

CHAPTER 2: PRINCIPLES OF CHINESE CIVILIZATION

1. Yellow River Civilization: the main source of Chinese culture

We can safely say that the region referred to as the central plains, near the middle and upper reaches of the Yellow River, was the cradle of Chinese civilization. Agriculture flourished on the banks of that mighty river, and a community — a nation, for all intents and purposes — arose under a powerful ruler. That ancient civilization had much in common with the three other ancient cultures: the Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Indus Valley civilizations.

In those four civilizations a great many people, the majority of them farmers, lived under an orderly system of government. Three of them eventually vanished, conquered by younger civilizations; no traces of them remain. Only the Yellow River civilization persisted, evolving into its present form, the Chinese civilization. The main reason for its survival is conflicts with mounted nomads to the north, who plagued the Chinese civilization from the time of its birth. There was constant warfare between the farmers and the nomads, who were seasoned, powerful warriors. During that process the Chinese civilization swallowed up other civilizations, for instance, older ones like its predecessor, the Yangtze River civilization. It continued to expand until it became the Chinese civilization of today. In that sense, it was different from the other three ancient civilizations.

The mounted nomads to the north were relentless in their attacks on the farmers, who referred to them as barbarians. The barbarians were skillful warriors, partly because of the advantage their horses gave them. The farmers suffered defeat after defeat until guns and cannons were invented and became available to them, but they were not annihilated. The nomads covered a wide range of territory, and carried their culture with them. But since they had no fixed abodes, they could not create a great civilization. Agriculture, however, enabled its practitioners to create a strong civilization and to form a massive community with a sizable population. In other words, they built a nation governed by leaders who routinely conducted politics. A writing system was created out of the need for various types of records, such as tax rolls, to support a large nation. We know that the *hanzi* devised by the dwellers of the Yellow River basin can be traced back to inscriptions on tortoise shells used in divinations. But like the writing systems used by the Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations, *hanzi* started out as pictographs, and later evolved into ideographs. The Mesopotamian and Egyptian writing systems vanished, for the most part; subsequent civilizations adopted some aspects of them when they created phonograms. An examination of *hanzi* reveals that characters for auspicious concepts like *beauty* (美) and *good* (善) include the characters for *sheep* (羊). One might conclude that such a phenomenon has its origins in interchanges between the farmers and herders, i.e., nomads. But it was the farmers who conceived *hanzi* as a tool for record keeping. The Yellow River civilization differs from its three counterparts in that *hanzi* are still used today, and bear witness to the continuity of that civilization. There were many other farming communities in areas near the Yellow River civilization. When one civilization won wars, and its sphere of influence expanded, *hanzi* were the only means of communication between speakers of different language families. They became ideographs and a means of communication.

2. Beyond nations to the world

The evolution of the Yellow River civilization was different than that of the Mesopotamian,

Egyptian, and Indus Valley civilizations. In the regions where they arose, newer civilizations appeared. Eventually peoples who shared the same religion, language, and lifestyle formed communities called nations, each governed by a ruler. These nations established boundaries, and while going about their separate ways, coexisted with other nations outside their borders. This new world order allowed for a reduction in the number of wars. But the concept of the nation was absent from the Chinese civilization, whose roots were in the Yellow River civilization, and which, therefore, recognized no borders. Instead, the Chinese lived their lives in a borderless world, or realm, governed by an emperor, whose realm expanded or shrank, depending on his power.

In an empire whose size depends on its ruler's might, the notion of national borders does not arise. The Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Indus Valley civilizations, all of them very large, appeared in specific regions where there was abundant arable land. There were no comparable civilizations in the vicinity of any of those three, so it is likely that there was no need to establish borders. Eventually those civilizations declined and disappeared. They were succeeded by new, more advanced civilizations in territory not far away from their predecessors. However, in the case of the Chinese or Yellow River civilization, and only that civilization in borderless, seemingly infinite territory, never declined, persisting even to this day. Since it, like the other ancient civilizations, had no borders, it was an exception in a world of national civilizations that coexisted peacefully with each other. A closer look at history tells us that the [first] nation to be formally and legally established was Germany, via the Peace of Westphalia concluded in 1648 at the end of the Thirty Years' War. That treaty also recognized the independence of Switzerland and the Netherlands.

Today all nations have definite boundaries, inside which their citizens reside. The PRC, the bearer of the Chinese civilization, was forced to establish borders to appease the international community. But in Chinese minds the Chinese realm includes all territory China is capable of controlling through its power. National borders may exist, but they could expand if the "emperor" acquires more power. According to this concept, the emperor rules the entire world and all people.

Present-day China is governed by a one-party (the CPC, or Communist Party of China) system; there is no longer a single ruler who controls the nation. But if the CPC, which supplanted the emperor, becomes stronger, China's territory will expand, as will the number of subjects ruled, just as occurred in the era of emperors. The socialist cosmopolitan notions of world revolution, liberation of the human race, and the abolition of the state have the same roots, as well as connections to the concept of *yixing geming*, or dynastic change. This philosophy has endured since the Yellow River civilization, and we can expect modern China to expand. The CPC, which flatters itself with the notion that the Chinese civilization depends on it; the essence of this philosophy has not changed an iota since the days of the Yellow River civilization.

According to Confucian arguments a righteous man of virtue is ordained by heaven, becomes the ruler, and governs the world's inhabitants. But China's rulers are neither righteous nor virtuous. The founding rulers, for the most part, used military force to gain their positions. Even those who were described as enlightened or wise rulers, for instance, Taizong (626-649) of the Tang dynasty and Yongle (1402-1424) of the Ming dynasty, killed blood relatives and close friends during their quest for power and the throne. The truth is that only cold-blooded, brutal individuals could become emperors.

Mao Zedong once said, "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun." His words add ammunition to the view that China is a nation born of war. If it were not for war, the PRC would not exist.

Let us take a moment to consider the connection between the teachings of Confucianism as they affect those who support the Chinese civilization, and the concept of “world.” According to the teachings of Confucianism, humans want to live peacefully under the rule of an emperor (son of heaven). Conceptually, Confucianism is a peace-loving way of life.

But Confucianism under imperialism does not address the barbarians who live on the perimeter of the huge Chinese civilization. Under imperialism Confucian teachings considered the beginnings of the Yellow River civilization the ideal age, since there were few conflicts, and religion and rule were one. The emphasis was on *li* (custom, reason, rite, mores). Such a teaching made perfect sense in a peaceful world. But everyone outside the Chinese world was considered a barbarian, and barbarians were not qualified to enjoy the ideals of Confucianism. The Chinese and the barbarians were completely separate, and the killing or wounding of barbarians was acceptable behavior.

From the viewpoint of members of the huge Chinese civilization, there was no need to respect the lives of the barbarians outside their world. Confucian scholar Wang Fuzhi, who lived near the end of the Ming dynasty, said that the barbarians were no better than beasts, to whom humanity and justice did not apply. Any Chinese who killed them would not be committing an inhuman act, and any Chinese who betrayed them would not be guilty of misanthropy or injustice. Since the Chinese were subject to attacks from the bellicose mounted nomads, they were almost constantly in a state of war. Of course, they would kill the barbarians if the necessity of doing so presented itself. Genocide against barbarians was justified as divine punishment according to Neo-Confucian doctrine. In other words, the Chinese would kill the immoral barbarians in the name of heaven.

As the founder of Confucianism, Confucius is regarded as a holy man. Nevertheless, he is reputed to have enjoyed the taste of human flesh. I cannot state with certainty that he engaged in this practice, but if he did, and if the human flesh he ate was that of barbarians, that is not inconsistent with his teachings, since he viewed barbarians as beasts. There are many accounts in official histories of Chinese officials eating barbarian flesh. *History of the Southern Dynasties*¹ (completed between 643 and 659), the *Book of Liang* (completed in 635), and “An Account of the Wa (Japanese)” (completed between 280 and 297) all contain numerous accounts that tell us how delicious Japanese flesh is.

It seems that Confucius himself was quite fond of *hai*, or salted and fermented meat. We are not certain that it was human flesh he was eating, but in his time cannibalism was widespread. Confucius enjoyed *hai* until the body of his beloved disciple Zilu, after he was killed, dismembered, and pickled, was sent to him.

Confucianism began in the 5th century BC with Confucius and Mencius. It then went through several phases, including the Neo-Confucianist Zhu Xi school in the 12th century. Between the 15th and 16th centuries Neo-Confucianism experienced a renaissance in the form of a school referred to as Yangmingism, after Yang Ming. But throughout its evolution, the philosophy continued to condone the killing of barbarians. This is the doctrine of *tianzhu*, or divine punishment. I find it interesting that a Chinese philosophy that had such a strong influence on the Japanese would be premised on such a doctrine.

¹ *Nanshi*.

3. The significance of war as the essence of Chinese civilization

When a strong animal captures a weak animal, and kills and eats it, there are no recriminations — no talk of justice or injustice. No matter how cleverly deceitful the method used to capture the prey, we usually praise the predator for its cleverness, rather than accusing it of being evil or unjust.

Most animals do not kill others of the same species. But there are some that kill and even eat others of their kind. There are even some that kill and eat their own offspring. If such behavior is instinctive, it is not evil or unfair.

Humans, however, do not eat other humans, under normal circumstances at least, and the murder of other humans, at least those living in the same community, is considered evil and criminal.

Problems arise when murders occur between groups of people. Suppose that a group that has no food left lives near another group that has some food. The group with no food will attack the group with food in order to survive, steal its food and, if necessary, kill members of the other group. In other words, the two groups battle each other. This is called war.

Human civilizations have two choices: they can endeavor to prevent war to the extent possible, or they can simply go about their business without making any attempt to suppress war.

When people form states, determine borders, and live in those states, they have established what I call national civilizations. These national civilizations, or nations, tend to refrain from waging war. But when people live in a civilization whose ruler is determined by the outcome of a war, the conflicts are not fought for the sake of the nation, but to enable the victor, one individual, to become the ruler (or emperor). Therefore, the wars are interminable.

Since we expect nations to coexist, controls govern wars fought by nations, such as attempts to avoid war or to keep casualties at a minimum. These controls take the form of laws and regulations, which both the weak and the strong must obey.

But in a civilization involving an emperor and his realm, the strong (or rather, the victorious) can behave as they wish. The law of the jungle applies, and since wars are intended to establish a ruler, any method of war is tolerated, and the conflicts become increasingly brutal.

Since the defeated have lost all physical means of resistance, the victors can kill them all if they please. For instance, during the Warring States period (480-221 BC) the Zhao were defeated by the Qin. More than 400,000 Zhao soldiers who had surrendered to the Qin were buried alive by Qin General Bai Qi. After the Qin took control, during the “great disorder under heaven” toward the end of the Qin period, 240,000 Qin soldiers were buried alive by Xiang Yu at Xin’an. A civilization that does not have a system in place to suppress wars must resort to any means that will enable it to emerge victorious. If that method promises to be successful, no matter how cruel it may be, it must be used to slaughter the enemy. To achieve victory, any and every means is permissible. This is the same logic that prevails in nature. There is no such thing as justice or injustice.

When wars are frequent, communities lose the ability to ensure that justice is done. In China approximately 2,500 years ago, a man named Sun Zi wrote a work entitled the *Art of War*. In the beginning of the book the following sentence appears: “Soldiers must deceive their enemies.”

What he meant is, "Since we must wage wars to survive, ordinary morals fall by the wayside."

For instance, take siege warfare: when an army surrounded a fortress in China, the soldiers and civilizations surrendered when they ran out of food. Unless the victors had an ample supply of food, they would massacre all defeated survivors by burying them alive, or by other means. Massacres have been perpetrated frequently in Chinese history in imperial capitals, such as the Nanjing massacre, several massacres in Chang'an (the last occurring in 949), and the Luoyang massacre (311). When they occur, the victims are not able to resist, so they must resign themselves to being killed. Inside a fortress under siege, the defeated cannot surrender when their food supply is exhausted. They kill their weakest (the elderly, women, and children) and eat them. Among 1,008 accounts of cannibalism in historical documents, 236 pertain to fortresses under siege.

When you have farmers who have a supply of food stored away, and to their north, mounted nomad barbarians, and those barbarians instigate wars, justice has nothing to do with those wars. Any means that will lead to victory is used, and wars become increasingly vicious.

To survive, victims of defeat attack another group of farmers. They use whatever tactics they need to win, and each war is crueler than the last. The region in which the violence rages grows wider and wider as time goes by.

We can summarize by saying that the Chinese civilization, the Yellow River civilization that developed in the plains on the middle and lower reaches of the yellow River, was constantly under attack by mounted nomads from the north. Even as war followed war, the area occupied by agricultural regions of China continued to expand throughout the entire continent.

If we were to define rulers as those who could muster an army and wage war, then as their military strength increased, so did the number of their subjects. The more powerful they became, the more their territory expanded.

A bird's-eye view of the history of Western civilization shows that the new civilizations that arose after the fall of the Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Indus Valley civilizations established nations. Although there were many exceptions, those nations were formed by people with a common religion, ethnicity, and language. The rights of the citizens of those nations were recognized, the right to be treated justly and the right to be treated fairly — these rights could not be violated by any authority. It became a nation's mission to protect its citizens' lives and property. Nations recognized each other's sovereignty and autonomy. Then international law, whereby all nations, strong and weak, would abide, came into being. Attempts were made to suppress warfare, and the number of war casualties decreased. Because war is cruel and inhuman, national civilizations that made efforts to prevent it became part of a coalition within which multiple nations coexisted.

Through the ages nations have taken many forms: city-states, feudal states, and nation-states. In China we had the Seven Warring States, the Sixteen Kingdoms, and the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period. But for a period of about 2,000 years, after the Han or ethnic Chinese had been driven out of their homeland, the central plains, the leading roles in Chinese dynasties were taken by barbarians, who sought control of the world —the entire world.

European civilizations developed under Roman law, which is rooted in the recognition that all humans have rights. The Peace of Westphalia was concluded in 1648 to put an end to a long war. The treaty afforded rights in the form of sovereignty to all signatory nations, whether large or small. Relationships among nations were now governed by international law, and it became

possible to avoid wars. Now national civilization, the ideal form of human civilization, began to take shape.

Since the advent of the nation-state era, national civilization became the main trend in the modern world. But only the Chinese civilization stands out as an exception in this the 21st century, with no nation, no people, and no borders. The biggest difference between the national civilization and the Chinese realm, or *tianxia*, is that in the relationship between a nation and its people there are legally defined rights and responsibilities. Systems are in place to solicit the will of the people. International law governs relations between nations. These aspects are nowhere to be found in the Chinese civilization.

4. The logically flawed political theory behind dynastic revolution

In the Chinese civilization, the individual who unites the world is the ruler, the emperor, who brings order to his realm and enriches the lives of his subjects. Therefore, ideologically, the emperor is the most virtuous individual, who brings happiness to everyone in his realm. But to become the ruler, the emperor must win a war and become a conqueror. War is his only instrument for advancement, but he cannot win wars if he is truly a virtuous man. He must renounce virtuous behavior, resort to deceit, and become a brutal conqueror who uses military force. During a war he may end up killing blood relatives or members of the same tribe.

Danger is a constant companion of war, and a ruler fighting a war is always in its midst. Looking back at Chinese history, we see that there have been approximately 200 emperors, but one-third of them did not die a natural death. Furthermore, on the Korean peninsula (part of the same civilization), even fewer kings died a natural death — about half of them met a violent end. Surrounded by so much danger, a future ruler must tread an evil path. A dynastic revolution by a ruler could never be defined as a political theory that benefits the human race.

Dynastic revolution is said to occur when one ruler falls from virtue, and a new ruler comes onto the scene and displaces him. Thus is virtuous politics restored. The new ruler has been awarded the mandate of heaven. A ruler who competes with his rivals and emerges victorious is called a virtuous man, and the true ordained son of heaven. This is a political theory put forward by Mencius, who lived between the 5th and 4th centuries BC. When Mencius attempted to establish a world that was peaceful and stable according to the precepts of Confucianism, China already had a history of power changing hands via military might. He therefore accepted that tradition, and out of necessity, formulated the political theory of dynastic revolution. It is possible to concede that dynastic revolution as a political theory was unavoidable.

Dynastic revolution is premised on the notion that every dynasty will eventually collapse. This proved to be a truth of the Chinese civilization, and was thus an inevitable political theory. But according to this theory, anyone who was able to win a war through any means could become the ruler. Therefore, wars became increasingly brutal.

Zhu Wen (852-912), who conquered the Tang and established the Liang dynasty, was originally a member of a pack of bandits led by Huang Chao (who is honored today as the hero of an agrarian rebellion at a museum dedicated to him). Zhu, under orders from Huang, fomented the Huang Chao rebellion. But when Huang Chao's position vis à vis the imperial army looked precarious, Zhu betrayed Huang and joined the imperial forces, who subdued Huang. For his heroics Zhu was given the name Zhu Quanzhong. Ultimately he conquered the Tang and founded the Liang dynasty.

Neither Liu Bang, founder of the Han dynasty, nor Zhu Yuanzhang, founder of the Ming dynasty, could read or write; reportedly they were drunkards who loitered in the streets. Both of them were fortunate enough to become emperor, but they ousted men who had fought bravely under them, and killed many innocent people. Zhu Yuanzhang stands out for murdering not only one clan of meritorious retainers, but also other residents of the same village, for a total of approximately 50,000 innocent people.

In a dynastic revolution, the strongest person wins, and when he does he is allowed to do whatever he wants to the people he conquers. Until the next ruler wins a war and is installed, the people undergo unspeakable suffering, and since the new ruler has achieved his position through military might, they also incur terrible risks due to the arbitrary behavior of the victors. It is pertinent to note that this principle persists in today's China under one-party rule.

The dynastic-revolution concept has its limits. After six dynasties, the Chinese world experienced approximately 2,000 years of barbarian rule, including the Five Barbarians era in the 4th and 5th centuries. The Chinese continued to evoke dynastic revolution, even when they were conquered by the likes of Mongolians (Yuan dynasty) and Manchurians (Qing dynasty). What are we to make of a political theory that brings nothing but misery to the human race?

5. Common characteristics of the people and subjects

In the Chinese civilization, what characteristics do the people, the subjects under the sway of the emperor, acquire?

According to the political principle called dynastic revolution, an individual who has become emperor by emerging victorious from a war has no time to consider the wellbeing of his subjects. If necessary, the ruler will kill as many people as possible at the drop of a hat in order to triumph in war. The people are of no use to him in his battle with his current enemy. Therefore he ignores them, kills them without compunction when the need arises, or lets them die.

Even when the ruler is virtuous and his realm is at peace, his subjects become displaced persons because of famine or pestilence, and chaos ensues. Moreover, since anyone who wins a war can become ruler, someone who aspires to become emperor will foment a war amidst the turmoil of famine and pestilence.

As scholar Liang Qichao (1873-1929) said, the people, subjects, are victims whose destiny is to be slaughtered. Even in present-day China, there are no citizens in the true sense of the word. Looking back at history, the people have no connection with their country. Their purpose is simply sacrificial.

In geopolitical terms, even though the Chinese had the Great Wall, they could not stem the southward advance of the nomads. The Yangtze River served as a natural defense in the south. It was difficult to ford, but it could not stop the northern nomads from advancing southward. Towards the end of the Han dynasty, there were already barbarians working as foreign laborers in the Han Chinese homeland. After the Three Kingdoms era (184/220-280), the farmers in the Central plains were half barbarians, and half Han Chinese. By the time of the Sixteen Kingdoms there were more barbarians than Chinese on the Central plains. The Sui and Tang emperors were Turkish (proto-Mongols and Göktürks). When the Song dynasty came into being roughly 1,000 years ago, north of the Yangtze the Liao dynasty arose, founded by the Khitan Mongols, then the Jin dynasty, founded by the Tungusic Jurchen, and in the northwest the Sogdians founded the Western Xia dynasty. The Mongol Yuan dynasty crossed the Yangtze River and appropriated land

south of the Yangtze. The Jurchen Manchus controlled the expanded Chinese realm, the continent, for nearly 300 years. From the time of the Sixteen Kingdoms for about 2,000 years, until the beginning of the 20th century, barbarians ruled China.

The Chinese on the Central plains bearing the Yellow River civilization were driven further and further south by the nomads for about 2,000 years, and ended up south of the Yangtze River.

Whether the force driving them was natural disasters, geopolitical or ecological problems, or war, when the people were displaced and social order collapsed, someone came forward to become the new leader, whether he was qualified or not. He didn't need to consider the wellbeing of his subjects, he just needed to triumph in war. His people, his subjects, were totally abandoned by their rulers.

As Liang Qichao said, the people living in the Chinese civilization were meant to be sacrifice, and could be killed by their so-called ruler at any time. Viewed in this light, the Chinese of today are survivors who have had the good fortune to escape being slaughtered.

What sort of personalities do we find in people who have survived horrible situations? Throughout the history of their civilization, the Chinese cannot say that they have been obedient and peace-loving. But once a system is in place, they want to be obedient. Or they want to be slaves. For details about their desire to be slaves, please consult my book *Arrogant China: Résumé of a Nightmare*.²

Eminent writer Lu Xun (1881-1936), who is considered the father of modern Chinese literature, and who was even more blunt than I, divides Chinese history into two eras: (1) when the Chinese were trying to become slaves but failed, and (2) when the Chinese became slaves for a time and were satisfied with their lot.

Within the Chinese civilization the Han Chinese were in the majority, but in general they accepted being controlled by the less numerous barbarians for decades, generations, even centuries. The Chinese adapted and pandered to them, whether bandits or barbarians. This is probably the characteristics people, subjects, acquire as they seek to minimize wars and other conflicts.

When one is confronted with an enemy who is far superior, it is foolish to lose one's life fighting an unwinnable war; it makes more sense to surrender as quickly as possible. When the superior Mongol armies came down from the upper reaches of the Yangtze River onto the land south of the Yangtze, Southern Song soldiers and civilians alike gave them an enthusiastic welcome. When the Manchu and Mongol Eight-Banner armies entered Beijing and Nanjing, all the officials (both civil and military), as well as civilians welcomed them wholeheartedly, even affixing yellow signs to their houses saying "We pledge obedience to the great Qing empire," and burning incense. It is safe to assume that the Chinese surrender when the enemy seems unstoppable.

At the end of the Ming dynasty patriot Huang Daozhou (1585-1646), who turned against his Manchurian ruler and attempted to restore the Ming dynasty, was an anti-Manchurian activist, and a hero for having tried to protect the Ming dynasty established by Han Chinese. When his attempt at resistance failed and he was arrested and taken away, the villagers were welcoming the New Year in a celebratory mood, dressed in their finery. When Huang was being led away, people who had a short time ago been Ming subjects asked who the prisoner was. They were told that he was a criminal because he had rebelled against the ruler. As soon as they heard that,

² Ko Bun'yu, *Ogoreru Chugoku: akumu no rerekisho* (Tokyo: Fukushodo, 2005).

the villagers formed a crowd and began cursing Huang and throwing stones at him — their hero!

Members of the Chinese civilization, which had evolved from the Yellow River civilization and was built by farmers, always thought of their non-Chinese neighbors as barbarians. They made a clear distinction between themselves, the civilized, and the barbarians. The Chinese placed themselves at the center of a concentric circle surrounded by Eastern, Southern, and Western barbarians. Even though they built the Great Wall to the north, for more than 2,000 years, the Han Chinese on the central plains were driven away and ruled by Mongols (Yuan dynasty) and Manchus (Qing dynasty), both barbarian tribes. And even though they were treated like slaves in a barbarian colony, they were delighted with their lot. This means, in Lu Xun's terms, that they were content to be slaves for a while, and that being slaves made them feel somewhat safe. "I would rather be the Taiping's dogs than an ordinary man in turbulent times."

The one desire of people who have lived through violent times is to avoid a cruel fate; this is called "clear wisdom and self-preservation" (*mingzhe baoshen*). Then, when disaster befalls someone else, they take pleasure. The mentality of rejoicing at someone else's misfortune is expressed by *xingzai yuehuo* in Chinese (rejoicing in another's misery).

When people belonging to a tribe whose members have been brutally murdered have an opportunity to kill, they use the same methods or even more brutal ones.

Recently the Japan Society for History Textbook Reform issued a pamphlet entitled the "Tongzhou Massacre." On July 29, 1937 hundreds of Japanese were murdered in Tongzhou, China. The murderers were, in addition to members of the Peace Preservation Corps, Chinese students, who were not soldiers but members of a training unit; they eagerly participated in the massacre. Photographs of acts of genocide on the part of Han Chinese against Mongols, Tibetans, and Uighurs are often exposed to the international community. The Tongzhou massacre was only one of many such acts in Chinese history. To the Chinese happiness means wealth, offspring, and longevity; the most sought-after desire in life is a hundred sons and a thousand grandsons (*baize qiansun*). Even today the killing of an entire family group (*mie men*) happens often. Historical examples show that attacks on non-Chinese peoples has involved cutting off men's testicles and tearing out women's uteruses. This shows determination on the part of the Chinese to eradicate foreign tribes, even to the extent of ensuring that they have no descendants. Famous victims of castration include Sima Qian, the father of Chinese historiography, and Zheng He, a Muslim member of the Semu tribe, who is even today revered in China.

Sun Yatsen often said that the Chinese love peace, but Mao Zedong was speaking his mind when he boasted, "That's a lie. They love war, as do I."

One often hears Chinese say things like, "Unlike militaristic countries, we are a nation of letters, so it is correct to describe us as peace-loving people." But in most of the countries populated by Chinese, you will see a great many scenes in programs, even programs depicting daily life, where characters, both men and women, are yelling, "Shoot! Shoot! Shoot! Punch him! Get him! Kill him!" That is why tourists and businesspeople from Japan ask if there aren't better, less violent, less frightening programs.

More than 2,000 years ago when the Qin and Han dynasties united the Chinese world, the balance between the people and Nature was already beginning to collapse. In those days the population in one county on the south bank of the Yellow River exceeded one million. The area was so crowded that the average density per square kilometer was, in some counties, more than 700 people. Then Nature struck back abruptly, bringing famine, which became the cause of social strife.

In the later Han dynasty, when the Yellow Turban rebellion broke out, and into the Three Kingdoms era, social strife in the central plains worsened to the extent that there were mountains of bleached human bones, but no signs of human habitation. Reports have it that in the Three Kingdoms era, the population dwindled to one-eighth of what it had been in prosperous times. The central plains became a depopulated area, and the hardy nomads from the north and the outskirts of the plains went to live there. By the Jin dynasty, the population there was 50% Han and 50% barbarians.

Driven off by nomads, the original inhabitants of the central plains fled southward, crossed the Yangtze, and then moved further south. Today they can be found everywhere on Earth. Those who went southward and then dispersed all over the world did not know how to coexist with Nature. They not only exhausted natural resources, but also dug up underground resources, depleted marine resources like fish and sea turtles, and tore red coral from the ocean floor, never considering the consequences.

In a society where war was an everyday event, the Chinese knew they might meet a tragic fate at any moment. They sensed that they must grab whatever rewards they could right away. Since they always risked suffering an untimely death, and lived constantly in fear, they felt they had to take whatever they could as soon as an opportunity presented itself, and that was their goal in life.

Realizing that they might meet death at any moment, they soon became thugs, hoping to rise to a powerful position in society. Today's Chinese are overbearing and make no effort to conform to standards that the world demands because their "strongman" characteristics have come to the fore. Lu Xun said, "The subjects of a tyrant are usually more tyrannical than the ruler himself. The subjects of a despot hope that someone else will be his victims; when that happens, they will stand by and watch with amusement. Brutality, the suffering of others becomes the bystanders' pleasure and consolation. Their strength lies in avoiding an unpleasant fate, and only that." Books and commentary with titles like "The Chinese Are Annoyed," "The Chinese Will Be Angry," and "China Is Strong and Will Call the Shots from Now On" bear witness to that mentality.

One would expect the Communist Chinese government, the current national authority, to encourage its citizens to exercise more restraint, it too is in strongman mode.

Still, I would like to believe that the Chinese character has taken shape for historical reasons, and has no connection with biological DNA.

Extrapolating from the shared characteristics of the Chinese, let us take a look at how Chinese soldiers behaved during the Second Sino-Japanese War.

Since the concept of nationhood is absent in China, there is no concept of citizenship, either. And there is no patriotism, at least in principle. Carrying this argument to the extreme, we can say that they were acquiescing to powers mightier than they. There was nothing for them to defend for someone else's sake, so they did not approach their training with any enthusiasm. They risked their lives, but not of their own volition. Conversely, they became violent when in a position of strength. Therefore, armies needed blocking units, which forced retreating soldiers back into the war zone. Without those anti-retreat troops, every man would have fled.

During combat, when the enemy was even the slightest bit ahead, Chinese soldiers would flee, or surrender.

Conversely, if their side seemed to be winning, they would fight furiously. When victory seemed close at hand, they would launch a violent offensive.

In the early days of the war, Japan's General Staff Office issued a pamphlet entitled "Attributes of the Chinese Soldier." It reported that Chinese soldiers were self-centered, irresponsible, and lethargic.

However, they would fight fearlessly and powerfully when (1) they had something to gain, for instance, prize money or the opportunity to loot, (2) when they assumed the enemy soldier to be weak, and (3) when they found themselves in a death trap.

The pamphlet goes on to say that Chinese soldiers were susceptible to mob psychology and to false rumors, and would desert when their situation became unfavorable. Officers would sometimes abandon their subordinates and go into hiding. When Nanjing fell in 1937, Tang Shengzhi, commander of the Chinese forces, abandoned his subordinates and fled the city; he is a typical example of such behavior. Prior to the battle, Gen. Chiang Kai-shek and his wife promised to defend the city to their death, but they were one of the first to evacuate; General Commander He Yingqin was not far behind them.

After Japan lost the war and there was no longer a Japanese presence in China, the Guomindang and Communist armies fought each other. But when the Communists appeared to be slightly ahead thanks to help from the USSR, Guomindang troops started going over to the Communist side; this is another good example of such behavior.

But what about the Chinese military personnel of today? Now that the CPC is in control, there are no more civil wars. There are national boundaries, and the nation has more or less taken shape. All the criteria for instilling patriotism have been met. Therefore, one would presume that Chinese soldiers are patriots. The truth is that when they think they are in a strong position, they are proud and patriotic. But in essence, they are the same as they were centuries ago. The PLA (People's Liberation Army) is not a force entrusted with the nation's welfare, but the CPC's private army. Therefore, we shouldn't expect much patriotism. The PLA's PKO troops in South Sudan in 2016 panicked when approached by throngs of refugees. Instead of taking action to protect them, they sprayed them with tear gas and abandoned their stations, becoming the laughingstock of the world.

6. Comparison of Chinese national civilization with those of other modern nations

Earlier when I mentioned national civilizations created by the Western world, I wrote that the ancient Roman civilization established a legal concept called "rights." The Romans were the first to establish the rule of law and to afford rights to all citizens. Every Roman enjoyed equal rights, and their right to live was guaranteed.

Soon Roman law became the law of nations, all humans were afforded rights, nations guaranteed the right to live to all their citizens.

On the foundation laid by those rights, people who shared the same religion, language, and ethnicity, i.e., people who got along well together. They built nations, determined borders, and derived value from coexisting in peace; they had created national civilizations.

The first national domains were determined by the Peace of Westphalia, treaties concluded after the Thirty Years' War in 1648. The treaties recognized the independence of the Dutch Republic

from Spain, as well as the independence of Switzerland. International law took on greater importance, and war came to be considered an extension of diplomacy (meaning subservient to politics). When the 20th century dawned, treaties governing the conduct of war on land were signed, and wars were ended when the outcome was clear. As a result, the number of casualties diminished considerably. The reality was, however, not always like that. For instance, during World War II, the Allies violated international law in countless ways. The US, which had become the main force of the Allies, the victors, did not claim that it could do anything it pleased. Instead, the Allies presented a farce in the form of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, the rationalization for which was the necessity of obeying the law, an argument that was consistent with the logic of national civilization.

Even for victors in war, the logic of civilization remained, i.e., they recognized the rights of the citizens of the defeated nations, believed that people should be able to live in peace, and that war should be prevented. Rights and the rule of law are important elements of human civilization.

China is the only national civilization that remains stuck to the ruler-and-ruled type of civilization, which has prevailed since the Yellow River civilization. When the 20th century began, the Xinhai Revolution erupted (1911), and China attempted to create a nation-state, but instead descended into unprecedented chaos. First it was an empire, then a republic, then a people's republic. But even as a people's republic, the regime of Mao Zedong differed greatly from that of Deng Xiaoping (1978-1989) and his successors. Why did the state structure change so many times? Because China was the world, not a nation. Attempts to transform a world into a nation resulted only in chaos.

Again, let us compare Western civilization, which established modern nations, with the current Chinese civilization.

Modern Western nation-states are, in principle, agglomerations of special cultures, which share a religion, language and customs. Another name for this agglomeration is "nation." A nation is based on the common principles that define its role: protecting the people's lives and property. From the 20th century on, the common concept is that nations must cooperate and coexist. In other words, in Western civilization people form nations, and have created national civilizations in which they live in peace and prosperity.

To that end, in a nation decisions are made about what form politics should take. For instance, such decisions might concern the separation of administrative, legislative, and judicial powers. The people's consensus is sought. The purpose of these decisions is to ensure that a nation's power does not cause it to behave irresponsibly, and that all citizens benefit from the principles of democracy.

The result was civilizations that refrain from engaging in warfare.

Rome's contribution to this sort of national civilization was enormous. Roman law was conceived of at first as the basis for freedom and rights to be enjoyed by citizens of the city of Rome. Soon this became the law of nations to be enjoyed by all people. In other words, even those who were ruled by the Roman army were afforded freedom and rights.

Rome had a history of frequent warfare. The Romans destroyed many states and civilizations, and enslaved people who surrendered to them.

But Emperor Julius Caesar was unlike China's emperors, who achieved their status only through military might. His enthronement was not the direct result of military victory, but of being

recommended by the Senate. Some Roman emperors, like Nero, used their power to further their own designs, but the emperorship was not a status one achieved through military might alone.

This tradition discouraged emperors from arbitrarily starting wars. The emperor's subjects, i.e., Roman citizens, were not permitted to instigate warfare for the purpose of becoming emperor.

It is not likely that this view of nationhood existed during the age of Mesopotamia and Egyptian civilization. Those civilizations were probably similar to the Yellow River civilization. When they flourished, there were no other competing civilizations in their vicinity. Therefore, there was no need for national boundaries. Since ancient, large civilizations were born together with religions, their leaders, at least in the early days, were probably also religious leaders. For that reason, in the early days the people could not have fulfilled purely sacrificial roles, as they did in later years, when there was a ruler and his subjects. Even in the Yellow River civilization in the age of legend and mythology, there was a cooperative relationship between the ruler and his people, and not much difference between that civilization and others.

But once the ancient civilizations perished, Western civilizations, influenced by the Greek and Roman civilizations, developed rapidly due to the universality of human culture. The Roman civilization contributed significantly to the formation of nations.

The fact that the Romans devised rights as they pertain to the formation of a nation is particularly important. In any harmonious community, the concepts of justice and fairness emerge, and there is order in the community that benefits those who live there. It is impressive that people crystallized those concepts into the word "rights," and made them an essential part of our nations. But rights as a legal concept did not exist in Mesopotamia or Egypt.

Hammurabi's Code (ca. 1745 BC) is considered to be the oldest code of law. It apparently mentioned freedom, but not rights. As I mentioned in my Foreword, Japan is a translation superpower. Iijima Osamu's translation of Hammurabi's Code was published (by Tairyusha) in 1997.

Hammurabi's Code is famous for "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." But it does not touch upon the concept of rights. Even the ancient Greek civilization, which made a huge contribution to today's human civilization, had no word for rights. The concept of rights, which proved to be an invaluable legacy to the human race, was a product of the Roman civilization.

Etymologically, the word "rights" includes both the right hand, a symbol of power, and means both the image of power that is the right hand, and another meaning of right, i.e., moral. Rights should of course be granted, but they are not guaranteed unless the guarantor has the power to enforce them; the existence of power is a prerequisite. They are not assured, nor can they be assured in the absence of power. The community, in this case the nation, acts as the wellspring of the guarantee of power.

According to the philosophy behind Roman law, laws are not made, they are discovered. Laws are not arbitrarily enacted, but evolve as justice is discovered. The legacy of Roman law looms large in human history. In medieval Europe, Christianity was a midwife at the birth of natural law.

Rights are protected by power; the notion that it is a nation's duty to provide that power is one that emerged as a basic concept of nationhood. This concept renewed the relationship between the ruler and his subjects, and brought forth the idea that a nation's first duty was to protect the lives and property of its people. The right of the various nations to govern was recognized, and that right became sovereignty.

But the relationship between nations is in principle a disorderly one. At times the interests of nations will collide, and they must go to war to arrive at a solution. But war is not fought on behalf of a ruler; but to settle a dispute between nations. In that case, the intent is to stop the expansion of wars that will increase the number of meaningless deaths in both nations. This is where attempts to suppress wars come into play.

In ancient times wars between groups belonging to different religions or different cultures sometimes resulted in the civilization of the defeated being destroyed, and its people becoming the slaves of the victors. But in modern times the necessity of cooperation between nations was recognized, and international law came into being. That law was applied to warfare, and efforts were made to reduce warfare to a minimum. When wars did break out, combat ceased once the outcome became clear, and efforts were made to avoid further casualties.

World War II, in which atomic bombs were dropped, and civilians were targeted in air raids, did not fit this pattern (efforts to reduce casualties). Even though the outcome was obvious, the slaughter of a great number of civilians in the Tokyo air raids, and the dropping of an atomic bomb when surrender was imminent fit another pattern: any and all actions are permitted in order to win, and the more powerful forces may do as they please. This was a reversion to the ruler-and-his-subjects philosophy. It was nearly a limitless war, a primitive war between the ruler and the world.

Wars are contests of physical strength. The defeated have no methods to resist physically. Even in objective cases where losers cannot resist even if the winners kill every one of them, when national civilizations wage limited wars, they limit the type of war activity that they engage in, and attempt to reduce the number of casualties to a minimum. They clearly wish to steer mankind in the right direction.

But primitive warfare did not come to an end in the 20th century. Looking back, we see that along with 21st-century human civilization, built on freedom and rights, the ancient Yellow River civilization (now the Chinese civilization) also persists. There the law of the jungle has morphed into political law.

China did have an opportunity to extricate itself from the Yellow-River-civilization-turned-Chinese-civilization, and quietly become part of the civilization built by the Western nations.

Professor Sugihara Seishiro explains this quite clearly in his book, *Now Is the Time for the Democratic Party of Japan to Make Its Presence Known*, published in 2005, right before the election that gave birth to a Democratic Party administration. The watershed was June 4, 1989, the date of the Tienanmen Square protests.

Mao Zedong died, and after the PRC had been adrift for more than 10 years, Deng Xiaoping took up the reins of power, and moved forward boldly with a campaign of economic openness. In 1979 Deng introduced a market economy and took resolute action toward economic reforms. But, as Sugihara states, at that point what China needed was not economic reforms, but political reform that would incorporate the will of the people into politics. Even if it would be difficult to introduce democratic elections into national or regional politics immediately, a good beginning would be having the people vote for representatives who would form a national body of public officials equivalent to a parliament. That would pave the way for democratic elections. But Deng ousted CPC General Secretary Zhao Ziyang, who was trying to guide China more or less in that direction. On June 4, 1989 Deng declared martial law, sanctioning tanks to run over and kill students demanding democracy.

About the Tiananmen Square Incident, Deng Xiaoping said, "If I yield, the PRC will cease to exist." The truth is that despite Deng's pronouncements about the PRC, behind his suppression of the anti-government demonstration was his desire to protect the Deng family interests. Behind the demands of the students and citizens who gathered in front of Tiananmen, though couched under demands for democracy, was a movement opposing his first son Deng Pufang's monopoly interests in the Kanghua Gongsu and corruption (called Down with Nepotism and Corruption!).

If Deng had not declared martial law, but moved in the direction of democratization, the PRC might have been able to extricate itself from the chaos resulting from territorial expansion, and eradicate corruption. A market economy normally goes hand in hand with democratic politics. At that time nations with better national civilizations would have had to admit China into the market-economy sphere, once they had verified that the Chinese were headed toward a democratic political system. Zhao Ziyang might have accomplished that.

An examination of the Tiananmen Incident shows that more than the Chinese people, the CPC government was being affected by the Chinese civilization and Chinese thought.

If China had moved toward the goals of Zhao Ziyang, it might not have become "ugly China." Deng Xiaoping's sins were grievous. The nations of the free world that forgave him are also to blame. Deng was the wealthiest man in socialist history. After his death, his family's power and interests were destroyed by the Shanghai clique. But the Deng clan gathered up assets equivalent to 10 trillion yen, fled to Australia. I understand that his granddaughter (second son's daughter) has obtained American citizenship.