamin Schwartz notes that among the civilizations of the Axial Era, China is the only one whose main concern is to look from the present upheaval, backwards, towards an empire and a culture that flourished in the immediate past (Graham, 2012, p. 21).

siderable production of thinkers and philosophers who have been arguing ever since about the Chinese existence and *being*. However, at the time only six schools succeeded in influencing the construction of the Chinese ethnicity. Firstly, the Confucian school or that of scholars; after that, the legalist; the Maoist; the Daoist or Taoist; the Buddhist (Yin-Yang) and the nominalist. Among all of them, the Confucian and the legalist schools are the ones that influenced the most in the debate on the Chinese State, although the contribution of the Moist and Daost currents is not less important with respect to the model of being Chinese, its social order and the construction of its forms of power.

## II

As is known, for over two millennia, Confucius and his followers represent the relevant explanatory source of Chinese society and its political power. On the other hand, Shen Dao, Shang Yan and Han Feizi (3<sup>th</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> C. A.C), were the representative voices of the legalist thought. Modi (Mozi), (4<sup>th</sup> C. BC), through his work (Mozi) contributed to the creation of a particular school with Confucian roots. Laozi (Lao-Tse), through the important texts *Dao De Jing* or *Tao Te Ching* and Zhuangzi, among others, has an important impact on the social and political order, although together with Buddhism, its frame of reference comprised mainly the spiritual field of people.

The foregoing is a synthetic vision of the philosophical schools that disputed the organization forms of the pre-modern Chinese societies, which, as was mentioned before, during the Axial age were contemporary of similar reflections in other parts of the world. Within this intellectual current, the figure of Confucius shows up as the most ancient and transcendent Chinese philosopher since he represents the nuclear thought from which the millenarian social organization of China began, as well as the different forms of its political power. In a special way, Confucius was the bridge where the philosophical-political thought transited from

theocracy to the naturalism of things, by *revealing* the importance per se of the human being and his relationship with the other, removing him from a divine order or sanction, and inculcating a respect and love for humanity (Ren).

Certainly, the things from heaven were the first justification of power in China, during its nascent monarchies. Traditions and ceremonies also constitute their first bonds of power. The sources of the Zhou Era (11<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> BC), whether they are bronze vessels or writing corpus, etc., proclaim that King Wen received the *Mandate from Heaven* (Tianming). However, since then, it provides for the possibility of withdrawing the power from the king in turn as soon as he *fails* in his mission that is: to maintain peace in his territories, to ensure the happiness of the people and to preserve the unity of “everything that is under Heaven” (Tianxia) (The Space of Chinese Civilization) (Cheng, in Relinque Eleta, 2009, p. 39).

In this regard, in the face of the challenges and questions of his time, Confucius based on the foundations of the traditions for beginning the construction of a social and political morality that serves as the solution for the chaos, and the organization of a society in formation that could sustain itself axiologically over time. The grand master, “Kong” (Confucius), of a low noble family of the now province of Shandong, at no time claimed the paternity of a new school of thought. On the contrary, he declared his revisionism towards a vanished golden age when he affirmed: “I pass through without inventing; I love and trust in the old” (Graham, 2012, p. 31). To which he added, “I am not someone born with wisdom, but rather I limit myself to loving ancient times, and I strive seriously to emulate them” (Bauer, 2009, p. 60).

And Confucius did not deceive with the truth. What he does is to interpret the power of his time through its best social expression, in order to offer a formula that rescues the human being from himself: from his barbarism and his chaos in a sustainable manner.

In this respect, Confucius’s transcendence is to offer social morality as a primordial source of political power, which far from

converting it into a religion and him into its priest, repeatedly until his death, puts social ethics as the only alternative for a healthy coexistence; and the commitment to it, as the sole justification of a central and sustained power. Thus the love to mankind (ren), knowledge (shi), ceremony, chivalry and good manners (li), righteousness (yi), benevolence, filial piety (xiao), loyalty to the monarch (zhong), that of the prince to his subjects (shu), love to the elder brother (ti), etc.; is what Confucius offers to society and to Chinese power, as the only path of personal and collective happiness.

As in most societies of his time, the best resource for Confucius would have been to continue building on a theocracy based on the power of Heaven (Tian), where it would justify the infinite, and in turn, the power, as was done later in Europe. Placing personal morality, and not Heaven, as the first stone for the construction of the Chinese society and power, was perhaps one of his greatest contributions toward the sustainability of the Chinese civilization. Certainly, in his speech, Heaven coexists with social morality, in a moment that required enormous sensitivity in the handling of symbols, categories, and concepts; however, in a clear and persistent way, social morality, benevolence, and the love for mankind and its people, became the philosopher's stone of the Chinese power. Based on this philosophy, Confucius ruled that "A person who appreciates morality does not need special laws or punishments" (Schleichert & Rotz, 2013, p. 43). That, "When one is straight, one does not need to command, and everything will work by itself. But when one is not straight, even if he commands, nobody will obey". Taking the recommendation to the extreme, "He who rules through virtue resembles the polar star, which, remaining fixed in its position, is revered by the rest of the stars around it" (2. I).

"Treat the people with respect —he recommended to the prince— and you will be venerated; be a good son to your parents and a good prince to your subjects and you will be served with

loyalty; honor men of value and educate the less competent, and everybody will feel incited to good”.

As for the way of governing, he insisted, “That the rulers give an example of solicitude towards their families, and the people will naturally tend toward humanity; that they give an example of fidelity towards old friends, and the people will never be cynical” (Cheng, in Relinque Alicia, 2009, p. 43).

Confucius had no doubts between human beings, political power and the power of Heaven. Despite his insistence on morality as a source of legitimacy and of political and social action, with historical links sensitive to the Tian, in the text of Lunyu, which deals with his dissertations, it is stated: “The master never spoke about strange (phenomena), powers, chaos or gods” (Schleichert & Rotz, 2013, p. 48). And this position of distancing the social and the State life from the gods and spirits, is a second transcendent contribution to the Chinese civilization when we compare it with the route that the Western culture followed, which took nearly 18 centuries to separate the church from the State, and even in some countries still continues as a pending issue.

His position in this field had to be extremely careful, to avoid offending ancestral traditions of the time or dying in the attempt (on several occasions his speech put him in physical danger), while at the same time concluding toward rational orders. When asked how to serve the spirits and the gods, Confucius answered skillfully, “He who cannot serve men, how will he pretend to be able to serve the spirits”. Adding also on the issue of death in an elusive way “He who does not understand life, how will he understand death?” (11.11). For this reason, some authors conclude “...different signs indicate that Confucius could be considered an agnostic who was not speculating on the emergence or the purposefulness of the world, nor on the origin of men, nor on life beyond death, not even on the gods and demons” (Schleichert & Rotz, 2013, p. 49).

### III

The military struggle for the unification of the seven kingdoms occurred along with the philosophical debate on the duty of the State and its exercise of power. In the face of Chinese moralism, which in the midst of the tribal struggles seemed like a decontextualized *rara avis*, thinkers emerged who bet on a more realistic manner for creating laws as a way to manage chaos and the hierarch in turn.

Because of their contrasting nature, these schools experienced a great deal of debate regarding the organization of the social order, of the state, and of power; which, as is known, was won by Confucianism, even though the first Empire declared Legalism the official school to lead the State.

The rationality of Legalism was opposed from its birth to the endeavor of a State, which subordinated its origin and action in the *ethics* of the monarch, warning of the fragility of this foundation. Instead of the Confucian concepts on virtue, the Legalists introduced three topics for political success, law (*fa*), power and position of power (*shi*), and the arts of the State government (*shu*). Similarly, the Legalists did not bet on the existence of a wise sovereign with superhuman abilities to solve social and political problems. Rather —they pointed out— a political methodology tailored to normal sovereigns and subjects should be established (Schleichert & Rotz, 2013, p. 200).

Among the most prominent philosophers of Legalism is Shang Yang (338 B.C.) who is recognized for his severity in the generation and application of laws. “A wise ruler,” he said, “does not value justice, but the law. If the laws are clear and the mandates are executed without any condition, then everything is in order” (Schleichert & Rotz, 2013, p. 225). Han Fei (280-233 BC) who was the author and promoter of the Han Feizi, represents another of the most sophisticated exponents of the Legalistic School. Just as Shang Jang, regarding the exercise of power, he indicates that when the base of power is occupied following the law, there is order; when the base of power is occupied rejecting

the law, there is a disorder. When one abandons the base of power and rejects the law and expects a Yao or a Shun (exemplary Kings) to come, one will have one generation of order for every thousand of disorder. When one adheres to the law and occupies the base of power anticipating that there will be disorder only when a Jie, or a Zhou, comes, one will have one generation of disorder for every thousand of order. Graham concludes in this regard: “For Han Fei, then, the political order does not depend either on the power as such or on the moral value, but on the order that falls on the base of power, with which he meant the existence of established laws, clearly defined, and rigorously implemented” (Graham, 2012, p. 393). Notwithstanding the importance that these millenary reflections, between a *de facto* and *de jure* state, could have for the West, as Bauer warns,

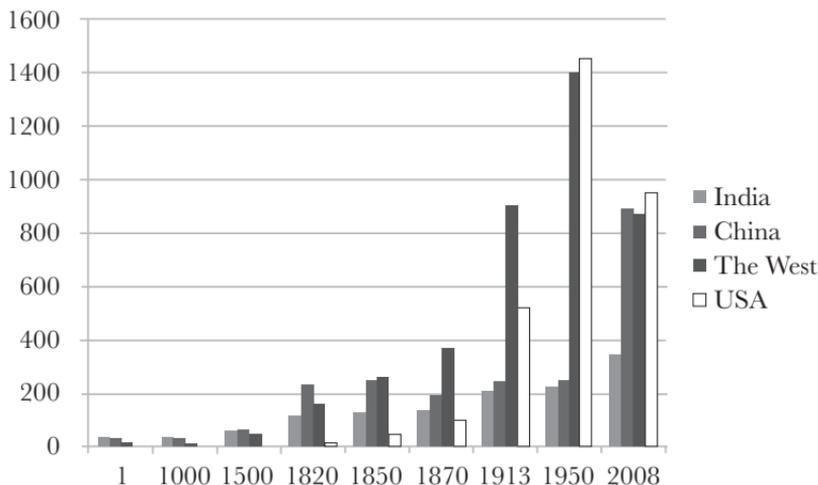
The philosophy of Legalism (in Chinese Fajia, “School of Law”) at first glance operates within the history of Chinese thought as an isolated phenomenon: it was an accepted ideology throughout China only during the notorious Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC); after the dramatic collapse of this dynasty, it became an immoral non-philosophy and was outlawed (Bauer, 2009, p. 123).

For the West, it is not easy to understand how this struggle between utopia and reason, as a prelude to the formation of the Chinese State, could opt for the former in an environment where the barbarity of human beings was barely declining, and religion, and then law, as happened in the West, were the instances that marked the outcome of its civilization. Accepting that the military kingdoms opted for a “commitment to morality and virtue” not only as personal aspirations, but as social structures and government, is a phenomenon that even in China itself is subject to various interpretations.

The reality is that, on the civilizatory route of China, through *centuries* of ideas, it followed the military and political integration of the seven main kingdoms by the first Chinese emperor, Shi Huangdi, which forms the first Chinese State, which lasts for

more than 2000 years. Given the new global geopolitics between the West and East Asia, this matter is presented as an element of the utmost importance. First, because it precedes the formation of the Western State, a millennium and a half before, with all that this means. And secondly, because its ancestral construction is under a cosmivision and parameters opposed to its counterpart from the West; which has resulted in a comparison of strengths and weaknesses between the two states, which in the last two millennia has resulted in a greater *economic strength* of the Chinese State, according not only to the results of the last forty years, but of 90% of the time of the modern world.

WORLD'S GDP  
(THOUSANDS OF MILLIONS OF USD)



SOURCE: Emilio Ontiveros/Mauro F. Guillén, 2012.

In comparison —to the millennial strength of the Chinese State— the European dynasties were just provincial potentates within the Oikumene of Christianity, at the head of regional

kingdoms. As Jacques Genet points out, at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the first modern state —the kingdom of France— was just being organized, while China had been for some time, “A great centralized empire that was governed by a «uniform» administrative system” (Fairbank, 1996, p. 72). Fukuyama adds, “China built a centralized and meritocratic bureaucracy that managed its population, with uniform taxes, military control, and an organized society, 18 centuries before a similar State was created in Europe” (Fukuyama, 2014, p. 354).

In this dialectic of the Chinese *construct*, the philosophy of its ideology and the political integration of its government, coincide in time to form the first Chinese State, as one of the most finished examples of its time. The military territorial integration by the “Yellow Emperor” (Qin) coincides with multiple offers of *forms* of social organization, and of power, which emanated from its Axial age of the “100 schools”. In particular, it is noted that the constituted empire had not only the guidelines of government and social organization of the philosophical thought, but unlike other civilizations, it transforms this philosophical thought into *official* and forces its practice as a form of government and education, which must be respected in society. Hence, another of the millenarian differences with regard to Western behavior.

The victory and the coming to power of Qin, as the first emperor of China, in addition to representing the first act of the Chinese State, during his brief term (221-206 BC) also signified the coming to power of the Legalistic current, based on the legacy of Shang Yang and the decisive influence of his minister Li Si. However, in this landing of philosophy and power in the Qin Dynasty “I will be the first emperor (Shi Huangdi), the subsequent reigns will be counted from me, the second, the third and even the ten thousand, the transmission will never end” (Graham, 2012, p. 510), there is also a first closing of the different philosophical currents, where a powerful and violent emperor not only makes the empire of Legalism official as a form of government, but also outlaws the rest of the existing currents, reach-

ing to the extreme of ordering the burning of books (213 A. C) that were written during the period of the hundred schools, and even ordered the killing of 460 scholars, mainly Confucians, of which some theorists talk of the possibility that they were buried alive (Fainbank, 1996).

The aggressiveness to accept the lines of the power and the *officialization* of these philosophical currents during the government, in turn, speak of an idiosyncrasy that has always aspired to a single government, a single thought and a single power; that to achieve this, it did not hesitate to exclude or destroy the different currents of thought. Also appearing as a highly significant fact, the debate that China is living today between a *de jure* state and a *de facto* state had its first antecedent, in terms of power, during the second century before our era. The debate of these two great schools, after the brief Legalistic triumph during the Qin dynasty, was replaced by the following Han Dynasty (202 BC to 220 AD) which, although it did not kill philosophers or completely ban the rest of the schools, following his predecessor's policy, took Confucianism as the official thought of his period (more than 400 years) which defined the ethnicity and the construction of power in China, in a manner diametrically different from Legalistic parameters and also from the West. Armstrong comments with regard to this,

In 136, the court scholar, Dong Zhongshu, presented a report to Emperor Wu (140-87) claiming that there were too many schools competing and recommending that the six classics, taught by Confucians, should become the official State teaching. The emperor agreed, but instead of abolishing all the schools, as the Qin had done, he allowed the others to continue. The Confucian philosophy supported the Han meritocratic system, which elected its officials through a public examination. The Confucians had always believed that a man of virtue and wisdom should occupy a high position in government, regardless of his origin. They supported the family, the basic unit of society, and above all, they were both men of school and thinkers, intimately familiar with the cultural

history that was essential to China's national identity (Armstrong, 2006, p. 503).

Confucianism, as the "official" line of thought, construction of power, form of government, and social organization, under its different historical moments and facets, is the clearest line of interpretation of the Chinese millenarianism, even for the last constitutional reforms of March 2018, as we will see later. Along with this, the syncretism of the other political and philosophical thoughts, show up as an accompaniment that explains the sustainability of Confucianism and the development of power and society in China. As a synthesis of this initial stage of construction of Chinese thought, in Cheng's words, we could point out the following:

Chinese thought is based on a relationship of fundamental trust between man with regard to the world he lives in, and the conviction that he possesses the ability to encompass the totality of what it is real with his knowledge and his action, unique wholeness that is formed by the infinite multiplicity of its parts. The world as an organic order is not conceived outside of man, and the man who naturally finds his place in it is not conceived outside the world. This is how the harmony that reigns in the natural course of things must be maintained with existence and human relations (Cheng, 2006, p. 35).

From this second Han Dynasty, and for more than 2000 years, under a decision from a State that opted for the "moral" order of things rather than a legal order, the Chinese people built the oldest living civilization in the world, which today confuses the West.

## E. THE FORMS OF POWER IN THE CHINESE STATE

The significant distance between the date the Chinese State was founded with respect to the Western State is not only relevant, leading for the former into a millenary political culture, trained, in

the face of triumph and adversity, to keep the State itself alive for hundreds of years. It is also surprising that this sustainability has been achieved, for the most part, through the *forms* or modalities that the State itself adopted since its origin, derived from Confucianism in all its aspects and related schools.

### *Unique Power*

Currently, the West is surprised by the Chinese “totalitarianism”, its high concentration of power in the figure of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the President in turn, Xi Jinping; as was also a subject of observation, for the same reason during the political term of President Mao Zedong and the late empire. Beyond the political reflections on this event, which divide the opinions inside and outside China, the unique power (Core leader) is a millenarian conception that derives itself from the way in which China has always been organized against chaos, barbarism and the challenges derived from the binary composition of the human being and the adversities of nature.

The pre-modern Chinese thinker (Confucius, Menzio, Shang Yan, Xunzi, Shen Dao, Mozi, Laozi, Han Feizi, and many others) was worried about barbarism, violence, chaos, war, social decomposition. China’s internal and external challenges. Its confrontation with others, social cohesion, and well-being of the people. The organization of the family and its role before the State. The formation of the State and its capacity to face these challenges.

Their sensitive warning regarding the social and natural challenges led Modi, for example, to declare that chaos ruled the world, “As with animals”, and that this chaos had arisen because there was no administration, no supervisor. He was even already venturing, as the solution to this chaos, which should be solved by “the most skilled”, the “most convenient”, adding without leaving the Confucian vein, that he was “vested” as the son of Heaven. The Guanzi, on the other hand, explains in agreement with Modi, that

In antiquity, there was no distinction between monarchs and vassals or between authority and subjects —that— men and women still did not live together as a couple. They lived among the animals, formed hordes and submitted themselves to each other; that people with knowledge introduced virtuous norms for the people; that in this way moral methods arose; that upon seeing this, people were impressed, and they also turned to the moral life (Dao) (Schleichert & Rotz, 2013, p. 100 and 202).

The image of non-order, animal chaos, human injustice, has as its response the creation of a powerful, unipersonal, qualified State, which is vested with an absolute power, in exchange for its commitment to society. In China, the central and absolute power is justified since the time of the 100 schools and survives, under various facets, up to the present date.

In China, the construction of power and the creation of the State follow a long path from its ancestral kingdoms, Xia, Shang and Zhou, as immediate antecedents, the figure of Confucius appearing, as was already indicated, as a synthesizer of theories and as an effective driver in placing morality at the base of power and outlawing the establishment of a State based on laws. In a special way, the vision of power, from the moment it became possible in the face of the geographic and military integration of the Chinese State, its moral acceptance was providing guidelines on the construction of its modalities, based on the pre-imperial philosophical proposal. Thus, if the acceptance of a central authority was the political response to the demand for the control of chaos, the construction of that authority was drawn since the dawn of time, unique, central, absolute, without conditions, under the consideration that only a power vested with these faculties would have the potential to yield satisfactory results to the society in turn. This original idea of power has accompanied the Chinese authority for over 20 centuries and is one of its essential elements to consider in the context of its long sustainability and economic success.

Certainly, the antecedent and accompaniment of the Tianming (mandate from Heaven) during its first empires were part of a ceremonial that, based on tradition, recognized the connection of the power with the celestial force. Then, little by little, under the force of an agnostic philosophical current (that even when they can refer to Heaven like Confucius, Mencius, etc., and can recommend the belief of spirits like Modi, all classical philosophers were basically *irreligious*), China begins the construction of a single monarch, which concentrates power and attributions, who like the “father”, will take responsibility for their “children”, in order to provide order to a holistic cosmogony, and a social cohesion, that will facilitate governance between the monarch and subjects and will give an orderly answer: each category in its place, the heavens, the earth, and the State, as the responsible and virtuous provider of the “things” of man (Schleichert & Rotz, 2013, page 18).

In this ideal of Chinese centralism, the influence of Confucius is decisive in imagining the Monarch and the State as a natural construction of the family organization. Xunzi, in this sense, as one of his clearest followers, points out that the monarch is the father and mother to his people.

Why must the mourning of the ruler last for three years? I say: the ruler is the lord of an orderly government; the origin of the models of a refined culture, the summit of feelings and appearance (decorous); so when the people, amongst one another, turn him into the most eminent, why is this unacceptable? The poems say: “happy is the prince, [he is] father and mother of the people”. This prince undoubtedly deserves the definition of “father and mother”. The father can give life [to the children], but not feed them; the mother can feed them, but cannot educate them; the ruler can not only feed them, but also educate them... (Pines, in Relinque Alicia, 2009, pp.72 and 73).

The State, then, as a central provider of the social universe of the Chinese “being”, as an *exemplary center* (Geertz), a moral

example, an educator for its people. A monarch that arrives in harmony with Heaven, but that requires virtue as a prerequisite and the obligation to commit himself to his people. And that his arrival was not a prize but a responsibility, that if he performed it badly, his revocation or even his regicide would be justified (Xunzi, Mencio).

The unique government is crucial for the proper functioning of the political system (Shen Dao). The monarch is not a beneficiary of power; he is a servant to his people (Shen Dao). The monarch should benefit others and not himself (Lüshi Chunqiu/book), there is no social order without a ruler (Shang Yan). An efficient government requires unity; duplicity means chaos. Xunzi says: “A ruler is the eminence of the State; a father is the eminence of the house: when there is only one eminent person, there is an orderly government, when there are two, calamity is produced...”. Power should be centralized to face chaos; to achieve harmony, unification, and victory against third parties (Laozi). The ruler must never divide his authority (Laozi). There should be no institutional limitations (but should be moral limitations) on the power of the ruler (Shang Yan) (Pins, in Relinque Alicia, 2009, pp. 55-85).

Schleichert and Rotz comment (2013, p. 203): “The monarchical state was never in question in ancient China, although often real power relations could be presented in another manner”. The Chinese philosophy, from antiquity until well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, sets off from with the evidence that the government is monarchical. Conclusively, Pines points out “Throughout the millennium, different political, religious and ethnic groups repeatedly challenged the legitimacy of the dynasty, but not a single one questioned the basic concept of the imperial political system”. Adding, on the millennial validity of the empire, that “And thus, throughout all Chinese history, no institutional limitation was ever imposed upon the power of the monarch” (Pines, in Relinque Alicia, 2009, pp. 56 and 57).

In China, the construction of power arises from the reflection and philosophical debate of ideas and not from an autocrat flash or divine revelation, although many times the ruler, in turn, has taken advantage of it. He may or may not coincide with it, but its ontological value is remarkable. The vision of power, transformed into time, ran deeply in the ethnicity and politics of China, so that during a first stage, until the fall of its empire in 1911, its form of organization was never questioned, and more importantly, no limitation was imposed on it. This culture of power and social coexistence, very different from the Western uses, marks a good part of the contrasts between these two civilizations.

### *Vertical Power*

The hierarchical organization, the verticality, the ordering of the Chinese State, is a category derived from its conception as the *organizing center* of things. This being so, the State and consequently, the monarch, as its representative, become the nucleus from which all directions depart. Upward, its harmonious relationship—not dependent—with heaven, and downward its organization is structured as a large family in the Tianxia, which becomes the entire Chinese civilizing space. The rest belongs to *barbarism*.

In this regard, Confucius noted: “That the sovereign be a sovereign, that the subject be a subject, that the father be a father and that the son be a son” (Schleichert & Rotz, 2013, p. 35). The famous social pyramid (filial) through which the human endeavor was ordered.

In the case of Confucius, to submit to the leader has as a central justification, a principle of hierarchical order initially supported in the lineage, but more importantly, in the merit and virtue of the ruler. In the case of Modi, submitting to the leader has the purpose of unifying the moral (*yi*) throughout the world, from an organizing ethical center that covers rulers, parents, children, and people:

In ancient times, in order to shine the light of his luminous virtue throughout the universe, [the sovereign] began by ordering his own country. To order his own country, he began by arranging his own house. To fix his own house, he began by perfecting himself. To perfect himself, he began by straightening his heart. To straighten his heart, he began by making his thought authentic. To make his thought authentic, he began by developing his knowledge; and he developed a knowledge by examining the nature of things (Cheng, in Relinque Alicia, 2009, p. 45).

The social and political hierarchy in China is a central part of a cosmogony that is created from an interpretation of the universe. The central power is the sun of that vision, and the other categories are ordered trying to follow a natural order of things. The hierarchy and the verticality of the State result in an organizing principle that has been accepted for centuries; despite its moral justification, on many occasions, it has been part of an excluding dictatorial social-political order.

In this context, the reference of moral order on which the Chinese State is built, in its own way, resembles the De Jure State of the West, to the extent that both are social ideals to be achieved; driving guides, although the diverse societies that compose them stumble all the time in the pursuit of their objectives.

### *Meritocratic Administration. The Chinese Mandarin System*

The monarch in turn's lack of capacity to govern was a matter of concern since the time of Confucius. The anxiety of choosing a monarch who did not comply with the dictates of Heaven was the cause for the emergence of various alternatives, which since Modi, as was mentioned previously, proposed the incorporation of "competent and convenient" ministers. Xunzi also recognized in his own way that "there is no one who can be sovereign alone because he needs officials and counselors as support and as crutches. They can never be required too soon" (Chapter

12.12). Xunzi even noted that the selection of officials was the most important task of a sovereign. He even defined the ideal bureaucrat: “The specialists without humanity are as useless as the humanitarian personalities that lack specialized knowledge: whomever brings together specialized knowledge and humanity is a true jewel for a ruler” (Chapter 12.8). Even for the Legalists, “The ideal State... is ordered by a precise bureaucracy that regulates exactly all the different tasks through corresponding competencies” (Schleichert & Rotz, 2013, p. 232). Graham adds

The great change that came to pass with the reunification of the Qin and their successors (the Han, 206 BC to 200 AD) was that, despite a brief and partial return, at the beginning of the Han Dynasty, to Zhou’s policy of distributing fiefs, China becomes, henceforth, a centralized empire, administered by a bureaucracy of appointed scholars and not by a hereditary aristocracy educated in the chariot and bow. The term *Shi*, which still designated that class of people that hold political office, has been better translated as “erudite” or “scholars” than as “knights” (Graham, 2012, pp. 19 and 20).

The merit of the stratified organization of political and social comparisons and civil service corresponds only to the West, exclaimed Weber at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Meanwhile, in China, the civil service issue had been discussed since the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.; and even during the Han Dynasty there are already records of the existence of an Imperial Academy (2<sup>nd</sup> century BC) that had 30,000 students, as well as a high-level written bibliography, and that this Academy prepared the officials to take their admission exams. In 156 B.C., for example, the canonical writings were elevated, officially, to an object of compulsory study within a State-funded training. Since that date, evidence also shows up on the completion of admission exams for aspiring public officials, which consisted of anonymous and written exams, made before notaries to avoid the identification of the candidates, who were only known by key number (García, 2014, p. 31). On this

important subject Leys adds, “Until the modern era, this was undoubtedly the most open, flexible, fair and refined system of government known in history (it was, specifically, the system that impressed and inspired the European philosophers of the 18<sup>th</sup> century)” (Leys, 2016, p. 362).

Upon trying to question the reasons for the survival of a power that renounced law and theocracy, as forms of sustainability, at the time of construction of its civilization, the idea of *shielding* the ruler in turn through a trained, loyal and professional administration, appears as one of the most credible explanations for obtaining good political, economic and social results for a society that survives through time.

### *Confucianism and its Force*

#### *A State that is “impossible to kill”*

The immortal empire, Graham insists. The oldest social organization in the world points out Leys.

The multidisciplinary philosophical construct, starting with Confucius, was the one that determined the formation of power and the Chinese State, as well as the central configuration of its society. By moving away from absolutes and coexisting since the Han Dynasty with complementary and related thoughts, Confucianism was perpetuated facing the adversities of its time. During the exercise of power, Confucius appears as a purpose to be followed, as an inspiration and a form of *chivalry*, within an everyday political realism. “If Confucianism had simply promoted the idea that in politics, one must proceed morally; this would have been a valuable contribution to human civilization. There is, however, another additional fact that does not stop calling attention to itself, namely, the centennial existence of Confucianism” (Schleichert & Rotz, 2013, p. 380). And it is this existence that transcends millennia that precisely justifies the current study of Confucianism, as an inevitable condition for knowing China

properly, for trying to interpret it, for knowing the China of today, through its relevant attributes of yesterday.

Confucianism does not disappear with the Hans. In many ways, it survives to this day through its adaptation or recomposition throughout imperial life. Its historical weakening and its affectation before the ascendant influence of Buddhism, for example, forced a re-launch and the adaptation of its postulates during the Tang Dynasty (6<sup>th</sup> century A. D.), with Han Yu (768-824). During the Song era (10<sup>th</sup> century), along with the rebirth of the Chinese identity, a neo-Confucian movement follows, led mainly by Zhou Dunji. In 1130 this movement was followed by a powerful Confucian movement orchestrated by Zhu Xi, which restructures the Confucian philosophy, shortly before the empire fell defeated in 1280 by the Mongol armies. During the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), successor and integrator of the Mongol, a Confucian idealism appears, led by Wang Zhouren, as a response to the invasion and the reconstruction of the identity as a nation. The second Chinese defeat at the hands of the Manchus in 1644 was a less demanding challenge for Confucianism since the millennial influence of the Chinese empire in East Asia had previously won the Confucian affiliation of the conquerors. Nevertheless, at this time, the empire was already beginning its declining period, the first “nationalist” movements appearing with Huang Zongxi (1610-1695), who directed criticisms at the monarch and at Confucianism, while at the same time he urged support of a Legalist government (Wang Fuzhi). Along with the fall of the empire (1911) ends the golden era of Confucianism and begins a revisionism and permanent questioning, which subsists in academic and political terms until the present date.

After the empire and the long period of social upheaval, Mao appeared in 1949, a critic of Confucianism, sympathizer of Legalism and promoter of a new Marxist-Leninist ideology. In spite of this, in February 1972, during his first meeting with President Nixon, Nixon congratulated Mao for having transformed an ancient civilization, to which Mao replied, “I have not been able

to change it. I only achieved it in a few places around Beijing” (Kissinger, 2012, p. 128).

Confucianism is still a subject of debate in the global world, but there is no doubt, as Mao tacitly says, that its roots in China and its tributary zone of East Asia will not be easy to change. Octavio Paz says that cultures are realities that resist the accidents of history and time with immense vitality.

## F. THE POWER OF THE CHINESE STATE. A DEVELOPER STATE?

### I

Beyond the philosophical positions on Confucianism, which is always in a perpetual debate inside and outside of China, what is relevant for this essay is to try to demonstrate the continuity in the construction of power that China follows since 221 B.C.; and how it, in its different versions, always returns to its original form deposited in one person, from which the verticality, the authoritarianism and the *absolute* power of the receiver of power in turn are constructed. Throughout the millennia and the countless historical clashes that the country suffers, the pieces of power can be divided or suspended temporarily, but even today, they always return to the organizing center, to its *exemplary core*, granting it unlimited powers; which has generated a political-comptroller (and developer) component towards its economy in a permanent way.

Shi Huangdi, despite being a Legalist, inaugurates the great absolute power. The Hans, with the official adoption of Confucianism, absorb the total power as children of Heaven by imposing highly centralized governments. In these cases, the State, as an absolute power, administered the greatest wealth, the land, and its sale was prohibited or very limited, and its distribution was part of the government’s management, which varied with each empire. Despite this great power, based on

the Confucian precepts and the leading schools, since then, a censorate was established, which was composed of officials of high prestige, which operated as a moral and politic audit, even against the emperor himself. During the Tang Dynasty, in the framework of its great cultural successes and military and economic problems, the State tried to maintain its economic control, regulating trade and stable prices. In the Song Dynasty, the bureaucracies remained prone to a central, strong, closed and Confucian State, although the policies applied did not always conform to the ideal of Confucius. With the Ming, after the trauma of the Mongolian invader, the State and the Emperor, in addition to being central and absolute, were transformed and became more interventionist and repressive. This generated veneration towards the Emperor, which is something that the Mongols themselves adopted. At the same time, the Emperor lost part of his *benevolence*. This creates the generation of a kind of *Almost Enlightened Despotism* with the Manchus (Qing), the last Chinese Dynasty (Botton, 2010). They certainly deepened in the roots of Confucianism, since the Manchus were already inclined by the precepts of Confucius before their invasion, and translated a large number of classic books for their greater dissemination. The empire, but not the Chinese civilization, was diluted standing up, faithful to its millenarian precepts of power centralization, with little attachment to profits and capitalism, agnostic, with a permanent intervention of the State, and with a social order attached to moral custom and a rejection to the rule of law. However, throughout the imperial period prevailed a State that although it never stopped fighting against its aristocrats and external forces, it adapted itself to the political and economic circumstances of the time. It never gave up the axial principles of its origin, nor was it the object of questioning or limitation to this enormous power of the State, and its historical capacity of comptroller and responsible party for the economy and the subjects.

## II

It is interesting to see that in the reconstruction of the power of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the pieces also return to a political center.

In 1976 Mao and Zhou Enlai had died. In 1978 Deng Xiaoping was barely regaining power, but from that moment he ordered and organized the opening of a millennial and closed State, which accepted his leadership and status without major questioning,<sup>16</sup> which he maintained *legally* and *extra-legally* until his death in 1997. The case of Mao, with the reservations of the case, bears an important similarity with Deng himself to the extent that from the triumph of the Revolution in 1949, until his death 27 years later, he maintained a solid power that endured the post-revolutionary adversity. Both Mao and Deng, Mao toward Marxism-Leninism and Deng toward market socialism, in both cases, do it under a central and all-embracing power, vertical and authoritarian, where the people were a faithful companion for both the Communism case and the step towards a Capitalism with *Chinese characteristics*. Naturally, as an innovative figure, the structure of the Chinese Communist Party shows up, that is integrated into the construction of the State power with great sophistication; however, in both cases, it allows and articulates the core leadership.

Usually, an easy evaluation that concludes that Chinese civilization has ended is made as of 1911, when Qing's last Chinese empire falls. The above, in the face of the multiple invasions suffered by the country in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries both by the Western powers and by Japan, and in light of its economic fall in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the leader in world manufacturing at the hands of the United States, and with it, the economic hegemony that it lost, together with India, for nearly 18 centuries. However, after a period of social turbulence from 1911 to 1949, within

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<sup>16</sup> The above does not ignore the internal political struggles at the death of Mao and the efforts of his wife, Jiang Qing, to remain in power (Band of the four).

the framework of the reconstruction of power and the Chinese project, in the strength of its new political hegemons and the general way of exercising that power, (with the forms and updates of the case) towards the recovery of a central power, a nuclear and charismatic leadership, is observed; dressed with new names, but that behind the labels reminds us with clarity of the attributes granted to the power by the philosophical-political thought, from before our era. And here arises again the question on which the different schools do not agree, whether Confucianism and all its historical legacy as a source of Chinese power are dead, as Bauer, Cheng, and others argue, when talking about the self-dissolution of Confucianism; or as other opinions postulate, that, “For a few decades, the Chinese philosophy, especially Confucianism, has experienced a renaissance” (Leys, Schleichert, Rotz, etc.).

The reconstruction of power in Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping, diametrically opposed in the economic and the political, show at first glance show the parameters and characteristics of power that the Chinese philosophers of the *100 schools* thought and imagined, with regard to a solid construction of a State with Chinese characteristics of central power, that over the millennia has passed the fierce test of oblivion or even more, that of results.

### III

The assessment of the above becomes clearer and more important for this study, given the changes to power made in China in March 2018, which speak us empirically of the return of an ethnicity of power which is largely Confucian, and that has never left.

Xi Jinping comes to power in 2013, as a representative of a fifth political generation (Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao, Xi Jinping), and even he was shaped by two positioning trends. That of Mao himself (1949-1976), with a continuism of almost three decades, and that of Deng, where it is accepted that both Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao belonged to

that economic and political project. The former, as was already mentioned, attempted a return to “Legalism” within the framework of a new Marxist-Leninist philosophy. And the arrival of Deng was a first attempt to expand that Legalism, but from a Western perspective, through a principle of separation of powers between the CCP and the creation of the Rule of Law. Under this vision, the first western-style Chinese constitution was approved in 1982 (three socialist constitutions had been promulgated in 1954, 1975 and 1978) through which, for the first time, in China, a systematization was built that to date includes five amendments and more than 240 national laws. Deng’s vision in this regard, confronted with the opening and globalization that he faced in 1978, considered that it was time to lead China, for the first time in its history, towards the Rule of Law, which, at the time, represented the possibility of breaking the Confucian apothegm of the absolute power of the State.

This approach for the future, which Deng personally did not practice and, which had small advances with Zeming and Jintao, were reversed by the reform promoted by Xi, when recovering, through an adaptation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, all the central power of the State in one person, as has been done for the last 2000 years.

In such a manner, through the constitutional reform of March 11, 2018, approved almost unanimously by the National People’s Congress (NPC), President Xi Jinping remains a 21<sup>st</sup> century emperor, by concentrating on his person all the categories of China’s real power. Since the reform, President Xi assumes, or is ratified, as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of China; likewise, he is confirmed as president of the powerful Military Commission, and of course, he is ratified as the head of State of the government. As if that were not enough, in a special way, in a frank use of the categories of the ancestral power, he is named as the core (Core leader) of the Party, in a remembrance without prejudices to the customary language. In this reactivation of the language and symbols of the unique power, he was also given the title of Ling

Xin, which recovers a historical recognition that had only been granted to Mao Zedong after the revolution. Finally, but avoiding any doubt about the new limits of the State, he is recognized as Zuigao Tonge Huai, which rescues a term of broad symbolism, of *greatest commander, supreme commander of China*.

Is a Confucian concentrator State revived, or had it never left?

Within these constitutional reforms, the Supreme People's Court of China lost its original power of judicial review, transferring it to the Standing Committee of the NPC and the CCP, where Xi Jinping is the incumbent. Also, the president's ideology was inserted in the Constitution, which is the "Construction of a Socialism with Chinese characteristics, for a new era", elevating his thoughts, within the constitution, to the level of Mao Zedong. In a relevant manner, the declaration that the leadership of the CCP is the defining feature of Socialism with Chinese characteristics is included in Article 1 of the Constitution. This shakes the validity of the concept of 1982 on the autonomy and foundation of the legal body, with which the initial approach to separation of powers initiated by Deng is damaged, thus motivating a return to a de facto state dominated by the highest authority of the CCP, in the figure of Xi, in his character as General Secretary. Also of Confucian inspiration, the reform includes the creation of a modern censorate through the National Supervisory Commission, which covered 50% of the constitutional reforms and whose duty will be to care for, *colossally*, the non-corruption in the government and the party (At the end of 2017, in different ways, the anti-corruption policy had sanctioned more than one and half-million people).

As reinforcement of the above, within the framework of the 19<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (11-2017) and the 18<sup>th</sup> Congress of the NPC (3-2018), the speeches, official print, electronic media, and mass media reiterated constantly a thousand-year-old mantra of total loyalty to Xi Jinping, as the center, core of the Chinese State. Even more, the necessary legal

changes were made so that state functionaries promised loyalty to the Constitution, to Xi and to his thought.

“The CCP members must enter into the greatest unity with the Core”. “The party must have a powerful leadership and a core or center of power”. “The core-leader is the key issue of China”. “The Chinese party and people need leadership”. “Any leadership must have a soul, center, axis, otherwise it will be unreliable”.

The CCP constitution stipulates that each member of the Party must obey the party organization, that minorities must obey the majorities, that low-level organization must obey the higher-level ones and that all must obey the CCP Central Committee, which demands self-government, self-regulation, and self-purification (China Daily, People Daily, March 2018).

As can be seen from the above, Confucius, Mencius, Modi or Laozi, could have written some of these texts.

#### IV

What is relevant in an effort to differentiate the Chinese State from the Western State begins by recognizing that they are different from each other. That they are born under different cosmogonies and that the construction of their power is done and administered differently. That the ancestral Chinese State remains current, with its strengths and weaknesses and that its economic adaptation to globalization, industrialization and new technologies is very advanced; and that as far as its coexistence with the Western political order, unlike the economic level, far from walking towards the democracy practiced by their counterparts (developed countries), returns with great determination to the place that it has never left, to that unique center of political power that it considers relevant in the construction of a renewed Chinese State, which rests on a lush civilization that aspires to a new Eurasian global order of Eastern tilt.

Regarding its status as a Developer State, we could point out that behind every Chinese State, a development policy has always been present, in a tacit or explicit way, directly or indirectly, within the framework of an always powerful state, with a natural vocation of intervention not only in the market but in all the *tianxia* or the Chinese world.

Thereby, in China, in terms of the construction of power and the State, everything has changed to remain the same.

## G. SYNTHESIS

### I

China or the difficulty of universalizing the concepts. China or the dilemma of a current Orientalism or just another actor in the cast. China, or the great Western challenge of understanding the “other”.

This dilemma about the other half of what is Western, is not new. It started as of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries when Matteo Ricci and the other Jesuits *discovered* China for the rest of the world. And since then until today the Western thinkers have not been able to agree on whether there is a particular Chinese cosmovision; whether this really makes us different; whether Chinese thought is inferior to that of the West; whether its philosophy has rational Western assembly; whether Confucianism is a philosophy or a religion; and now, the doubts that have been added in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, whether China is Capitalist or Socialist; whether it is already integrated into the free market or not; whether it is already part of the Western global order, or it is looking to create a new one; or, according to the question from this essay, whether China can be classified as just another developmentalist State, or if it is more than that.

China is complex, dense, historically tangled and current. A thread that pulls another and is crossed or is interspersed between different disciplines that easily invite error. Its force requires an

obligatory trip to the past, which breaks wills. Under these curtains, China itself plays, as in a thousand-year-old performance, at showing us a different face each day, so that we hardly know which each one of these faces it is, or if it is all of them at the same time.

These faces, since the first Jesuit books that tried to translate what they saw, caused the first great division over the interpretation of the other, as well as the acceptance of the other. Within the framework of a renaissance and an incipient European illustration, the arrival of an agnostic, moral state, determined by the thought of Confucius, added to the debate that would precede the Western acceptance of the creation of its modern state and, in a remarkable fashion, of its separation from the power of the church. Thus, the name of Confucius and his books were added to that of Spinoza, Leibnitz, Foucquet, Montesquieu, and others, who also extolled him as the founder of a utopian state or, as an articulator of an oppressive leviathan. Malebranche and Voltaire, diametrically opposed, the former is in charge of anathematizing, “The superstitious transfiguration and Confucian Atheism”, and the latter, first, recognizes, “China, once entirely ignored, then, longtime disfigured before our eyes”, and then, raise it to the category of, “A political utopia of enlightened absolutism where the State subsists by itself, rationally, without the help of religion” (Guarde, 2013, p. 349).

Not only astonishment or derision followed the China of Ricci, but along with it also appeared a feeling of competition and Western superiority that since then has been embedded in a long chain of thought that has prejudiced their opinion on China and, along with it, has prevented a more punctual and useful knowledge about China. Meanwhile, there has been no shortage of Sino-affiliated trends, exacerbating Chinese merit.

Adam Smith, for example, I cannot avoid this feeling of class, and comparing it with the England of the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, he talked about a strayed China, where, “Any carrion, whether the corpse of a dead dog or a cat, for example, although it is half rot-

ten and stinking, will be as desirable to them as the healthiest food for citizens of other countries”, of course he was referring to Europeans (Morris, 2014, p. 62). Hegel, confusing the Chinese sustainability and ignoring its ancestral philosophical thought, even commented that although China was one of the oldest countries in the world, it lacked a past, that it had no real history and that together with India; they were countries that had *remained on the sidelines of history*. Marx did not resist either from commenting on China and called it a *living fossil, captive of time*, and that *thanks* to England (probably because of its invasion of China in 1839 in the Opium War) had been able to peer into the civilized world. Engels, continuing with the Hegelian judgments, also denounced India and China as countries that had, “Been left out of the line of historical development, for which they were condemned to be conquered and dominated by European civilization” (Relinque, 2009, p. 11).

In the economic field, for example, since the beginning, Marx, predisposed, placed the Chinese economy as an Asian production model (hydraulic despotism), unable to insert it properly within a *universalist* theory on the subject. In this regard, Derbik comments

It is regrettable that the only attempt to introduce a pluri-linearity of history in Marxism —I mean, the concept of “Asian way of producing”— would be so negative. Their implications —pejorative, orientalist— are evident. However, above all, the notion introduces a false plurality since it does nothing but theorize stagnation and only results in a constant impasse on societies without present or future (Relinque, 2009, p. 12).

Max Weber did not stay behind and despite acknowledging his lack of depth on the issues of China, of course disqualified it with regard to the West under the arguments of having a negative sociopolitical structure, its lack of vocation for profit and the lack of a transcendent life moral, which affected the formation of an economic mentality. Similarly, as was already

mentioned, Weber affirmed that, “Only the West has the merit of the structured organization of the political and social corporations, and of the civil service”, ignoring the scientific and moral strength of the Chinese administration. In this effort to interpret China based on the superiority of the West, he also advanced that the printed literature was born only in the West and that only in the West had there been science in that phase of development that is currently recognized as valid. In the former, there are records of the Chinese calligraphy for 3700 years, paper in the year 100 and printing in the year 700, and books were already being sold to the public since the 9<sup>th</sup> century, while it is recognized that the Gutenberg printing press did not appear until the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century. Mateo Ricci himself comments on the thousands of books he found published in China. On the latter, J. T. Needham (20<sup>th</sup> century), with a work that occupied him for more than four decades, made it clear to Weber and the West that the Chinese way of being was never an obstacle to science and innovation, areas where China demonstrates technological advances since a thousand years before our era.

The opinion on Chinese issues is not easy. De Gaulle in his time commented that “China is a big country, inhabited by many Chinese”. Nixon for his part came to say about the Great Wall of China, “This is a great wall” (Leys, 2016, p. 415).

## II

The economic nature of the Chinese model of development, as a theme derived from the complexity of understanding China itself, continues to divide the opinions of experts in the field since its first opening in 1978.

Is China a Developer State? To get close to the beginning of an answer, we would divide its analysis, as was indicated at the beginning of this essay, into its two generally accepted attributes, which are: the STATE, as a determining element of this eco-

nomical alternative, and its DEVELOPER quality, which defines it in the face of the other models.

The first category, that of the State, although it is the first difference that identifies the countries that follow this path, at the same time, in the case of China, is also the one that gives it its distinctiveness and individualizes it with respect to the Western Developer States.

As we have seen, the political and economic meaning of the Chinese State, were born together, learn together, live together and are consubstantial in their origin. Similarly, their essential economic responsibilities are born in the same birth like primary forms that have changed little, because they are part of the construction of a power that was thought to be a responsible father in order to satisfy the material and economic needs of his people; of a people that was educated not to have, but to be, in the frugality of its Confucian moralism. Of a unipersonal imperial father (State), that is not accustomed to share its power or responsibility because it has never done so. Because it has never been subject to limitations (checks and balances); one which has always been accustomed to acting in an authoritarian manner, under the *moral and virtuous responsibility* of its origin, subject to the result of the satisfaction of its governed (children). To organize itself vertically as a father to his family, with a single voice and command from top to bottom, where the unlimited loyalty of each of the members of the family (State) prevails towards his ruler, in a vertical relationship without real glimpses of democracy, because they have never been part of its State cosmogony. From a State that, to guarantee its good results, is surrounded by a civil organization with a millenary, meritocratic career, from a government of the best; dynamic, updated, disciplined and pragmatic, like an administrative army that during millennia administered the land, during the last century administered the industry and services and now is focused on its task of becoming the most powerful nation in the world in 2049 (Xi Jinping, 3-2018). A State that, as always, will try to preserve China from the chaos of

globalization and global disorder, the “barbarism” of the United States, under the shared idea between the people and the Chinese state, that the latter will always be the most qualified and the only one to decide the best strategy of the moment. Just as in 1949 the people and the State marched together towards an economic model of central planning, believing that it was the best alternative for China; likewise from 1978 to date, as defined by Deng Xiaoping, it will continue with an economic strategy of “market socialism” until this strategy serves its purposes, and this, in turn, will be a model for the construction of Socialism and (Market) Capitalism, according to the global and internal frameworks of China. Deng Xiaoping points out:

“Currently, there are two models of productive development. Insofar that each of them serves our purposes, we will make use of it. If Socialism is useful, the measures will be Socialist, if Capitalism is useful to us, the measures will be Capitalist”. In this regard, in an unusual and pragmatic way, he pointed out “There are no fundamental contradictions between Socialism and market economy”.

The experience that we have gained over the past few years has shown us that we could not develop the productive forces within a rigid economic structure. For this reason, we have been implementing some useful Capitalist measures. It is now clear that the correct approach to open up to the world is to combine a planned economy with a market economy, to which structural reforms are implemented.

“Surely, it is incorrect —he added— the affirmation that the market economy only exists in a Capitalist society, that there is the only Capitalist market economy. Why cannot Socialism practice the market economy?” By way of a summary, he concluded: “Both are means” (Oropeza, 2008, p. 450).

The Chinese state, unlike the other Western Developer States, did not have to change the nature or vocation of its economic role to opt for market socialism in 1978. At that time, it

did not decide to be more interventionist with its economic reality to seek growth or to support the industrial development of the country. Nor did it become autocratic given the urgency of its social demands to potentiate the new policies of its development. It did not start, as of its opening, the expropriation of power from its *private* or public companies to head the new development. The Chinese State, that everlasting State, in all its ontology and millennial power, decides not to bet on a Communist strategy of central planning and starts a new economic stage where it does not inaugurate or change its role, what it does is to change the means, as Deng said, to obtain the ends of the development sought.

While the vast majority of the developer models of the West incur in one or some of the above assumptions to introduce or lead industrial development policies, the interventionist Chinese State, like Monterroso's dinosaur, was already there, in a long-standing economic intervention that has never changed in terms of (totalitarian) presence and responsibility; Yes, obviously, in terms of its strategy and participation tools.

A State always present in the economic commitment, statist, monopolistic, interventionist, to a greater or lesser degree or luck, but that sustained China as the largest economy in the world in 90% of modern times, is not a characteristic that can be compared with any other State in any other country in the world. A long-lived, wise, oppressive, ceremonial state, tanned in millennia, which has withstood the test of military adversities and time, cannot be compared with any Western State either.

But in spite of all these differences, all of them relevant to mark essential differences between a Western Developer State and the Chinese case, there are two more that amply reinforce this assumption.

The first is that all these characteristics accompany the construction of the Chinese State, while the scholar's debate whether they are still alive or not. Whether they died with the Empire, with Mao, or continue to be part of its daily events, the political

reform of March 2018, the fifth reform to its 1982 constitution, clearly reveals that this millenarian way of building power in China is still current; consequently the same reform ratifies the need of a center, a *core*, a nucleus of power in the figure of Xi Jinping, who is assumed as an exemplary center, a radiant center, and organizing principle of the entire Tianxia, the Chinese civilizing space that today includes the whole world. Likewise, through a Confucianism for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Chinese State calls for the loyalty of the children with the father, of the least with the most, of the underdogs with the political Tianming.

The empirical evidence of the reform and the official and media statements that accompanied its implementation, once again ratifies the existence of a Chinese State that, inspired by its everlasting cosmogony, without responding to absolutes, is installed and adapted to make China not only the economic hegemony, but also to take over the geopolitics of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The second point, as part of an Eastern dialectic of conceiving the power and the State, which differs with regard to the Western Developer Model, is that while in the cases when the model was applied to Germany, Finland, or even in its Latin American versions, in the middle of the last century such as Mexico, Brazil or Argentina, in these cases, once the State goal was achieved, or not —to implement an industrial process competitive with developed nations— this lowered its sails and returned to a political position of adaptation with the international economic order, limiting its direct participation in companies and processes, aligned to a global economic logic. China, in four decades of economic success, from being the second economy in the world, the first exporting power, and the first manufacturing nation, is still there, under different masks, maintaining its entire presence, and as the specialist Pankaj Mishra points out, the end of the participation of the Chinese State in the development of its economy, “Has never been on its agenda” (Mishra, 2018).

### III

Regarding the issue of China's *developmentalism*, since its opening, it has been inspired by the success of Taiwan, Korea, Germany, Japan, and even the United States. In theory, of course, it drinks and learns from Hamilton and Lutz. It asks its academics, as in other disciplines, to be inspired by them; as it did at the time with Toffler and Rifkin, and with others, to whom it led to long seminars with its Confucian bureaucracies, so that they can learn, ask, and embrace knowledge and strategies.

Since 1980, Chinese developmentalism is installed through its economic zones that came to include all models and facets. They represent the foundations of its economic miracle. Despite its weakness, the selective, progressive and pragmatic opening, at all times was focused on enhancing its content and national interest. Its appropriation of technology, its vision for the future; its always priority bet to a national industry and not only to maquila. The strength of its Development Bank, as the financial muscle of its success. Its champion sectors of development dynamically selected in each of its five-year plans; its industrial clusters. The selective control of its currency, the commitment to science and technology, the high-volume production. Its state policy of support to exports and industrial production. The short, medium and long-term planning. Its subsidies and tax exemptions for the foreign industrial investment, and priority sectors; its educational policy for development. The protection of its domestic market, of its companies, of its jobs, etc., are part of a widely known economic lesson.<sup>17</sup> The *software* of its success, which corresponds

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<sup>17</sup> For more information on the developmentalist economic path of China, see "China entre el reto y la oportunidad" (Oropeza, 2006), especially Chapter II. "El comercio chino, un modelo de Estado", III. "Una visión general sobre el sistema financiero chino" V. "La relación China-OMC, ¿Detonador o protocolizador del éxito comercial" and VII? "China-México: un encuentro inesperado". Likewise, "México-China. Culturas y sistemas jurídicos comparados" (Oropeza 2008), in a special way, "China y su modelo de Desarrollo: líneas generales desde una perspectiva mexicana", through which political stability is

to the living keys of its civilization, is a pending task for a better understanding and administration of a new era, which will inevitably have a high Asian component.

However, the topic of China, due to its importance and dimension, cannot remain circumscribed to a debate of whether it is a Developer State of Western heritage or not. The magnitude of the facts exceeds this question, and before the evidence of its enormous success, that places it, in a probable way, as the economic hegemon of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is necessary to continue exploring the integral strengths of an Asian model of development, with its own characteristics, recognized by China as *market socialism*, that although it borrowed part of the technical instruments from the developmentalist model during the first decades of its opening, is far from being just that; and even, the Chinese know-how on incorporating not only the industrial issue but the integral process of globalization, already represents a case study and inspiration for most of the undeveloped countries.<sup>18</sup>

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detailed, as a fundamental element of the Chinese model and Economic Development, as a priority of the State, which includes the general lines of the economic model as of 1978, among others, the implementation of a policy of selective opening, the creation of Special Economic Zones, the long-term vision of the economic strategy, the companies owned by the State, the industrial policy, the Chinese policy on the issues of research and development. Additionally “El mundo según Goldman Sach: reflexiones generales al proyecto BRICS” in *BRICS. El difícil camino entre el escepticismo y el asombro* (Oropeza, 2014); “El acuerdo de Asociación Transpacífico: ¿bisagra o confrontación entre el Atlántico al Pacífico” in *El acuerdo de Asociación Transpacífico: ¿bisagra o confrontación entre el Atlántico al Pacífico* (Oropeza, 2013) y *Del Atlántico al Pacífico. Hacia un nuevo orden global* (Oropeza, 2017) and “El desorden global. México y su circunstancia” in *México 2018. La responsabilidad del porvenir*, Volumen II (Oropeza, Salazar, Romero, 2018).

<sup>18</sup> Regarding Nationalism as an inherent factor in the development models of the West, it may be noted that in China, unlike the European countries, the first Nationalist expressions can be found in the ancient Confucian principles, when the idea of an axiological belonging that gave identification and meaning to the Chinese people is common. As already stated, Schwartz highlights this fact by pointing out that China was the only one of the axial civilizations whose main concern was to look and recognize itself in its past. In its long histori-

The theme of the Japanese model, because it began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and because of the way it was carried out generates a relevant distortion for the analysis of the Asian models of development, in such a way that allows it to be set as an example of neoliberal success (World Bank, International Monetary Fund) or as an economic success of tributary Confucianism, where mandarin administrative positions predominate, highly prepared bureaucracies, loyal and disciplined with their governors and their companies; as well as a central planning after 1950.<sup>19</sup>

Regarding the developer models for the industrial growth that were implemented throughout the world with more or less

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cal journey and in relation to its identity confusion during the Tang Dynasty and the rise of Buddhism “The reconquering of China by a Chinese cosmivision...” (Bauer, 2009) operated as a tool that was always at hand so as not to lose its own personality, a Chinese pride that among its many meanings can be labeled with the modern stamp of *Nationalism*. This same feeling and politico-intellectual attitude are always active, to a greater or lesser extent, in the face of external threats that frequented China over two millennia. In a special way, this *Nationalism*, or preservation of the Chinese, stood out against the Mongol invasion and was stronger against the conquest of China by the Manchus, where the resistance came to suicide. Certainly, the late empire brought with it re-releases and revisionisms that judged the causes of the imperial decadence. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, in the context of these events, for example, Huang Zongxi is considered the first Chinese nationalist (Bauer) and responsible for introducing an intellectual current of social criticism. Therefore, it can be said that *Nationalism in China*, with Chinese characteristics, appears from its millenary origin, through a feeling of pride and belonging, which always turns to the past to nourish its responses to the challenges of the present. The same to defend itself against the challenges of the exterior of the last centuries (Western and Japanese invasions) as to start the new *Chinese dream* of becoming the new hegemony of the 21st century. In the specific case of its inauguration, as a Developer State as of 1978, its Nationalism uses it as an engine to overcome its enormous backwardness and as a motivation to achieve a better present. The humiliation of the Opium War or the Japanese invasion are also, without a doubt, permanent incentives for not turning down the public agenda of building a Socialism with Chinese characteristics for a New Era.

<sup>19</sup> For more information about the theme of the Japanese model see; Oropeza, Arturo, 2019, *Japan and the Importance of its Role in the Encounter Between East and West*.

success since the 19<sup>th</sup> century to date, which found a natural point of expansion in the Chinese world of East Asia (Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, now Vietnam and other Asian nations), the ease of adaptability in terms of the successful role played by the State of each of these countries, must be based, largely, on a cultural Confucian *taxation* that permeated from the Chinese civilization, which flaunts itself, and must be believed, as the only *living civilization of millenary nature*.

In the face of a new economic era that is opening up and a declining period, in which a sick neo-liberalism from the future contrasts with an Asian development model led by China, which drives by itself 30% of global economic growth versus the 28% of all developed countries (ECLAC, 2016), the challenge of imagining new alternatives for economic development arises, in a distortion period that will not be easy for anyone.

When Milton Friedman was invited to China in the early eighties, during that Asian euphoria, to learn from the other, Friedman pointed out that the Chinese person who welcomed him when he got off the airplane emitted a “terrible bad smell”. At the end of his lectures, when leaving China, Friedman stated that the Chinese were “incredibly ignorant of how the Market and the Capitalist system worked” (Mishra, 2018).

Almost four decades after these declarations and in light of an enormous ignorance of what China represents, it is imperative that academia, for the purposes it pursues, not disregard China.

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