# The Belt and Road Initiative as a Natural Extension of the Evolution of Taoist and Confucian Philosophies, and Traditional Chinese Medicine - A Holistic Approach to Peace and Development

By Gregory Brundage

## ABSTRACT

On one level this article presents very brief reviews of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) launched by Chinese President Xi Jing Ping in 2013. On another level it examines humanity as if it were a single organism which, based on current information appears to have increasingly serious energy flow blockages and other imbalances that endangers the health and life of that organism. It concludes that the BRI has Taoist, Confucian and TCM-like qualities that have the potential to bring robust health back to humanity especially along the land and maritime Silk Roads via enhanced energy circulation systems.

### Introduction

Imagine different parts of your body were fighting each other. The brain said: I’m going cut the electricity off because the liver isn’t living up to my expectations (!) or the stomach said to the gall bladder “I’ve had enough of your bile - I’m turning it off!” It’s not hard to predict that before long there would inevitably be chaos and some sort of total system failure. This scenario is a microcosm of what one finds in the newspapers every day - absurd egoism creating havoc within complex inter-related mutually dependent systems - systems that feed the hungry and nurture life - or not. True, big fish eat the little fish, but it’s also true that within organisms relationships are win-win; the parts work together or they work not at all.

There is an old saying in biology: Ontogeny (the growth and development of the individual) recapitulates (mirrors, reflects, parallels) phylogeny (the evolution of the entire species), and indeed evolutionary biology is found reflected in the growth of each individual mitotically dividing from the union of sperm and ovum, to four cells, eight, 16, and so on in much the same way evolution occurred. This harmonious union of opposites (ontogenesis and pyogenesis) is unquestionably in harmony with the organizing principle of *Li* (理) and energetic properties of *Qi* (气) that govern the multiverses in which we humans find ourselves immersed.

These parallels are also in many ways reflected in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) program inaugurated by China’s Xi Jing Ping which is breathing life back into the ancient land Silk Roads across Asia to Europe with maritime nodes along the south of Asia, the Gulf States and north and east coasts of Africa by developing transportation (road and rail connectivity and ports) and other infrastructural resource development projects to revitalize local, national, transcontinental and potentially the world economy.

“Other infrastructural resource development projects,” includes evaluations of renewable energy resource potential and development focusing on hydroelectric dams, wind and solar power, natural resource (e.g. oil, gas, gold, etc.) discovery, extraction and transportation, telecommunications, banking & finance, and security. Improved communications, education and cultural exchanges are intrinsically part of the BRI program.

It is a truism that extraordinary resources or geopolitical value invite disaster. Many are the nations in the developing world that have extraordinary resources however lack the infrastructure to develop them and/or find themselves mired in wars wherein they are coerced into giving those resources to the very same superpowers that caused those wars in the first place in exchange for weapons needed to survive and maintain some illusion of “self-determination.”

The BRI on the other hand presents a more harmonious pathway to development. It is already enhancing “energy circulation” along the land and maritime Silk Roads by removing impedances caused primarily by a lack of financial resources - the chronic disequilibrium experienced in the developing nations of Africa, Asia, Latin America and East Europe.

Enhancing “energy circulation” isn’t some new concept, but rather an ancient principle of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) whose origin is lost in the mists of ancient prehistory.

### Traditional Chinese Medicine - A holistic system with ancient roots

“Acupuncture and moxibustion are important inventions of the Chinese nation and originated as early as in the clan commune period of primitive society… It was about 100,000 years ago that China entered the clan commune period which lasted till 4,000 years ago. In the ancient literature there are many legends about the origin of acupuncture and moxibustion such as Fu Xi’s creation of therapeutic techniques with stone needles, and Huang Di’s invention of acupuncture and moxibustion. The above-mentioned Fu Xi and Huang Di in legend actually are the representatives of the clan commune of primitive society.”

Xinnong, Cheng (Chief Ed.), Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion, Foreign Languages Press, Beijing13th printing 2012, P. 3 (1)

More recently, some 5,000 years ago during the Majiayao Period it appears a form of Qi Gong was used. In 1975 Archeologists found a painted pottery jar in Liuwan San Pintai, Ledu, Qinghai province with a figure in the posture of “gulping Qi,” or “turtle breathing” used to exercise inhalation and exhalation, a fundamental practice of Qi Gong science. (2)

According to Chinese mythology it was the “God Farmer,” “First Deity of the Five Grains” and “First of the Legendary Flame Emperors,” Shennong that taught Chinese agriculture, the use of herbal medicines and acupuncture.

More empirical histories date Chinese Traditional Medicine back to *The Medical Classic of the Yellow Emperor* (*Huang Di Nei Jing*) which was originally written sometime during the Warring States Period 221-206 BC, expanded during the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC) and compiled and made public during the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC - 24 AD). (3)

“The Han dynasty (206 B. C. – A. D.220), which is considered the most glorious epoch in Chinese medical history, was rendered especially memorable by the fact that during this period there lived Zhang Zhongjing, Hua Tuo and others, the greatest physicians of China. Much stress was laid upon direct observation, thus placing medicine on a more scientific basis.”

WHO - *Traditional Chinese Medicine Could Make “Health for One” True*, P. 12 (4)

Although the word “*Qi*” in Chinese has evolved since ancient times with the most common translations being “intrinsic energy,” over time it has been used in Chinese literature to mean steam (like from a cooking rice pot), lightening, air, electricity, and life force. Energy flow is ubiquitous in all natural systems from the expansion of the universe to the life and health of all living systems.

Mammalian biological systems have several energy flow systems including blood, axoplasmic (through the interior of nerves) and lymphatic circulatory systems (connecting various glands), and biological systems invariably follow gestalt principals which can be summed up as follows: “We work all-together or we work not at all.”

Unlike western medicine that tends to treat very specific ailments via for example specialized drugs that target very specific bacteria or viruses, Chinese medicine tends to work more holistically, much the same as the BRI program.

Despite its ancient and noble history Chinese Traditional Medicine had its ups and downs in the 20th Century. After the revolution against the Qing Dynasty in 1911 colonialists “denounced and depreciated Chinese traditional medicine and even defamed acupuncture and moxibustion as medical torture…” (5)

Starting in 1914 the government attempted to ban TCM adopting a series of measures to restrict its use. None-the-less TCM continued to flourish in the countryside where the vast majority of people still lived.

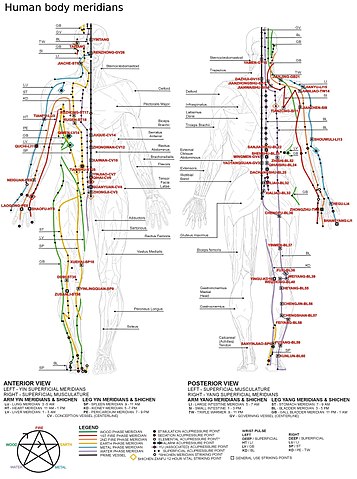
“Since the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the Chinese Communist Party has paid great attention to inheriting and developing the legacy of traditional Chinese medicine and pharmacology.” (*ibid*)

It wasn’t until economic reforms under Deng Xiao Peng that China’s economic health began to recover beginning in the late 1970s, and coming to flower in the 1980s. Decade by decade China began to recover her identify, culture and health.

Since that time TCM has become a mainstay of health and medical treatment world-wide.

Although the exact number of people who use TCM in the United States is unknown, it was estimated in 1997 that some 10,000 practitioners served more than 1 million patients each year. According to the 2007 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), which included a comprehensive survey on the use of complementary health approaches by Americans, an estimated 3.1 million U.S. adults had used acupuncture in the previous year. The number of visits to acupuncturists tripled between 1997 and 2007. According to the 2007 NHIS, about 2.3 million Americans practiced tai chi and 600,000 practiced qi gong in the previous year.

<https://nccih.nih.gov/health/whatiscam/chinesemed.htm> (6)



### The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) - A holistic system with ancient roots

It was Saturday, September 7, 2013 at Nazarbayev University in Astana, Kazakhstan, during a speech on China’s Central Asia strategy that President Xi Jinping first officially announced the launching of the BRI program: “The proposed economic belt is inhabited by close to 3 billion people and represents the biggest market in the world with unparalleled potential,” President Xi said. (7)

According to a March 2018 World Bank report “The (Belt and Road) initiative aims to strengthen infrastructure, trade, and investment links between China and some 65 other countries that account collectively for over 30 percent of global GDP, 62 percent of population, and 75 percent of known energy reserves.” (8) It doesn’t mention that most of those countries are in many of the poorest and least developed regions of the world.

According to that article shipping commodities between Europe and China takes about 30 days, whereas trains take only about two weeks however are more expensive. Hence China is investing heavily in rail infrastructure that can reduce the time and cost of the bidirectional transcontinental transport of goods and people.

To aid in the development of the BRI the Chinese government has set up the Asia Infrastructure and Investment Bank (<https://www.aiib.org/en/>) and the Silk Road Fund.

Note: To clarify the language here, the “Belt” usually refers to the land Silk Roads, whereas the “Road” refers to the Maritime Silk Roads (MSR), and “BRI” usually refers to both.

### The Maritime Silk Road Initiative (MSR) - A holistic system with ancient roots

Plans for MSR development plan were first announced by Chinese President Xi Jinping at a speech presented at the Indonesian Parliament October 2nd, 2013 in which he first outlined a win-win solution deriving from an “independent foreign policy of peace and the opening-up strategy.” <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013xiapec/2013-10/02/content_17007915.htm> (9)

This was followed by a speech presented by Premier Li Keqiang of the State Council at the 16th ASEAN-China Summit in Bandar Seri Begawan, capital of Brunei on October 9th that same year. In that speech he said that “Both sides should seize the opportunities to push forward the wide-ranging, in-depth, high-level and all-dimensional cooperation between China and ASEAN” and presented a seven-point proposal on the framework of China-ASEAN cooperation for the next ten years. <http://www.chinaembassy.org.nz/eng/zgyw/t1088098.htm> (10)

The history of the Maritime Silk Roads however certainly did not begin there.

Unlike the land Silk Roads that slowly evolved from about 200 BCE, the Maritime Silk Roads followed a blueprint designed by the third great emperor of the Ming Dynasty, sometimes called by his given name Zhū Dì (朱棣 ), sometimes referred to as the Yǒnglè (永樂 ) emperor (which means “perpetual happiness”), and/or his posthumous name Wéndì (文帝 ), and sometimes referred to by one of his Temple names, Tàizōng (太宗) or Chéngzǔ (成祖). In any case by any name he could well have been one of, if not the greatest leader in all of world history.

In many ways it was his grandfather, the Hongwu (“Vastly Martial”) Emperor, progenitor of the Ming Dynasty, the last of the indigenous Han Chinese dynasties that set the tone for his grandson’s brilliance.

The end of the previous dynasty, the Yuan, left China in a dilapidated state with the people taxed cruelly, vast numbers of slaves, much of previously arable land wasted, and so on. The Hongwu Emperor implemented many reforms including lowering the taxes, freeing the slaves, utilizing the army to revitalize the land via canals and other irrigation systems and greatly encouraging trade and commerce.

Like his grandfather, Emperor Zhū Dì considered economic revitalization and family happiness as fundamental to governing the country. “If the people around the world are adequately fed and clothed, I would be still happy even if there were no hearty meals or music to enjoy.” (11) They were great emperors to be sure, because they were men with compassion for the common people.

To understand the Hongwu Emperor and his grandson Emperor Zhū Dì one must have some appreciation of Confucian philosophy.

“Although the parrot and orangutan can speak, they cannot be treated as human being because they have no etiquette. Naturally, people who can speak but who have no rites are the same as animals in essence. Since animals are not cultivated by etiquette a female animal is shared by her husband and son. To avoid shameful behaviors, the sage formulates rules to cultivate people, making them polite and know how they are different from animals. (*ibid*, P. 12 quoted from *The Book of Rites*, translated by Yang Tianyu, *Annotation to the Book of Rites*, Shanghai, Ancient Books Publishing House, 2016. P. 3)

With this background in mind one can appreciate the following:

It was in line with the requirements of the times that Zhu Di was committed to strengthening and expanding ties between China and overseas countries, rather than pursuing the colonial practice of looting, aiming to transmit the civilization and carry forward the excellent traditions of the Chinese people who loved peace and had always been willing to make friendly exchanges with the outside world. In addition, it adopted good-neighborly and friendly policies to overseas countries. China, as an ancient civilization, was in a state of etiquette. (*ibid*, P. 13)

Thus one can understand the idealism with which Admiral Zheng He - in the early 1400s - was infused when charged by Emperor Zhū Dì to lead the greatest fleet in history on an unprecedented diplomatic tour. In all Zheng He led seven expeditions to the “Western” seas, known today as the South China Sea, Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea, Gulf of Aden, Red Sea and Indian Ocean. His fleets visited Brunei, Java, Thailand and Southeast Asia, India, the Horn of Africa, and Arabia. Along the way he gave gifts including gold, silver, porcelain, and silk. In return he received gifts including ostriches, zebras, camels, and ivory.

It should be noted here that from the time of the first Ming Dynasty Hongwu Emperor China adopted a policy of strict neutrality in regards to conflicts between other foreign powers, as was demonstrated by their refusal to get involved in a conflict between Annon and neighboring Champa (Vietnam), even though Annon had also attacked several Chinese coastal villages. Chinese culture, as aforementioned was based on civility which precludes getting involved in other country’s conflicts, even when personal (and nationalist) feelings and some degree of personal (and nationalist) interests might dictate otherwise.

Given this background the casual observer might conclude: “Aha! President Xi is emulating formulas laid down by Emperor Zhū Dì, his grandfather before him the Hongwu Emperor and Confucius, not Chinese Traditional Medicine. In fact, Chinese Traditional Medicine most probably co-evolved with the philosophies of Confucius over several millennia, and supports the central pillar of Confucian philosophy, harmony, the harmony of the Yin and Yang, and the *Qi* (or trade/commerce in economic terms) flow that exists within and between living systems.

Thus the BRI systems reconnecting China to North, Central, South and West Asia, the Gulf Countries and North Africa and ultimately linking them all to European trade centers including Athens, Venice and Rotterdam in the Netherlands are bringing back critical energy “flow” to an ancient trade system with roots in prehistoric times.

Prehistoric times? The Maritime Silk Roads connect with Egypt and Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti, and Eritrea (known in biblical times as the Land of Punt and then the Kingdom of Aksum) and as far south as Kenya, which were part of the even more ancient trade and migration pathways along the Trans-Saharan Trade Routes which were trodden by the early pre-human and human species north into Eurasia. Peking man’s ancestors didn’t fly, they walked.

Likewise biological systems evolve and flourish or decline as a function of the relevancy of their role within larger ecosystems, barring outside influences like climatic changes (e.g. ice ages) and/or invasive species which can disrupt or destroy any ecosystem. China’s role in the evolution of harmonious relations between nations of the world is clearly far from over and in fact flourishing despite resistance from some “outside influences.”

### A Health History of China and the Land Silk Roads

*“A health history is a holistic assessment of all factors affecting a patient’s health status, including information about social, cultural, familial, and economic aspects of the patient’s life as well as any other component of the patient’s life style that affects health and well-being.”* (12)

A catastrophic series of events began about 500 years ago which bottled up the energy flow systems of the land Silk Roads, specifically domination of world trade by the major Atlantic coastal states of Portugal, Spain, Holland, England and France. Whereas it’s true Sweden, Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Italy were seafaring nations also, at that time their trade was almost exclusively local in natural. When shipping by sea became cheaper and faster than land transport by camels and horses across the vast expanse of the Eurasian continent, world power shifted from the land Silk Roads to the Europeans who had, via military might colonized quite a large number of port cities in Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

The *Treaty of Nerchinsk* in 1689 didn’t help things in the Central Eurasian States - the heart of the Silk Roads - as the Russians and Manchu Qing Dynasty effectively divided that region between them. Only Afghanistan survived as an independent state, a buffer zone between the Russian, Manchu and British Empires. This treaty was seen as essential by the Chinese as Russian traders were expanding south into the Amur region of Northern Manchuria and building garrisons, e.g. at Albazin. Extreme violence was avoided by this treaty which returned the Amur River to the Qing Dynasty and Russians were permitted to send trading caravans to “Peking.” This treaty lasted until the mid-19th Century when Russian expansion led to further land concessions from the slowly crumbling Qing (Manchu) Dynasty. Though the *Treaty of Nerchinsk* was a, if not the landmark diplomatic solution leading to what has become the solidified and enduring peaceful relationship between Russia and China, it was a devastating blow to the Central Asian states.

Adding to the general instability and unhealthiness of the Asian milieu, in the 1790s the British Empire, reeling from its losses in North America (e.g. independence of the United States of America in 1776) radically increased its sale of Indian opium in China offsetting its trade imbalance resulting from an English fondness for Chinese tea, silk and porcelain. (Fortunately for the world their crumpets were home-made.)

Like a healthily functioning immune system the Chinese government banned the production and importation of opium in 1800 and in 1813 outlawed the smoking of it imposing a punishment of beating convicted offenders with 100 lashes. Unfortunately the disease (of opium addiction) had spread too far and the British version of “supply side economics” proved its efficacy.

A Chinese government official named Lin Zexu argued that efforts to end the disease of opium must be fought on all fronts and among other things wrote an open letter to Queen Victoria questioning British support for the trade and the morality of pushing drugs in China. He arrested some 1,600 Chinese dealers and stopped all foreign trade by quarantining areas where foreign merchants operated. After a mere six weeks foreign merchants turned over 2.6 million pounds of opium. Lin Zexu then went further destroying opium on British ships and forced the Portuguese off the mainland of China onto the Island of Hong Kong which was at that time teeming with malaria and crime.

This culminated in two British driven Opium Wars, with the first from 1839 to 1842 and the second from 1856 to 1869. The weakened Qing (Manchu) monarchy lost both, rights to Hong Kong, other ports and most unfortunately ultimately faced increased opium sales in China.

As if all that weren’t “unhealthy” enough, then there was the First Sino-Japanese war, 1894 - 1895 when the Japanese took over large parts of northwest China. Then there was one bright spot in 1911 when the “peasants” won their revolution against the Qing Dynasty ending that corrupt foreign dominated dynasty, however that victory was quickly followed by the feudalistic Warlord Era from 1916 to 1928, and then the Second Sino-Japanese War started in 1937 when Japanese moved south from their bases in northern China (Manchuria) to conquer Beijing, Tianjin, and other mostly coastal areas. This is called the “War against Japanese Aggression” by Chinese which didn’t end until 1945.

Within weeks after the U.S. dropped atomic weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, the U.S. turned those bombers around and started bombing their former allies the Chinese, for the “crime” of being Communist. That civil war which had previously simmered for decades plunged the entire nation into an unprecedented bloodbath of conflict. Principally fought between the American backed Nationalists and Chinese Communists, that war did not end until 1949.

In 1790 when the British began ramping up its sale of opium in China, China was the richest country in the world, but by the mid-20th Century China was among the world’s poorest pinned down by European dominated coastal cities that had poured poison into the continent for centuries, supported the failing Qing Dynasty, and then armed and promoted one of if not the deadliest civil war in history.

Thus the dissolution of the core of Eurasia and China was matched by the rise of the peripheral coastal cities dominated by foreign powers’ weaponry and trade power. Under Western European control the Asian coastal states attracted the principal traders and goods and by the 19th Century commerce, wealth and power had shifted completely to those European dominated port enclaves. Meanwhile the Central Eurasian states were starved out of global trade and fell one by one, victims of - in medical terms - ischemic attacks (characterized by blockage of arterial blood flow).

From the founding of the new China in 1949 until the economic reforms of Deng Xiao Peng in the 1980s the Chinese economy was in the doldrums - at best. Since then however China has risen to become the world’s second largest economy at the “cutting edge” of many sciences and arts drawing the envy, ire and retaliatory aggression of other world powers, principally the U.S.A.

There have been “bumps” along the road for example during the recession of 2007-2009 China’s exports fell some 16% resulting in some 23 million workers being laid off, however a Chinese government $586 billion dollar stimulus package got 98% of them back to work in short order.

### Domination vs. Harmony

“And God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.’”

Genesis 1:26-28 King James Version

The word: “dominion” above means “domination over nature,” (derived from the Medieval Latin *domin*(*ium*), which found its way into Middle French and late Middle English sometime between 1400-1450).

Generally speaking, Chinese Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism do *not* give man the authority to “dominate” over nature. Most of Chinese philosophy teaches humans to harmonize *with* nature. Given that Europe and the U.S. are - to greater and lesser extents - dominated by Judeo/Christian philosophies, it is not surprising perhaps that domination is a major theme in their philosophies, or that it should contrast strongly with Chinese philosophy with its emphasis on harmony.

This is not to confirm the assertions in the book “*Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*” but rather in hope that a new consciousness in Europe and the U.S.A. is emerging from “long traditions of English and German Romanticism, the Biblical criticism of Herder and Schleiermacher, and the skepticism of Hume,” (13) as well as the relatively simple pragmatism and transcendentalist philosophies of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau.

“According to Emerson, an individual has to improve himself through nature, but at the same time, he emphasized that he needs to interact with his society to be a “whole man”. In other words, not only nature but also society is both significant for an individual “each fit reproduces the other”. According to the philosophy that Emerson founded immersion in the nature is necessary for the improvement of individual, while engagement with the society is indispensable. In other words, only through focusing on both can we live a complete life and make a better society to live in. Thoreau and Emerson emphasized on the transcendentalist idea of human harmony with nature. They believed that nature can help us improve spiritually and help us connect to the rest of the world.

“According to Transcendental ideas, everything is connected, everything is one.”

Manzari, Alireza, Nature in American Transcendentalism, *English Language and Literature Studies*; Vol. 2, No. 3; 2012 (14)

### Medical Prognosis and Energy Blockages in the “Organs” of Contemporary World Politics

Nature tends to go in cycles and on the surface at least things at the time of this writing appear to be at rather an extreme.

Treating a raging infection can be an onerous job yet doctors must routinely examine them carefully and clean for example infected wounds before recovery can begin. Just so, an examination of the health and energy imbalances in the world today is not a pretty sight.

Energy flows world-wide are blocked and unbalanced by a remarkable number of converging trends:

* January 21, 2010 The United States Supreme Court decided in a case called *Citizens United vs. FEC*, based on a 5 to 4 vote to legitimize nonprofit corporations, for-profit corporations, labor unions, and other associations giving big money to politicians for advertising cynically calling such money, “free speech.” Thus was corruption in American politics legitimized and even sanctified taking on the aspect of Constitutional protection. On March 26, 2010, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled in *SpeechNow.org. v. FEC* that the contribution limits of 2 U.S.C. §441a were unconstitutional as applied to individuals’ contributions to *SpeechNow*. The *Citizens United* ruling “opened the door” for unlimited election spending by corporations. Most of that spending is then funneled through groups known as “super PACs.” Thus, for any American to say, this or that government is corrupt is missing the point. The American Supreme Court legitimized absolute corruption in American politics and that corruption was vastly expanded by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit decision in *SpeechNow.org. v. FEC*.

*Thus, to start a war in some developing country to create jobs making weapons in this U.S. state or that, is perfectly legal.* Bought and paid for politicians will absolutely support such malfeasance. In fact, it’s considered “patriotic.” This however may not go on forever, as the following suggests: Federal Court to Review Case that Could End Super PAC Spending, by DC Editors - March 3, 2019

<https://democracychronicles.org/end-super-pac-spending/> (15) Thus, it is remotely possible those robotically following absolute corporate rule now may at some time in the future be held to account. “I was just following orders,” didn’t work as a defense for the Nazi collaborators and it may not work for those who have participated in crimes against humanity great and small during this time of absolute corporate rule.

* According to Hans Kristensen director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, the United States now has about 4,000 nuclear warheads and bombs at its disposal. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2018/08/24/the-modern-nuclear-arsenal-a-nuclear-weapons-expert-describes-a-new-kind-of-cold-war/?utm_term=.1492c968ed5b> (16)
* Under President Trump the U.S. has restarted a nuclear arms race with Russia <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2018/10/25/trump-just-pulled-out-of-one-of-the-most-successful-arms-control-treaties-ever/?utm_term=.51ecb370a3fe> (17)
* President Trump is preparing to sell nuclear technologies to Saudi Arabia which will fuel a Gulf States Vs. Iran nuclear arms race <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/making-nuclear-mbs-190307135114759.html> (18) In spite of the fact that:
* American and European weapons are being used by the Saudi- and UAE-led coalition to kill and wound tens of thousands of civilians in Yemen. MHR wrote that during a wedding celebration in Hajjah Governorate in April 2018, a US-made bomb exploded killing at least 21 people and injured another 97, among them drummers, dancers and wedding guests including 60 children.

In 2018, MHR documented 128 apparently unlawful coalition air attacks that killed 418 civilians, including 181 children, and wounded 435, among them 197 children.

An estimated 85,000 children in Yemen have died of hunger and preventable diseases; according to the report (since the American backed Saudi-led war began four years ago). <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/03/european-arms-attack-yemeni-civilians-report-190306154450248.html> (19)

* President Trump’s national budget for 2019 includes increasing “defense” spending and decreasing domestic spending <https://dmlnews.com/report-trump-budget-propose-slashing-domestic-spending-boosting-defense/> (20) “For many children, school lunch is the only meal they eat all day. Trump’s budget would cut $1.7 billion from child nutrition and eliminate food assistance for millions—literally taking food out of kids’ mouths. This is not humane. This budget isn’t humane. He is not humane.” — Ilhan Omar (@IlhanMN) March 12, 2019
* Last year homelessness affected 1.3 million children in American public schools. [https://www.icphusa.org/interactive\_data/the-united-states-of-homelessness/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIxLC194r14AIViraWCh24zgmGEAAYASAAEgJfOvD\_BwE#](https://www.icphusa.org/interactive_data/the-united-states-of-homelessness/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIxLC194r14AIViraWCh24zgmGEAAYASAAEgJfOvD_BwE) (21)
* President Trump unilaterally started a trade war with China,
* Huawei's chief financial officer, Meng Wanzhou, daughter of the company's founder and CEO Ren Zhengfei is still under arrest in Canada awaiting extradition to the U.S. on what most consider to be “trumped up” charges in an illegal attempt to stifle fair competition “There are ‘serious concerns’ over the Meng Wanzhou case due to Donald Trump’s comments, her lawyer tells court,” *South China Morning Post*, by Ian Young, March 7, 2019 <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/2188945/huawei-cfo-meng-wanzhou-canadian-court-us-extradition-hearing> (22)
* U.S. revels in whatever secrets it didn’t find when the NSA launched “Operation Shotgiant” to hack Hwawei’s servers in 2009/2010. (Ref: Frankopan, Peter, *The Silk Roads - New History of the World)*(23) &
* Link to 20140322-NYT-Operation Shotgiant Objectives, <https://www.eff.org/node/79592> (24)
* The Pivot to Asia slyly articulated by Hillary Clinton in her Foreign Policy Journal article <https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/americas-pacific-century/> (25) during her stint as Secretary of State for President Obama appears to be an extension of the older arch-conservative
* China Containment Policy <https://www.newsweek.com/washington-shift-china-toward-containment-326591> (26),
* …which for all practical purposes is the extension of a National Security Directive from the 1970s that says: “No nation or region will be allowed to compete economically with the United States of America.” The legality, morality and potential side-effects of this policy remain unaddressed by the decision makers that produce such edicts.
* 8 rich people own as much wealth as half the world <https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2017/01/18/rich-people-own-much-money-half-world-report-says/y6az3Wtasd5TIf9Q6k3I4K/story.html> (27)
* The Richest 10% of Americans Now Own 84% of All Stocks - http://money.com/money/5054009/stock-ownership-10-percent-richest/ (28)
* The wealthiest 1 percent of American households own 40 percent of the country's wealth, according to a new paper... <https://www.washingtonpost.com/> (29)
* According to Fortune.com, the “The Wealth Gap in the U.S. Is Worse Than In Russia or Iran,” http://fortune.com/2017/08/01/wealth-gap-america/ (30)
* The American national deficit in March 2019 stands in excess of 22 trillion dollars, <http://www.usdebtclock.org/> (31)
* Americans Taking More Prescription Drugs than Ever - Consumer Reports says many may be doing more harm than good - A new survey finds 55 percent of Americans regularly take a prescription medicine -- and they're taking more than ever. <https://www.webmd.com/drug-medication/news/20170803/americans-taking-more-prescription-drugs-than-ever-survey> (32)
* According to the American National Institute on Drug Abuse:

“Every day, more than 130 people in the United States die after overdosing on opioids. The misuse of and addiction to opioids—including prescription pain relievers, heroin, and synthetic opioids such as fentanyl—is a serious national crisis that affects public health as well as social and economic welfare. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that the total “economic burden” of prescription opioid misuse alone in the United States is $78.5 billion a year, including the costs of healthcare, lost productivity, addiction treatment, and criminal justice involvement.” <https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/opioids/opioid-overdose-crisis> (33)

* Venezuela braces for rival protests amid US ‘electricity war,’ PressTV, Mar 9, 2019

“The power failure, which stopped subway service in Caracas, is also endangering patients in hospitals around the country and has cut people off from their families, friends and the outside world.

“Many patients are facing danger, according to health advocates, who were particularly concerned about those who rely on respirators and the lack of air conditioning in several hospitals, which are needed to keep facilities cool in order to prevent the spread of bacteria. ‘There are patients who are connected to machines,’ said Dr. Luz Ardila Suarez, who works at a hospital in Caracas. ‘And of course, there’s no water.’ According to health advocacy group, CODEVIDA, thousands of dialysis patients were going without treatment as a result of the outage.

“‘I’m desperate,’ said a mother who had been unable to buy food for her of three young children because she wasn’t able to take money out of the bank due to the power cut.”

<https://www.presstv.com/Detail/2019/03/09/590571/Venezuela-power-cut-US-crisis-Juan-Guaido> (34)

Venezuela suffers from the double damnation (in spite of being Catholic) of being an oil rich nation and socialist. Though not commonly known, it was communists that, in country after country in Africa, Asia and Latin America helped the indigenous people free themselves from the cruel yoke of European colonialism. In each case since WWII, however the U.S.A. then swept in and attacked those nations killing usually around 10 times the number of people as in the colonial wars to “free” them from communism. (35) The U.S.A. likes puppet governments, especially in nations with oil, other natural resources and/or geo-political strategic importance of one kind or another and works relentlessly to destroy Communist, Socialist, and Labor parties even if democratically elected.

Cannon and repeater rifles have for the most part been replaced with economic, legalistic and chemical (drug) warfare, and so-called “covert actions,” and a Western mainstream press that virtually always sides with the shareholders that also own stocks in the “defense” industries at least in the U.S., U.K., France, Canada, and other bastions of Euro-American hegemony. These forces combined rain havoc on the world’s energy flow systems.

Western powers are currently attempting to destabilize China via at least three main avenues, a “democracy movement” in Hong Kong wherein many if not most university student demonstrator organizers are paid cash to demonstrate in the streets by CIA front organizations, terrorists are imported from hotspot regions like Iraq and Syria to the northwest Xinjian region to promote separatism, and there has been a long-time propaganda war in Tibet in an attempt to radicalize the population, led by the Dalai Lama and western media.

How does the Chinese government deal with all this?

The great virtue of China has - for most of its history - been patience. The Hong Kong demonstrators were waited out and a few - very few - key leaders arrested. In the Northwest and Tibet the Chinese government is using economic development and education to try to reduce differences between indigenous people and Han immigrants. In all three cases the Chinese government feels compelled to protect its periphery from “inflammatory” outside influences (propaganda wars and of course cash) that represent foreign covert attempts to radicalize the local people.

When one or another of China’s BRI projects is halted - for one reason or another - China simply diplomatically waits - and flows around it as there is so much work to be done in bringing the developing world up into the 21st Century. So much work to be done…

“**Yielding is the way of Tao.**”

### Also on the bright side

Germany tells America to verpissen off over Huawei 5G cyber-Sicherheitsbedenken - Europeans can't find any evidence of Chinese spying

By Kieren McCarthy in San Francisco, Feb 19, 2019 <https://www.theregister.co.uk/2019/02/19/germany_huawei_5g_security/> (35)

In sum, it appears the only good news these days seems to be coming from China and the land and maritime BRI. Investing in infrastructure development appears to be much healthier than just making and selling more and more weapons of mass destruction designed to divide and conquer the world. Investing in infrastructure opens energy channels and unblocks the *Qi*, whereas selling instruments of death and cutting the electricity to entire nations certainly carries with it all kinds of short and long-term negative energies that endanger the health of the entire world energy system.

### Chinese President Xi Jinping

The following quote is from The Star newspaper in L.A.

**China’s political star Xi Jinping is a study in contrasts**

By Barbara Demick and David Pierson, *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 14, 2012

“LIANGJIAHE, CHINA—In 1969, a pale, gangly 15-year-old walked down a dirt road flanked by desiccated yellow cliffs from which generations of Chinese farmers had eked out a subsistence living.

The path led to Liangjiahe, a village in central China where the Communist Party was sending city youths to do hard labour during the Cultural Revolution. For nearly seven years, Xi Jinping lived there, making a cave his home. A thin quilt spread on bricks was his bed, a bucket was his toilet. Dinners were porridge of millet and raw grain...”

<https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2012/02/14/chinas_political_star_xi_jinping_is_a_study_in_contrasts.html> (38)

That was after his sister was murdered and his father sent to prison during the Cultural Revolution.

Pressure however makes some people “crack” - crawl into bottles and drugs - whereas others become only stronger.

Poverty relief: Xi’s remarks and China’s progress

By Chen Ziyan and Zhang Wenfang, March 9, 2019

President Xi’s remarks and China’s progress

<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201903/09/WS5c82ece8a3106c65c34eda1c.html> (39)

Some quotes:

“President Xi Jinping called for fulfilling the poverty elimination goal by 2020...”

“There should be no retreat until complete victory is won.”

“The tasks ahead remain arduous and hard as those still in poverty are the worst stricken.”

“The officials must improve their work styles and never slacken in poverty alleviation work.”

“They (the officials) should not cheat in reporting their progress in poverty reduction.”

“In 2012 there were 99 million people in China classified as “living in poverty. By 2018 that number has reduced to 16.6 million.”

“An average of 13 million people were lifted out of poverty via newly made employment opportunities annually.”

“Another 10 million will be lifted out of poverty in 2019. The remaining 6 million will be lifted out of poverty in 2020.”

*ibid*

Why should President Xi care so much?

It appears helping the poor and combating corruption are personal issues with him.

It appears his early life - family and personal experiences - taught him a lot, profoundly painful as they must have been. He appears to have genuine empathy for the poor and downtrodden, no empathy for those who abuse their power, and the willpower and farsightedness to expand his planning diplomatically and globally in accordance with the actions of Emperor Zhū Dì, his grandfather before him the Hongwu Emperor, Lao Tzu, Confucius and Chinese Traditional Medicine, for Chinese Traditional Medicine most probably co-evolved with the philosophies of Taoism and Confucian philosophy over several millennia, inculcating the principles of harmony and civility within and between living systems; expressions of the universal organizing principle of *Li* (理) and energetic properties of *Qi* (气).

### Summary/Conclusions & the Future

First, a diagnosis of the collective health of the human species at this time is clear: There are many imbalances in the world’s energy flows which are getting increasingly extreme at an increasing rate. A definitive prognosis is more complex because there are too many unknown variables floating about in a long series of rather complex equations governing the future health of the collective human species at this time.

* For example, if President Trump were to order a nuclear launch just prior to the next presidential election, would the American Secretary of Defense Patrick M. Shanahan go along with it as he would have to do for that launch to actually occur?
* If enough American nuclear submarines and battleships are set sailing in the South China Sea, how long will it be before some severe accident, real or contrived actually occurs?
* Will Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte sign on to the BRI as Reuters recently reported he might in April (2019) or buckle under the rather explicit threats coming from the U.S.?

“White House National Security Council spokesperson, Garrett Marquis, told the FT that the Belt and Road Initiative was unlikely to help Italy economically and could significantly damage the country’s international image.”

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/2189332/italy-signs-belt-and-road-infrastructure-summit-china> (36)

* Unfortunately this pathology of anti-Chinese and anti-synergy hatred is spreading from the White House to Brussels. According to Wall Street Journal March 14, 2019, on March 12th the European Commission (headquartered in Brussels, Belgium) has “turned sharply.” They have labeled China as a competitor(!) and “politically a comprehensive opponent.” Tsk, tsk. This does not bode well for the health of the human organism, the evolution of a synergistic world economy. Nope, instead it stinks badly of “Trumpism” and corporate rule in general. Win-win scenarios clearly don’t fit within the schemata of the European Union’s plans. Building the house of cards higher during a windstorm doesn’t seem like the wisest decision for creating and maintaining a prosperous world economy. The European Commission’s kowtowing to Hillary Clinton’s and Donald Trump’s anti-China policies is abjectly shameless. It is so patently absurd.

Western Europeans and Americans have so raped and pillaged the developing worlds over the past 500 years there is no need for competition in attempting to repair the massive damages. There is plenty of work for all; it would take a century at least *even if the U.S., Europe and China worked together.* Attempting to continue and escalate the rampaging brutality of western hegemony is certain to end in total system failure. Global economic collapse and/or WWIII will result in the deaths of billions and exacerbate the deteriorating health of the human organism. Some view this as inevitable, however it is not necessarily so. There is no need for a “king of the hill” as there are so many hills. There is no need for “the big stick,” as violence begets violence in a never ending cycle.

Nature abhors a vacuum both in individual and collective living systems. Five hundred years of western hegemony ruthlessly exploiting the natural and human resources of the “developing world” has created huge imbalances in world power and even within the U.S. economic polarization is reaching new extremes representing another very dangerous series of energy blockages/vacuums.

There is no need to repeat history again. The Western Roman Empire collapsed due to internal rot, corruption and its relentless expansionistic policies. The Eastern Roman Empire lasted 900 years longer because it didn’t make those same mistakes. It was more pluralistic, vastly better organized and *not* devoted to world domination.

Traditional Chinese Medicine advocates healthy circulation of energy within and between living systems that can only exist within relatively stable but none-the-less evolving and mutually dependent ecosystems.

The Belt and Road Initiative is the one and only large scale operation at this time in the world designed and implemented to restore balance and health to this little blue planet in a suburban district of the Milky Way. The parallels between the BRI, TCM, Taoist and Confucian approaches to healing, health and harmony are many.

It’s all rather simple, as explained by the Yellow Emperor some two thousand three hundred or so years ago.

* + 1. Original Article

“The Emperor said:

“The yin and yang are the law of the heaven and earth, the rule of everything, the parents of variations, the root of life and death, and the locus of power in the universe. The root must be sought in treatment…”

2.16 Eighth Article

“Root Spirit - the Divine Pivot

“…Uncle Qi answered: The heaven bestows its virtue on people. The earth bestows people with its benevolence. The virtue of the heaven descends, and the benevolence of the earth ascends so that people may live. So, what is generated before birth is essence (sperm or ovum). Two essences wrestle, then the spirit is produced. The *yang* should go with the spirit. The *yin* soul goes with the essence. What learns and deals with things is mind. What is immature in the mind is idea. What is determined firmly is resolution. To think about this resolution over and over again is consideration. To ponder things from long distances and many angles is farsightedness. Dealing with all things with farsightedness is wisdom.

“So, when a man with wisdom cares for his life, he must obey the rules of seasons and acclimatize to cold and heat. The man should appease joy and anger and be satisfied with his residence. He should be moderate in the *yin* and *yang*, and adjust the rigidity and softness. In this way, evils will not intrude and one can live indefinitely.

“Therefore, fear and thought impair the spirit. The impaired spirit induces greater fear…”

Zhu Ming (Trans.) *The Medical Classic of the Yellow Emperor*, Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 3rd printing 2009, P. 69 (37)

If only other world leaders could honestly live up to those standards, the “energy flow” including food into the mouths of the hungry, and medical care for all, a pleasant healthy harmony would emerge on this little blue planet in this suburban district of the Milky Way.

“What Confucius learned is fully expressed in his commentaries. What Lao Tzu learned can be found in what he wrote in the Tao Te Ching:

“I have three treasures

That I guard and hold dear:

The first is love;

The second is contentment;

The third is humbleness.

Only the loving are courageous;

Only the content are magnanimous;

Only the humble are capable of commanding.”

*The Complete I Ching, the Definitive Translation* by Taoist Master Alfred Huang, Inner Traditions (Publ.) Rochester, Vermont, Toronto Canada, 2010, P. 149 (40)

“Seeking harmony among people,

Prosperous and smooth.

Favorable to cross great rivers.

Favorable for the superior person

to be steadfast and upright.”

*Ibid*, P. 135

Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte has it within his power to poke a hole in the one of the seals creating a power vacuum between east and west in April 2019. Will he follow the way of violence and death as perpetuated by the doomed Western Roman Empire, or work to harmonize between systems and help being about a new world harmony?

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**About the Author**

Gregory Brundage has been a reporter, stringer and/or freelance journalist from 1988 until the present time. He has traveled, researched, written and published articles from and along the land Silk Roads between China and Istanbul covering more than 14,000 kilometers on the ground in addition to the Maritime Silk Road countries of Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and Japan. He began his study of TCM, Chinese classics (and Chinese Wushu) in 1972. He resolutely believes that peace between tribes and nations is possible and war a pathological disease that can only be cured using communication, education and infrastructure development.