Semper Confucianismus:
A Virtuous Approach to Military Affairs

by

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Introduction

“Good iron is not beaten into nails, good boys do not become soldiers.” – Chinese Proverb

No wonder, then, why the house keeps crumbling.

The history of China is one that moves in step with its soldiers. Given that Confucianism (儒家, rújiā) has been part of that history for over two and a half millennia, one argument put forth is that Confucianism is (at least partially) responsible for the seemingly endless pattern of violence. Yao Fuchuan even provides statistical analyses, showing that instances of war are higher after the introduction of Confucianism.

My counterargument would be that perhaps, this cycle of violence is the result of the non-adoption of Confucianism by China’s military organizations. To prevent our current discussion from becoming overly historical and combative, I shall offer a more positive mode of debate. My thesis aims first and foremost to show that Confucian and military goals are not only compatible, but also mutually beneficial.

The goal of military organizations is to attain mission success. The nature of modern warfare is such that missions are accomplished not by superior firepower, but by placating the local populace. Doing so requires proper engagement at the human level, and this is what Confucianism prides itself on. Confucianism is famous for its emphasis of benevolence (仁, rén) – the premier virtue. As we shall soon see, benevolence is the

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1 好鐵不打釘，好男不當兵 (hàotiě bù dǎdīng, hǎonán bù dāngbīng)
2 Throughout the entirety of this thesis, I will transliterate important Chinese terms using the hànyǔ pīnyīn system. Transliterations will also contain the appropriate tone diacritics – for the benefit of proficient readers. Translations for keys terms will be in traditional Chinese characters.
virtue that allows for morally meaningful human interaction, and is exactly what allows
for the attainment of Confucianism’s end goal – worldwide harmony. Now, given
military organizations’ constant exposure to the wider world (whether on deployment or
training), they would be the perfect Confucian evangelists.

Based on the previous paragraph, Confucianism and the military seem like a
match made in heaven. Inquisitive readers might then ask, “Why is it that no military
organization has ever adopted Confucianism?” Much like an infantry assault, my
response is delivered in three phases.

Firstly, Confucianism is often seen as an exclusively Chinese or Asian
phenomenon. When people think of Confucianism they think of arcane ritual practices or
ancestor worship. The truth is that Confucianism is steeped in the universal principle of
benevolence. As I shall show in chapter 4, the moral principle of Confucianism is highly
inclusive. In fact, one need only be a human being to enjoy its worth.

Secondly, Confucianism is often viewed as a religion, rather than a philosophy.
While it is true that there are Confucius temples in the world, the three texts clearly show
a great deal of philosophical depth.

Thirdly, Confucianism is often ridiculed at not being able to provide concrete
solutions to ethical questions. I would state that unlike Western philosophy,
Confucianism is a practical applied ethics, one that does not have categorical laws and
codes. As such, to find the answer, you have to go out and practice the philosophy for
yourself.
Now, I will introduce readers to the three *dramatis personae major*, as well as the texts attributed to them. Collectively, I term them the classical Confucians, and their texts the classical Confucian texts.

 Confucius (孔子, Kǒngzǐ, ca. 552-479 B.C.E.) is often thought of as the progenitor of Confucianism and the sole author of the *Analects*. The truth is that the Chinese word for ‘Confucian’ (儒, rú) has the meaning of being learned or scholarly and that the *Analects* were most likely composed by a host of contributors. But the fact remains that the tradition bears Confucius’ name, and he is often seen narrating passages in the *Analects*.

 Perhaps the second most famous exponent of Confucianism (after Confucius himself) is Mengzi (孟子, Mèngzǐ, ca. 372-289 B.C.E.), also known by his Latinized name, Mencius. In Mengzi’s eponymous text, he undertakes the task of carefully explicating the teachings of the *Analects* from a moral-psychological standpoint, giving reason to follow its teachings. Another one of Mengzi’s contributions is also to introduce the four cardinal virtues of benevolence (仁, rén), righteousness (義, yì), lǐ (禮), and wisdom (智, zhì).

 The least known of the three, Xunzi (荀子, Xúnzǐ, ca. 313-238 B.C.E.) famously declared that human nature was bad. He emphasizes learning in self-cultivation, and places a lot of emphasis on ritual propriety.

 The reason I chose the classical Confucian texts as the locus of my thesis, is twofold. Firstly, their writing took place during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods – two of the most tumultuous periods in China’s five thousand year history. I believe that while deeply Confucian, these texts were a product of their time, and could
inform us about virtue in war. Also, I believe that these texts perfectly balance philosophical debate with practical advice.

Now, let us begin our journey as we try to turn bad iron into good iron.

Chapter 1: Sowing the Sprouts
Establishing the Grounds for Confucian Moral Cultivation
“Who can go out but by the door? Why is it that no one follows this Way?” (Analects 6:17)

1.1 – A Soldier’s Life for Me

Military organizations are in the business of winning wars. To win a war, good soldiers are required. A soldier is defined to be any person employed and trained by a military organization. Training is included in the definition of a soldier for two reasons; firstly, it is to differentiate soldiers from irregular military contractors that might also be under the organizations employ. Examples include civilian logistical contractors and informants. Secondly (and more importantly), such a definition emphasizes the importance of training for military organizations. As a group whose success depends heavily on the individual competence and cohesive capabilities of all personnel, training plays an important role for military organizations.

This chapter closely tracks the initial moral-psychological development of a soldier. Fittingly, it begins at the very beginning of every soldier’s career – basic training. Be it the United States Armed Forces or the Viet Cong, every military organization subjects its soldiers to a period of initial basic training. This phase of training is meant to simultaneously accomplish two goals: equip the recent enlistee with the necessary skills

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When quoting from the Analects, Mengzi, or Xunzi, I will be using Brooks, Van Norden, and Hutton versions respectively. As such, I will employ the quotation style displayed here. For the Analects, the first number represents the chapter, while the second number represents the passage. For the Mengzi, the passage number will be provided without the sub-section. For the Xunzi, the first number represents the chapter, and the second number represents the lines as ascribed by Hutton.
to succeed in her new environment, and assess the compatibility of her continued employment in the organization. Chapters 1 and 2 will concentrate on the first goal, with the last section of chapter 2 reserved for an explicit discussion of the second. This chapter outlines a Confucian military training program and explicates the moral-psychological processes behind at work.

Though often perceived to be overwhelmingly physical in nature, there is an increasing demand for a moral and spiritual aspect to military training. The importance of moral education is highlighted by the shifting nature of contemporary war. Victory is no longer conditioned on superior firepower. Instead, a military organization has to win the hearts and minds of the affected populace. The United States’ recent forays in Iraq and Afghanistan are cases in point – combat objectives were met swiftly, but the objective of restoring peace has (at the time of writing) not yet been fully accomplished. Hearts and minds are most effectively won when the boots on the ground are able to engage locals with a degree of humaneness. In order to do so, military training has to place a dual emphasis on cultivating practical soldiering skills and individual morality. I believe that a basic training program based on Confucian ethics allows for an increase in the war-winning capabilities of each soldier, and not just improving combat effectiveness.

The prime motivation of this chapter is Lai (2009), due to its use of lǐ as a yardstick for moral improvement. Lǐ can be understood in two ways. Firstly, it is a Mengzian cardinal virtue, often translated as propriety. Secondly, lǐ is an action that is in accordance with a particular social circumstance, often translated as ritual. We see that the two meanings are closely linked. A person who possesses propriety can be expected
to perform the appropriate ritual when required. I will not provide a translation for \( Li \), as it might arouse confusion in readers (if a soldier is to possess the virtue of ritual, for example). However, the context in which \( Li \) is used will be made clear, when used. \( Li \) is particularly important in the context of basic training because of the highly ritualized environment. Almost every action soldiers perform are \( Li \). Good examples are marching, drills, and greetings.

Karyn Lai adeptly charts the evolving role of the performance of \( Li \) in an individual’s moral development. As readers will soon see, the imposition of \( Li \) is the only means of recourse during the initial phases of basic training. She partitions Confucian moral education into three distinct stages. Stage one is that of the moral beginner. Though Lai associates moral beginners with children, she also shows evidence from the *Analects* that moral maturity is not always associated with biological age. The defining aspect of a stage one moral agent is that she “does not have the resources to consider objectively her actions and their implications.”\(^5\) The initial imposition of \( Li \) can thus be seen as “an essential part of the initial training phase during which repetition of correct forms of behavior is the basic mode of moral learning.”\(^6\)

In stage two, the individual becomes a developing learner. This stage is typified by experimentation, and “the interdependent roles of learning and reflection.”\(^7\) Having amassed an appropriately large set of \( Li \) (and the consequent moral clout), the agent is now afforded a degree of moral independence. Moral cultivation is largely self-directed, as the agent is now expected to derive and absorb the moral principles undergirding the

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\(^5\) Lai, “\( Li \) in the *Analects,*” 69, slightly modified.
\(^6\) Ibid, 71.
\(^7\) Ibid, 74.
practiced ̄li through the act of reflection (思, sī). This stage is best represented by the
passage:

“The Master said, If she studies and does not reflect, she will be rigid. If she reflects but does
not study, she will be shaky.” (Analects 2:15, slightly modified)

Lai acknowledges that, “to be able to reflect well requires some detachment from popular
opinion.” As such, the ̄li practices by the developing learner straddle the line between
socially prescribed ̄li and the ̄li deemed appropriate individually by the agent, on account
of her heightening moral and situation perceptiveness.

Contrary to popular belief, Confucianism is receptive to changes in social norms. One example can be seen from Analects 9:3; instead of using a hemp cap, as prescribed
by ̄li, Confucius advocates the use of a silk cap. However, only individuals who have
attained a sufficiently high level of moral cultivation are allowed to deviate from the
prescribed ̄li. Such an individual is a stage three moral agent or a paradigmatic person (君子, jūnzǐ). A paradigmatic person is a moral exemplar – an advanced Confucian moral
agent. Lai describes the paradigmatic person as someone who “is conscious of and
sensitive to the morally salient features of different situations.” For the paradigmatic
person, “̄li are no longer cumbersome and restrictive. But they are indispensable because
they create the conditions for appropriate expressions of the self.”

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8 Ibid, 75.
9 Ibid, 76.
10 Ibid.
Though Lai successfully paints a concise picture of Confucian moral cultivation, she ultimately offers a view that is too impoverished with regards to the aims of my thesis. Lai’s express goal was to merely trace the evolution of \( lî \) during different stages of individual cultivation. In fairness, Lai’s work does provide a useful framework for this chapter. Without the use of other Confucian concepts, she is unable to fully describe the mechanics of inter-stage moral progress.

Thus, I shall treat Lai’s work as a skeleton. By introducing, modeling, and/or unpacking critical Confucian concepts, the discussion in chapters 1 and 2 will serve to provide the rest of the anatomy, with regards to Confucian individual moral development. Furthermore, my focus on military training should not be viewed as a restriction, but as an opportunity to zoom in on specific developments within a defined context.

Before we join the soldiers in basic training, we have to understand two of the most fundamental concepts in Confucianism – the heartmind and the \( dàò \).

1.2 – An Introduction to the Heartmind and a Novel Conception of the \( Dàò \)

To understand classical Confucian ethics on the individual, psychosomatic level, one necessarily has to understand the heartmind (心, \( xīn \)). Literally translated, \( xīn \) refers to the bodily organ of the heart. The purpose of adding ‘mind’ as a suffix is to distance one’s understanding of \( xīn \) as a physical object, and emphasize the cognitive and conative functions that the Confucian heartmind affords the individual. Accepting the cognitive aspect of the heartmind is not difficult. In light of modern science, one can understand the
heartmind as an amalgamation of the human heart and brain. The conative aspect, though, is harder to establish. I begin by showing that the heartmind is “the site of what we would describe as… affective activities.”¹¹

“If one is without the feeling of compassion, one is not human. If one is without the feeling of shame, one is not human. If one is without the feeling of respect, one is not human. If one is without the feeling of approval and disapproval, one is not human.” (Mengzi 2A6, slightly modified)

Van Norden translates xīn from the original text as ‘feeling’ in the passage above. Here, Mengzi makes the dual claim that the heartmind is the locus of emotion, and that an individual devoid of emotion cannot be considered human. Equivalently, Mengzi is stating that a necessary precondition to be considered a human being is one’s ability to feel. To be human is thus to own a heartmind.

Having affective properties, however, does not necessarily imply that the heartmind is capable of inherently motivating emotional responses. I refer to the same passage in the Mengzi:

“Suppose someone suddenly saw a child about to fall into a well: anyone in such a situation would have a feeling of alarm and compassion – not because one sought to get in good with the child’s parents, not because one wanted fame among one’s neighbors and friends, and not because one would dislike the sound of the child’s cries.” (Mengzi 2A6)

¹¹ Shun, “Conception of the Person,” 185.
Mengzi’s assertion is that in such a situation, one’s feelings are evoked involuntarily.
Even if one does not act on the elicited emotional impulse, the impulse still exists.
Mengzi’s account is highly plausible. If one were actually to see a child about to fall into a well, one would almost certainly feel an immediate, involuntary emotional shock. It is difficult to imagine a person who would experience emotional nonchalance in such a situation – let alone allow her raw, innate emotional response to be dictated by other conditions present (such as whether anyone else is watching or potentially judging her actions).

Collectively, these two excerpts provide insight into Mengzi’s conception of the human psychology in relation to potential moral action. He believes that all human beings have a heartmind intrinsically capable of translating external psychological stimuli into physical propensities. As such, the heartmind is not only the command center of all psychological activity; it is also the fulcrum between the human psyche and physicality. Mengzi clearly feels that the heartmind serves as a solid moral basis upon which individual morality can be built.

Understanding the genealogy of the heartmind is of further moral significance. Mengzi connects the heartmind to the concept of Heaven (天, tiān), “To fully fathom one’s heartmind is to understand one’s nature. To understand one’s nature is to understand Heaven.” (Mengzi 7A1, slightly modified) Edward Slingerland describes Heaven as “the source of normativity in the universe”12 and an “all-powerful being… responsible for everything beyond the control of human beings.”13 Mengzi implies that

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the heartmind is of limitless moral potential. But if the heartmind is limitless, how does he explain perceived moral faults in people? The answer has to do with the fundamental limitations of the human body. Interpreting the earlier work of Xiaotong Fei, Tingyang Zhao states:

“Body is indeed the boundary line of the self, while the heartmind starts from the self and can [morally] expand endlessly…. Although the heartmind is thought to be the most important, the body’s limitations cannot match the limitlessness of the heartmind.”

Though all human beings are endowed with a morally limitless heartmind as granted by Heaven, it is situated within the body. The result of this dilemma is that the “heartminds are restrained by their bodies.” Remember that we have only established the fact that the emotions lead to physical propensities. Understood in the context of the heartmind and the body, moral reaction on the part of the individual is not a necessary implication of external stimuli. This situation allows for the possibility of differing degrees of morality among individuals, according to the quality of each individual body. Moral cultivation, then, can be viewed as training the body in order to increasingly and asymptotically realize the infinite moral power of the heartmind.

Apart from the heartmind, Heaven is the genealogical root of another integral Confucian concept - the dào. Slingerland describes it as “the unique moral path that

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should be walked by any true human being, endorsed by Heaven.” That *dào* is often translated as ‘path’ or ‘way’ is misleading, as it implies that an individual need only traverse a linear, straightforward path towards sagehood (the moral ideal of Confucian self-cultivation). As the main metaphor for Confucian moral development, these common translations betray the richness and uniqueness of one’s journey along the *dào*, where moral cultivation is dependent on numerous important variables. A more appropriate picture of the *dào* would thus be a line in n-dimensional space, where n is the number of variables that affect one’s moral progress. Examples of variables include time, and one’s endowment of Mengzi’s four cardinal virtues. Moreover, such a conception of the *dào* grants us the ability to precisely chart the individual’s moral progress with respect to all variables as a line called the progress line. I term this space and its components the *dào* space.\(^{17}\)

I will now impose two properties of the *dào* space. Firstly, each dimension contains an origin. The origin divides that particular dimension of the *dào* space into two portions – the good (善, *shàn*) portion and the bad (惡, *è*) portion.\(^{18}\) Secondly, the *dào* space is not bounded; there is no limit to an individual’s endowment of a particular variable.\(^{19}\) These properties allow for the notion of moral progress and regress. Movement along one’s progress line towards the good portion of any dimension denotes moral progress in terms of that variable, while movement towards the bad portion (intuitively) denotes moral regress.\(^{20}\)

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\(^{17}\) See Appendix A, Diagram 1.

\(^{18}\) See Appendix A, Diagram 2.

\(^{19}\) See Appendix A, Diagram 3.

\(^{20}\) See Appendix A, Diagram 4.
Due to the common genealogy of the heartmind and the dào, it is not surprising to find that these two concepts are intricately linked. The unboundedness of the dào space is a consequence of the Confucian conception of the self as a heartmind-body duality. Though moral cultivation sees the heartmind’s moral potential being increasingly realized, the fact that it is imprisoned within the body (at least while one is still alive) entails the finitude of human moral capacity. However, human finitude in the context of a morally infinite heartmind signifies the permissibility of perpetual moral cultivation. While we may never be able to fulfill the true potential of our heartminds, it does not stop us from being able to experience continual moral progress.

One scholium of the above construction is that any individual’s progress line can be logically decomposed into discrete points, with respect to a given time and space. I will now introduce three components of each such point, namely moral direction, moral momentum, and moral position. Collectively, they will be termed moral configuration. 21 Moral direction indicates whether the individual is progressing/regressing. Moral momentum indicates both the rate at which said progress/regress is being achieved, as well as the moral force required to alter this rate. Finally, moral position indicates the location of the individual within the dào space; it describes the individual’s endowment of each variable.

I believe such a model of the dào to be of great assistance to my investigation. As, it allows for greater clarity in explaining Confucian concepts in the context of individual moral development. By providing a visual, mathematical understanding of the link between individual psychology and action, it is my hope that readers who are not well versed in Confucianism can receive a fuller picture, and appreciate the beauty of

21 See Appendix A, Diagram 5.
Confucian ethics. Subsequently, it allows for a more sophisticated analysis and deeper comprehension of Confucian moral cultivation. As such, this model will be used extensively to supplement our exploration of individual moral growth.

Four of the most important variables in the 之道 space are the Mengzian cardinal virtues.

“The feeling of compassion is the sprout of benevolence. The feeling of shame is the sprout of righteousness. The feeling of respect is the sprout of 里. The feeling of approval and disapproval is the sprout of wisdom.” (Mengzi 2A6, slightly modified)

Notice that the ‘sprouts’ found in this passage are identical to the feelings found in the earlier excerpt of Mengzi 2A6. Mengzi’s point in using an agricultural metaphor, and terming these feelings as sprouts (端, duān) is to emphasize that they are able to, in some sense, be nurtured and grow. The passage also informs us that, if nurtured well, these sprouts will blossom into full-blown virtues.

Passage 2A6 also draws direct correspondences between an emotion and a cardinal virtue. Envisage each of the four cardinal virtues as a dimension of 之道 space. Moral position with respect to each dimension can thus be interpreted as how attuned one is to the corresponding emotion. That is, when an individual experiences a particular event, how strong the involuntary emotional impulse is. Moral position, then, is a measure of how strong one’s emotional impulses are. This measure is isomorphic to the strength of the emotional-physical link as located in the heartmind. The stronger this link, the more likely the individual will perform the correct moral reaction.
The result of attunement is the ability to better accord one’s action with respect to the particular virtue. This is not difficult to visualize. A person who is not very attuned to her feeling of compassion might feel it when she sees a baby about to fall into a well, but that emotional impulse is so faint that the person fails to act on it. A person who is very attuned, on the other hand, feels an overwhelming surge of compassion when she sees the same gravitationally challenged baby. An external force is being applied on the heartmind. This tsunami of emotion compels her to spring into action, saving the baby. The action of saving the baby is in accordance with the virtue of benevolence.

One corollary: performance of virtuous action is subject to situational moral requirements. Following the theme of compassion and benevolence, there is a certain endowment of benevolence that is required before the person actually is compelled to save the baby. Equivalently, a person’s emotional impulse has to be of requisite strength before she is compelled to save the baby. Of course, moral requirements are most often not phrased in terms of single virtues or dào space variables. In any given situation, there may be a number of variable requirements. I shall provide a 2-dimensional example, and leave it to the reader to abstract the concept to higher dimensions.

Imagine the scenario where soldier A is ordered to apprehend and detain soldier B, a fellow platoon mate who has decided to go AWOL²² in order to visit her dying parents. Soldier A’s feeling of compassion compels her not to execute the order. At the same time, Soldier A’s feeling of respect towards the military hierarchy compels her to act as ordered by a military superior.

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²² Absent without orderly leave – an offence that requires court-martial (in most militaries), and usually involves hefty personal punishments such as detainment or even discharge from service.
At first glance, the above scenario might seem inherently paradoxical. However, I propose that a solution exists, and involves the idea of a moral requirement. Soldier A has to perform an action that is both adequately benevolent and adequately ƒ. If soldier A’s moral position is either inadequately benevolent or inadequately ƒ, then she would fail to perform the required action.

Unfortunately, the classical Confucians did not leave any record of the correct action to perform under the aforementioned circumstances. One consequence of moral requirements is a lack of moral perception for the agent who has yet to attain the requisite moral position. Note that the further away her moral position from the requirement, the worse her perception. Furthermore, readers should not suppose moral superiority on my part. I can only suggest plausible solutions. One possible solution would be for soldier A to appeal to the conscience of soldier B, counseling her to turn herself in and face the consequences. Such a solution would be benevolent as soldier A is acknowledging soldier B as a compassionate child. It would also be ƒ as soldier A confronted soldier B with the aim of returning soldier B to the relevant authorities, albeit in an indirect, benevolent manner.

Given my failure to concoct a concrete solution to the problem above, it is tempting to invoke a sense of moral ignorance in our investigation of individual Confucian morality. What I mean is that one could plausibly state, “Since my moral position is lacking with regards to a given situation, I do not know the correct moral action. Thus, I cannot and will not further analyze the situation.” However, the classical Confucian texts provide a trove of ƒ that a paradigmatic person would do under an array

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23 This situation represents a moral dilemma – an issue that I will explicitly tackle in section 2.3.
24 See Appendix A, Diagram 6.
of situations. The task at hand, then, is to interpret these *li* to the best of our abilities, and to apply them to the military context.

Equipped with these analytical and conceptual tools, we begin our investigation at the very beginning of a soldier’s career – basic training.

1.3 – Basic Training: Relationships, Respect, and Role Models

With its insularity and unique norms, a military organization can be viewed as a self-contained society. Recruits are effectively thrust into a new world – one where the moral dictates can vary wildly from the civilian world. As such, “in order for one to engage fully with others within a particular social and cultural environment, one needs first to understand the existing, social, cultural, and moral norms operative within that framework.” As stated in section 1.1, every military organization subjects its soldiers to a period of initial basic training, however informal. Newly enlisted soldiers who have yet to complete basic training are called recruits. The main goal of this period is to acclimatize recruits to military life. Charged with this task are commanders, who oversee the physical and moral growth of recruits. Specifically, commanders are responsible for ensuring that each and every recruit is a stage two moral agent by the time she graduates from basic training.

I understand that some military organizations require compressed basic training schedules in order to service their manpower needs and overall fighting strength. While this might seem plausible, I want to restate my belief that moral cultivation actually improves the war-winning capability of soldiers. While I admit that raw fighting

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25 Lai 72.
capability is largely a matter of physical prowess, remember that we want each soldier to be able to win hearts and minds. Before this notion is fully discussed in chapter 4, this section investigates how commanders morally shape their recruits.

Because of the mandatory nature of basic training, recruits come from all strata of wider society. It is not difficult to find members of the aristocracy line up beside the hoi polloi. The moral implication here is that basic training has to cater to soldiers of all moral configurations. Moreover, note that some national militaries have a policy of mandatory conscription – adding to the moral variance of any batch of new recruits. My aim is to show that basic training is able to train most recruits to become stage two moral agents. The main concern for commanders, then, is how to morally sculpt the worst of these recruits. My line of reasoning is that if commanders are able to train recruits with the worst moral configurations into stage two moral agents, then they can also succeed with morally superior recruits. I define a recruit with a bad moral configuration as the recalcitrant recruit.

The recalcitrant recruit is a stage one moral agent. Her moral learning thus consists merely of “strict adherence of ǐ”\(^{29}\). Commanders then, should subject the recalcitrant recruit to a set of rules that “stipulate the conditions of the eligibility or permissibility of actions.”\(^{30}\) That is, in addition to serving as behavioral guides in their new military setting, ǐ also act as delimiting rules, setting certain behavioral confines.

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\(^{26}\) In a purely voluntary military, recruits opt in to the organization – indicating a basic willingness and aptitude for military life. In a conscript military, soldiers are performing a mandatory duty, and may be enlisted against their will.

\(^{27}\) I stop short of claiming that all recruits can be molded into stage two moral agents. I admit that there might exist recruits who are inherently evil, and whose moral configurations cannot be altered in basic training, I discuss such recruits in section 2.4.

\(^{28}\) Specifically, the recalcitrant recruit has bad moral direction, momentum, and position.

\(^{29}\) Lai 69, slightly modified.

Given the recalcitrant recruit’s bad moral configuration, she will only deteriorate morally if left to her own devices. We require an external moralizing force – one that allows the recalcitrant recruit to achieve moral progress. We will soon see that it is the commander who applies this external force – initially through exposing the recalcitrant recruit to strict *li* adherence. One method for *li* adherence would be rules and punishments. Readers might argue that Confucianism is famously against the use of strict rules and punishments, as can be seen from the following passage:

“The Master said, Lead them with government and regulate them by punishments, and the people will evade them with no sense of shame. Lead them with virtue and regulate them by *li*, and they will acquire a sense of shame – and moreover, they will be orderly.” (*Analects* 2:3, slightly modified)

The above quote seems to clearly forbid the use of rules and punishments if one is to instill virtue in the recalcitrant recruits. Rules and punishments will merely cause the recalcitrant recruit to become evasive of the *li*.

However, this quote has to be read in the context of Lai’s scheme. The whole point of stage one is for the moral beginner to adhere strictly to *li*. Rules and punishments is an excellent tool for use in basic training because it makes recalcitrant recruits perform *li* under pain of severe punishment. Humans are very responsive to pain. There is substantial evidence for the use of pain avoidance as a means of behavioral change. Empirical evidence even shows pain’s ability to change even the most addictive of habits
such as alcohol consumption and smoking. Wanting to avoid this pain, the recalcitrant recruit performs $li$, thus accomplishing Lai’s dictum for stage one learners.

Using rules and punishments is the negative route for adherence to $li$. Now, the disgruntled performance of $li$ is unlikely to lead to any profound moral improvement in the recalcitrant recruit. Or at the very least, the exclusive usage of rules and punishments is not as good at morally elevating the recalcitrant recruit as making her want to perform $li$. Such a recruit is one that simply ‘goes through the motions.’ To see how adherence to $li$ can actually affect the heartmind (and hence lead to moral betterment), we begin an exploration of the concept of respect. As respect requires an understanding of relationships, I will first give an explanation of Confucian relationships and their role in moral cultivation.

External moral forces are applied through relationships. The relationship we are interested in at the moment is the recalcitrant recruit-commander relationship. Recall that Confucian ethics is meant to be the means by which its political theory could be enacted. As such, there is a great importance placed on social ethics and inter-personal relationships as vectors of individual moral change. It is only after a relationship is formed between two individuals that an individual can have any form of communication, moral or otherwise, with another individual. The sage king Shun, wanting to properly instruct people on roles and the relationships between these roles, explicitly listed five relationships:

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31 See, for example, Longabaugh, et al. 1994.
“Between father and children there is affection; between ruler and ministers there is righteousness; between husband and wife there is distinction; between elder and younger there is precedence; and between friends there is faithfulness.” (Mengzi 3A4)

As Confucian gentlemen, commanders are possible sources of this external moralizing force. However, none of the relationships on the above list seem to adequately describe the recalcitrant recruit-commander relationship.

Conspicuously missing from the five relationships is the teacher-student relationship. Xunzi stresses the importance of a good teacher in the practice of \( l\i \):

“\( l\i \) is that by which to correct your person. The teacher is that by which to correct your practice of \( l\i \). If you are without \( l\i \), then how will you correct your person? If you are without a teacher, how will you know that your practice of \( l\i \) is right? … If you do not concur with your teacher and the proper model but instead like to use your own judgment, then this is like relying on a blind person to distinguish colors, or like relying on a deaf person to distinguish sounds. You will accomplish nothing but chaos and recklessness.” (Xunzi 2:175-189, slightly modified)

A Confucian relationship is a dyadic and reciprocal\(^{32}\) link between two individuals, each with her specific role within the relationship. Formed and maintained through \( l\i \), there is a proper action that one is to perform towards the other in the relationship. The teacher’s \( l\i \) is educating the student, while the student’s \( l\i \) is to learn from the teacher. In the context of classical Confucianism, the recalcitrant recruit-commander relationship is best described by the teacher-student relationship.

\(^{32}\) I further discuss the reciprocal property of relationships in section 4.2.
For a relationship to facilitate moral exchange, there needs to be a certain degree of willingness by both parties. In order for the commander-recruit relationship to even be formed, both the commander and the recruit must be willing to at least listen to each other. Now, for the case of the recalcitrant recruit, this sense of willingness might not be present. It is thus the job of the commander to portray himself in such a way as to appeal to the heartmind of the recalcitrant recruit. In other words, the commander has to earn the respect of the recalcitrant recruit.

Recall that Mengzi 2A6 cites respect as the sprout of *li*. If commanders are able to enhance the recalcitrant recruit’s feeling of respect towards the commanders themselves as well as to the actual performance of *li*, then the recalcitrant recruit is likely to perform *li* well.

Scholars often stress the reciprocal nature of relationships. In order for the recalcitrant recruit to respect her commander, the commander has to first respect the recalcitrant recruit. This is clearly possible, as can be seen from “when those above respect those below, it is called ‘esteeming the prestigious.’ When those above respect those below, it is called ‘respecting the worthy.’” (Mengzi 5B3, slightly modified) and “those who love others are generally loved by others. Those who revere others are generally revered by others.” (Mengzi 4B28)

In speaking of the paradigmatic person, Xunzi makes the claim,

“There are none for whom she does not feel concern. There are none to whom she does not show respect. On no occasion does she contend with others, but rather she is broad and open
just like the way Heaven and Earth encompass the myriad things. If one is like this, then those who are worthy will honor you, and even those who are unworthy will favor you. When one is like this, those who still do not submit can be called unnatural and devious.” (Xunzi 6:147-153, slightly modified)

Commanders are (ideally) paradigmatic persons, and respect all others. Sin Yee Chan states, “When we respect someone, our respect is grounded on our positive appraisal of the person, or at least on the positive appraisal of certain qualities of the person.”33 But why would the commander respect the morally repugnant recalcitrant recruit? After all, the recalcitrant recruit is one of low moral fiber. A concrete example of a recalcitrant recruit would be a murderous triad member who joined the army only to escape arrest. The answer lies in commander’s recognizing the moral potential of the recalcitrant recruit. Mengzi again uses an agricultural metaphor34 to explain this potential.

“In years of plenty, most young men are gentle; in years of poverty, most young men are violent. It is not that the potential that Heaven confers on them varies like this. They are like this because of what sinks and drowns their hearts. Consider barley. Sow the seeds and cover them. The soil is the same and the time of planting is also the same. They grow rapidly, and by the time of the summer solstice they have all ripened. Although there are some differences, these are due to the richness of the soil and to unevenness in the rain and in human effort. Hence, in general, things of the same kind are all similar. Why would one have any doubt about this when it comes to humans alone? We and the sage are of the same kind.” (Mengzi 6A7)

34 See section 1.2 and Mengzi 2A6.
Just like barley, all human beings have the potential to grow. For humans, the ripened state is to become a paradigmatic person. As a paradigmatic person herself, the commander is able to recognize the potential for moral growth in the recalcitrant recruit. This potential is the recalcitrant recruit’s source of respect. This account is consistent with Mengzi’s theory of the human heartmind.

Looking back at passage 6A7, Mengzi’s second claim is that differences in moral character are a result of both environment and personal effort. Here, the commander recognizes that personal effort in the form of reflection is required for moral progress, but also that the recalcitrant recruit is unwilling and/or unable to do so. That leaves the commanders with environment, which they are in almost full control of. One advantage of utilizing basic training as a time of moral cultivation is that commanders are able to shape the recalcitrant recruit’s environment so as to maximize moral growth. A commander’s prime imperative then, should be to instill a sense of respect in the recalcitrant recruit. The question now is; how exactly does a commander gain respect from the recalcitrant recruit? The *Analects* provides some clues.

“Jì Kāng asked, To make the people be respectful, loyal, and motivated, what should one do? The Master said, Regard them with austerity, and they will be respectful.” (*Analects* 2:20)

Commanders have to regard the recalcitrant recruit with austerity. That is to say commanders have to maintain an air of gravitas and confidence in dealing with recruits. This aura of dignity stems from moral superiority. Further passages in the *Analects* shed light on this claim.
“If the superiors love ُ, then among the people none will dare but be respectful” (Analects 13:4, slightly modified)

Being superior moral agents, commanders know and understand the value of ُ, and thus perform it well. Their confidence in performing the ritual well shows in their body language, and thus in the quality of the ُ performed. The commanders are acting as moral role models – they are showing recruits the goal of their performance of ُ. Supplying the recalcitrant recruit with a visual end point to the performance of ُ inspires her. Basically, the commanders’ performance of ُ is sufficiently good, to the point that the recalcitrant recruit’s heartmind cannot help but feel respect for the commanders. This is how commanders can directly apply moral force on the recalcitrant recruit’s heartmind. In terms of the ُ space, the commander is applying an external moral force on the recalcitrant recruit – resulting in a dampening of the recalcitrant recruit’s bad moral momentum. Persistent application of this external force will eventually cause the recalcitrant recruit’s moral momentum to become stationary, and subsequent application will change her moral direction.

Take the example of a military parade. A parade involves two parties – the main contingent and the parade commander. A good parade involves the timely, precise execution of commands, delivered by the parade commander, by the parade contingent. It is an exercise in obedience and precision. According to Analects 2:20 and 13:4, the commander has a certain authority conferred by her ability to immaculately perform the ُ of parade drills herself. Exercising this authority, the commander is strict on the recalcitrant recruit during parades, constantly pushing the recalcitrant recruit to perform the drills well. The recalcitrant recruit is responsive to these methods because she cannot
help but feel respect for the commander, who the recalcitrant recruit knows is able to perform the ǐ better than her.

Here, I want to assert that emotion can be understood in two ways – as a serious frame of mind, as well as an intentional state. Chan explains, “An intentional state is directed at specific objects, and the descriptions under which the objects are viewed are essential to the identification of the mental state…. In contrast, a frame of mind need not be directed at a specific object. It is a general condition of the mind where a pervasive attitude dominates.” Respect as an intentional state would involve the recalcitrant recruit’s respect toward the commander specifically.

Respect is additionally important because Mengzi explicitly states that respect is the sprout of ǐ. Chan states that respect “prompts one to treat others according to ǐ, which includes all sorts of rules such as those pertaining to etiquette, moral, and ritual.” As the recalcitrant recruit develops respect, she begins to treat her commanders and fellow recruits with ǐ. The innate feelings of respect within the recalcitrant recruit begin to be extended. This is where the recruit’s respect for the commander becomes a frame of mind. Chan continues, “The distinction between these two modes of consciousness is quite fluid. Whenever an intentional state pervades one’s whole consciousness, it then becomes a frame of mind.” Respect for commanders teaches the recalcitrant recruit the feeling of respect, and it is up to the commander to make this feeling of respect so strong within the recalcitrant recruit that it elicits meaningful moral development in her. The

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recalcitrant recruit is then able to apply this respect to other objects, and eventually, it becomes a latent, perpetual state of mind.

Another means would be to make the recruit realize the absolute underlying beauty of the goal she is working towards. The key here is reverence. Paul Woodruff states, “Reverence begins in a deep understanding of human limitations; from this grows the capacity to be in awe of whatever we believe lies outside our control.”\(^{38}\) The \(dào\) itself is certainly a candidate for the recalcitrant recruit’s awe. Here, we see another use of my formulation of the \(dào\) space. The inherent beauty and limitlessness of the \(dào\) is better portrayed to recruits through the \(dào\) space. By imparting such knowledge, commanders can make recruits feel insignificant; mere pawns to the all-powerful \(dào\).

The earlier example of the military parade can help to instill this sense of awe. Besides being an exercise in respect, parades are also displays of ceremonial pomp. Ceremonial colors and fancy uniforms, all having deep, historical meaning and can be found on the parade ground. These objects are meant to show that the recalcitrant recruit is part of something bigger than herself. Not only is she a small part of a military unit, but that the unit has a long and storied history. She is thus made to feel spatially and temporally insignificant.

Taken together, the coordinated effect of the commander’s respect and reverence further helps to develop respect within the recalcitrant recruit. The recruit feels small and insignificant in light of the awesomeness of the \(dào\). Despite this sense of smallness, the recruit acknowledges that the commander still respects her by spending personal time and effort in cultivating her. Also, she recognizes the commander as part of what she has

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reverence for (i.e. the military unit). The likelihood of the recalcitrant recruit developing respect is thus increased.

We have seen how commanders are able to manipulate the environment such that the recalcitrant recruit is able to achieve a modicum of moral progress. However, the methods described above are not sufficient for the recalcitrant recruit to reach stage two. The following section will detail the critical faculty that distinguishes a stage two moral agent – reflection.

1.4 – Towards Self-Directed Moral Cultivation

In section 1.1, I have mentioned that the difference between a stage one and stage two moral agent is the ability to reflect. ‘Reflect’ here refers not to the general mental capability of reflection, but to the specific capacity for moral reflection. What I mean by moral reflection is the ability to “reflect on and extract the reasons or principles for specific decisions and responses.”39 Through the newly developed faculty of reflection, stage two soldiers are able to derive the moral content of the *li* they practiced and internalized during basic training. These principles guide the soldier and allow for a greater attunement of her feelings, leading to an accumulation of virtue. However, Lai merely states that reflective ability is “acquired only through continuous and rigorous practice.”40 This section offers a more in-depth analysis of the process whereby the recruit gains this reflective ability.

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39 Lai 2006, 74.
40 Lai 2006, 72.
With respect, all that happens is that the recruit will take part in stage one lì, but this participation does not necessarily lead to the fixation of zhì (志) on the dào. Because zhì is an intellectual virtue, the commander has to appeal to the recruit’s intellect as well. Unfortunately, the classical Confucian texts provide no concrete explanation on how zhì is to be fixed. We look outside of the Confucian literature, and see that for a sustained, permanent change, the recruit “must participate actively in the transformation…. There must be an extension of a capacity that the person has already partially worked out.”42 I propose certain strategies.

The first would be for the commander to appeal to the intellectual, non-moral reason of the recalcitrant recruit. The key here is constant two-way communication about the goals of basic training. On the commander’s part, they have to clearly state the moral goal of basic training, as well as the intent of each exercise, and how it contributes to the overall goal. According to Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-0:

“The commander’s intent is a clear and concise expression of the purpose of the operation and the desired military end state that supports mission command, provides focus to the staff, and helps subordinate and supporting commanders act to achieve the commander’s desired results without further orders…. Commanders articulate the overall reason for the operation so forces understand why it is being conducted. A well-crafted commander’s intent conveys a clear image of the operation’s purpose key tasks, and the desired outcome. It expresses the broader purpose of the operation…. This helps subordinate commanders and soldiers to gain insight

41 I will explicitly discuss the translation for this term later in the section.
into what is expected of the, what constraints apply, and, most important, why the mission is being undertaken.”

Secondly, commanders should also be willing to engage with the recruit to understand and bolster the recruit’s intellectual position. Perhaps one form of engagement could be akin to Socratic dialogue, where the commander constantly pushes the recalcitrant recruit towards greater intellectual insight. It is the hope that intellectual realization will stimulate the recalcitrant recruit towards a greater interest in being moral. Moreover, this would gain more respect for the commander, as she is seen as willing to spend time correcting the recruits’ flaws.

The third strategy has to do with persistence in the commander’s instruction. Colby and Damon concede that, “Developmental transformation of goals is a gradual process, occurring over months and sometimes years of communication. It may begin in a small way, as when one person induces another to entertain a new idea or to adopt a new behavior. But long-term, permanent growth does not begin until the latter party’s goals are affected. In order for this to occur, the first party’s rationale for the idea or behavior must be accepted.” This rationale acceptance of the recalcitrant recruit can be understood as the alignment of her zhī. The centrality of zhī within Confucian ethics can be gleaned from one of the most famous passages in the Analects.

“The Master said, At fifteen I was determined (zhī) on learning, at thirty I was established, at forty I had no doubts, at fifty I understood the commands of Heaven, at sixty my ears were

obedient, and at seventy I may follow what my heart desires without transgressing the limits.”

(Analects 2:4)

Zhi appears in the crucial first step of “Confucius’ spiritual autobiography,” the step upon which Confucius’ other moral accomplishments could not have been accomplished. In a grim warning, Xunzi shows that Confucius’ subsequent moral achievements were absolutely contingent on his initial zhì, “If you do not first have somber intention (zhì), No brilliant understanding can there be.” (Xunzi 1:103-104) Note that Confucius’ zhì was acting on learning. By itself, zhì does not involve any moral value. The object it is tied to determines its value.

“The Master said, Why does not each of you tell your wish (zhì)? Zìlù said, I should like carriage and horse, and light mantles to wear, to share them with my friends, and not mind if they ruined them.” (Analects 5:26)

Zìlù is seen to fix his zhì on material goods. In this passage, zhì is translated as wish, signifying not only a serious, intentional state of mind towards a specific object, but also a certain desire for the possession or fulfillment of said object. If fixed on an object of moral worth, the possessor of zhì is signifying both her contemporaneous lack of the moral object, as well as her intention to attain that object. This mental act of desiring something morally excellent after the recognition of one’s lack of it confers moral worth (and even personal benefit) onto the possessor of the fixed zhì. This notion can be seen

46 One of Confucius’ disciples often attributed with military characteristics. See Slingerland 152, and Brooks 292.
from, “The Master said, If once he sets his mind (zhì) on benevolence, he will have no hatred.” *(Analects 4:4,* slightly modified)

The question remains, what must a recruit’s zhì be fixed on? In what could be seen as the generalized version of his spiritual autobiography, Confucius states, “Intent (zhì) upon the dào, based on virtue, close to benevolence, and acquainted with the arts.” *(Analects 7:6,* slightly modified)

In order to achieve moral advancement, then, an individual’s zhì should be fixed on the dào.⁴⁷

Before proceeding, I will comment on the language issues surrounding zhì. We have seen that zhì has been translated into a smorgasbord of terms, including determination, (somber) intention, the setting of mind, and wish. We thus see that translations of zhì are dependent on the context in which it is used. However, our initial analysis of zhì suggests that it encompasses certain characteristics:

i. Requirement of an object of fixation
ii. The individual’s contemporaneous lack of the object
iii. The individual’s realization of this lack, and
iv. A genuine desire to overcome this lack.

In light of these criteria, I propose the English ‘intention’ as a suitable translation for zhì.

Our investigation of intention (thus far) provides for two implications, both of which must be discussed at some length. Firstly, intention is a limited endowment. A

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⁴⁷ I acknowledge that there is a difference between the object of fixation in *Analects* 2:4 (fix on learning) and *Analects* 7:6 (fix on dào). However, realize that learning is the method by which progress is attained on the dào space, granted by zhì. An in-depth discussion can be found in section 2.4.
A useful illustration would be the recruit whose intention is fixed on both marksmanship and running. This recruit can certainly have an equal fixation on both objects, but she cannot be infinitely intent on both. Mental effort spent on marksmanship is mental effort taken away from running, and vice versa. A physical manifestation of this dual fixation may be that she spends equal amounts of time at the shooting range and running laps.

The second implication is that the fixation of intention cannot be externally coerced. External forces can at best (dis)incentivize the individual’s intention. Returning to our example of the shooter-runner recalcitrant recruit, suppose that her commanders decide that the appropriate \( li \) is that of running, and thus hope to increase her fixation on running. Commanders can incentivize her running by teaching her proper running technique, promising material rewards should she beat a personal record, and extolling the benefits of running. Simultaneously, the commanders could disincentivize her fixation on shooting by confiscating her rifle, disparaging the study of marksmanship, or even enacting corporal punishment. Ultimately, the allotment of intention is an individual decision. The shooter-runner partitioning of her intention is wholly dependent on her. Her commanders cannot control what is undeniably and inalienably a part of the recruit’s self.

One possible problem with attempting to fix the recruits’ intention in basic training is its uniformity – that is, all recruits are expected to adhere to the same training program. This situation is troublesome in light of recruits having different moral configurations, as described earlier. However, the personalizing factor comes in the commander-recruit relationship. Being a paradigmatic person, the commander is able to perceive the moral configuration of all recruits, and personalize basic training according
to their individual needs. The commander can then decide what sort of ɿ is most appropriate for the fixation of the particular recruit’s intention.

A corollary. Because another’s intention cannot be coerced, one cannot know for sure if another’s intention is truly fixed on a particular object. However, there are certainly physical indicators that one can detect, suggesting not only the fixation of intention, but also what the object of fixation is. I begin by connecting intention to physical activity.

Here, we can draw the link between intention and action using the Mengzi. “Your intention is the commander of the ɿ.48 ɿ fills the body. When your intention is fixed somewhere, the ɿ sets up camp there.” (Mengzi 2A2, slightly altered) Mengzi suggests that when one has her intention fixed on a particular object, one is compelled to act on that intention. For our shooter-runner recruit, she would perhaps be seen to pay extra mind during range practice – listening intently on proper marksmanship stances and subsequently hitting all her targets. Conversely, she would also appear listless during physical training – consistently clocking the slowest times during timed trials and maybe even showing deterioration in lap times.

These physical indicators can be further explored through the mechanics of the heartmind and human nature. As a cognitive faculty, intention is housed in the heartmind. The shooter-runner, when experiencing a particular event, experiences emotions that accord with her nature. Her nature is such that she enjoys shooting and dislikes running. As such, positive emotions are evoked during ranged practice, and negative emotions are

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48 Often translated as ‘psychophysical stuff’, ɿ can be likened to physical matter. It comprises the entirety of perceivable phenomena in the cosmos.
evoked during physical training. The intention fixes itself on what is perceived as more appealing. Thus, shooting is the focus of our recruit’s intention, in accordance with her moral position.

In terms of the dào space, an intention fixed on dào is represented as positive moral direction. Moral momentum is directly proportional to the intensity of the recruit’s fixation.

Though fixation of intention on the dào improves the recruit’s moral configuration, it is not enough to ensure the recruit’s progress to stage two. The problem is one of multiple external incentive forces. In any situation, there exist myriad external events that have an effect on the recruit’s intention. We will see the importance of not only inducing the recruit’s fixation of intention on the dào, but also maintaining that fixation. This issue will be discussed in detail in section 2.4, with the idea of moral equilibrium.

In this chapter, we have explored how soldiers begin to mature from stage one to stage two moral agents. Note that the concepts and methods used in during basic training are not exclusive to any specific virtue (e.g. rules and punishments to lǐ). Much like lǐ in Lai’s article, I shall trace the changing function of other Confucian concepts as we move from stage one to stage two in the next chapter. This chapter has also concentrated on how external forces are able to improve the moral configuration of the recalcitrant recruit. The next chapter will show how external forces enable recruits to perform self-directed moral cultivation, and become useful members of Confucian society.
Chapter 2: From the Inside Out

Self-Directed Moral Cultivation and Individual Harmony

“Good, better, best. Never let it rest. ‘Til your good is better and your better is best” – Saint Jerome

2.1 – Team Building: Sincerity as the Root of Friendship and Xīn

Training individual soldiers is one thing. Instilling teamwork is another. Teamwork is what allows for the improvement of overall effectiveness of any military unit, by magnifying each soldier’s capabilities. That is, the whole must be greater than the sum of the individual parts. Teamwork is produced through morally significant relationships between each and every soldier. The challenge facing this us here is that the recalcitrant recruit can only be expected to adhere strictly to lǐ.

The previous chapter concentrated on how the recalcitrant recruit can be cultivated via external means; through the hierarchical relationship between the recruit and the commander. We have already seen how cultivation was accomplished with the virtue of lǐ. In this chapter, we will deal with the other three Mengzian cardinal virtues.

Realize, however, that the recruit-commander relationship is vertical. An overarching theme of this chapter is how horizontal relationships are more useful in moral cultivation. I will first show how commanders, through the use of the vertical
relationship, are able to foster horizontal relationships between the recruits through the use of shame and trust. Then, I will show how horizontal relationships exercise the recruit’s feelings of compassion – leading to the ultimate virtue of benevolence.

While the recalcitrant recruit-commander relationship is useful in nurturing respect, the recruit-recruit relationship engenders compassion. I will show that such relationships can be formed even from the start of basic training. I will continue to focus on the recalcitrant recruit.

The answer lies in the *li* of group punishments. Remember that the recalcitrant recruit is responsive to pain and will try her hardest to avoid it. Returning to the example of the military parade, the recalcitrant recruit has to learn that one mistake by any individual is enough to ruin the parade. Thus, the commander can dictate that the whole contingent will be punished for any mistake, regardless of the individual at fault.

The recalcitrant recruit, motivated by the avoidance of pain, realizes that she has to work in tandem with her colleagues in ensuring that the contingent performs the parade commands in a cohesive fashion. Naturally, the recalcitrant recruit performs the *li* out of fear of punishment; She does not want to be the source of her own punishment. With group punishments, the recalcitrant recruit then realizes that in order to avoid punishment, she has to work together with the rest of the contingent in the performance of commands. Now, the recalcitrant recruit cannot be certain that the others in the contingent are not going to mess up, but she has no choice but to participate in the parade. This evokes a feeling of helplessness and fatalism with the recalcitrant recruit’s heartmind. However, when the contingent is successful, there is the feeling of trust (信,
The recalcitrant recruit realizes that her colleagues could have messed up, but were successful anyway. The recalcitrant recruit’s punishment was in the hands of the contingent, and they managed to procure a favorable outcome for her. Realize here that in team building exercises involving group punishments, the recalcitrant recruit’s trust is outwardly directed. Similarly, every other recruit in the team building exercise feels the same way about each other. Unwittingly, the recruits that take part in team building exercises have formed bilateral bonds of trust between each other.

Now, just because trust is formed between recruits does not make the recalcitrant recruit a trustworthy person, yet. However, we can agree that the bonds of trust are the seeds of friendship and being a trustworthy person. The key is in sustained team exercises and the development of sincerity. I now turn to the example of the buddy system.

The buddy system couples one recruit with another, and the pair is effectively treated as one organism. The significance of the buddy system during basic training is that a buddy’s mistake is the recruit’s mistake. Both recruits will be punished. This system is effective for the entirety of basic training. Even though the buddy relationship embodies trust, it does not imply that either buddy is trustworthy. Remember here that the recalcitrant recruit is still motivated by pain avoidance. The recalcitrant recruit is only participating in the buddy relationship because it is obligatory.

In (almost literally) going through basic training side-by-side with her buddy, though, the recalcitrant recruit begins to understand another person at a deep level. As the buddies share every experience and every memory together, the same feelings are evoked within each buddy’s heartmind, and the recalcitrant recruit begins to feel empathy and
sympathy. That is, the recalcitrant recruit recognizes her buddy as an, albeit partial, embodiment of the recalcitrant recruit’s own self.

Here we turn to Michal Slote’s definitions of empathy and sympathy. The former “involves having the feelings of another aroused in ourselves, as when we see another in pain,” whereas the latter “means that even though we feel sorry for others who are in pain, we do not necessarily have their feeling of pain per se.” The exact mechanics of empathy and sympathy are the object of psychological study. However, there is empirical evidence supporting my account of their development. Slote cites the work of Martin Hoffman, and concludes that children’s moral motivation and propensity for empathy can be developed by method of inductive discipline. Using Slote’s definitions, we see that empathy is evoked within the recalcitrant recruit through forced sympathy.

Empathy and sympathy can be understood generally as the extraction and transfer of others’ emotions to one’s self. Here, I propose that we can equate the Mengzian sprout of compassion to this transfer. Wai-Ying Wong states that, “Transference is the direct manifestation of the heartmind of benevolence,” and, “By the transference with others, one can break the barrier separating oneself and the others, hence making selfless moral judgments possible.” Wong’s statements amount to the claim that the sprout of compassion allows the recalcitrant recruit to transcend individual desires in performing actions. The recalcitrant recruit’s motivation for ‘buddy-like’ actions need not be externally motivated through punishment any more. Instead, these acts of compassion

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stem from her own understanding of her buddy’s situation. In other words, the
calcitrant recruit’s actions are now sincere.

To understand the Confucian concept of sincerity (誠, chéng), we turn to the
Mengzi:

“If one occupies a subordinate position but does not have the confidence of one’s superiors, one cannot
bring order to the people. There is a Way for gaining the confidence of one’s superiors. If one does not
have the faith of one’s friends, one will not have the confidence of one’s superiors. There is a Way for
getting the faith of one’s friends. If one serves one’s parents but they are not happy, one will not have the
faith of one’s friends. There is a Way for making one’s parents happy. If one examines oneself and one is
not Genuine, one’s parents will not be happy. There is a Way for making oneself Genuine. If one is not
enlightened about goodness, one will not make oneself Genuine. For this reason, Genuineness is
Heaven’s Way.” (Mengzi 4A12)

The passage lists six duties:

1. Bring order to the people
2. Gaining the confidence of one’s superiors
3. Getting the faith of one’s friends
4. Making one’s parents happy
5. Making oneself Genuine

Note that ‘Genuine’ is Van Norden’s translation of 誠身 (chéngshēn) which literally
means being sincere to oneself. Yanming An suggests that this list, when read in
ascending order, can be understood as “a chain reasoning from the far to the near, from large scale to the small. In this process, each succeeding phase functions as a necessary condition for the realization of the preceding one, and each success signifies the person’s new achievement in realizing his social ideal.”53 Because the ideal team involves a team of friends, my analysis will concentrate on the last four phases.

An’s chain reasoning claim implies that the motivation for making oneself sincere is to make one’s parents happy. Note that we have not included our notions of family or filial piety in our investigation so far.54 However, we can show that familial bonds are similar to our construction of the relationship between buddies. An states that:

“Normally… seeking to ‘please parents’ does not come from some utilitarian or pragmatic concerns; it is an intuitive action as natural as needing to eat and drink…. The need pushes people to search for its satisfaction; and the naturalness account for the intensity and durability that feature the search.”55

Although the compassion that a recalcitrant recruit feels towards her buddy might not be ‘as natural as needing to eat or drink’, we see that making one’s buddy happy does not come from any utilitarian or pragmatic concerns. Instead, it stems from the recalcitrant recruit seeing her buddy as an extension of herself.

The importance of sincerity can be found in the link between heartmind and body. When performing li as merely a means of avoiding pain, there is no virtue in the ensuing

54 Issues pertaining to family and filial piety are of great importance in Confucianism. I will mention filial piety in section 2.4.
Sincerity, defined as being true to oneself, attaches virtue to action. The recalcitrant recruit consults and accords with the emotions of her heartmind before performing any action. In this way, the recalcitrant recruit is being sincere.

The simultaneous development of sincerity within the recalcitrant recruit and her buddy leads to a permanent sense of trust. Trust as an intentional state becomes trust as a frame of mind through sincerity. Because of the similar emotions between buddies, being true to one’s feelings is also being true to the buddy’s feelings. There is now a lasting sense of trust between buddies due to their mutual understanding of each other.

The development of sincerity within the recalcitrant recruit has implications that stretch beyond the immediate buddy system. Because sincerity arises from the attunement of the recalcitrant recruit’s feelings, she is actually experiencing moral progress – to the point that strict adherence to li need not be enforced through the threat of pain any more. We have thus witnessed how recruit-recruit bonds also serve to fix the recalcitrant recruit’s intention on the dào. Self-motivated moral cultivation then, stems from the recruit’s ability to abstract the relationship with her buddy and apply those principles to every other relationship.

I shall now show how sincerity leads to the development of trustworthiness and friendship. As concepts, trustworthiness and friendship are closely linked, and I shall be analyzing them in tandem. We see that sincerity qualifies the recruit as a stage two moral agent. However, the soldier cannot yet be called truly trustworthy, nor can buddies yet be called true friends. Cecilia Wee notes that the trustworthy person “is not someone who has goodwill only toward certain specific individuals. Her ‘goodwill’ is more general: she

56 Recall our discussion in section 1.3.
is in general well-disposed toward others insofar as she is concerned that she does not fail them.”

In my construction of the buddy relationship, I portrayed it as one that was born out of obligation, so as to sidestep the need for familial bonds. However, Xiufen Lu states, “In friendship one freely commits oneself to certain modes of conduct that are neither role defined nor obligatory and one develops the strength of character to follow through on that commitment. Choice, then, is a feature of friendship.”

Because the sincere soldier’s intention is fixed on the dào, voluntary friendship can be seen as the aforementioned abstraction of the buddy relationship. In her interactions with friends, she is experimenting with her lǐ, based on the buddy relationship.

A trustworthy person is one who follows through on her communication. For the classical Confucians, the primary means of communication was speech. In order to understand trustworthiness then, we have to look at the classical Confucians’ positions on the relation of speech to action.

“Zēngzǐ said, I daily examine myself in three ways. In planning on behalf of others, have I been disloyal? In associating with friends, have I failed to make good on my word? What has been transmitted to me, have I not rehearsed?” (Analects 1:4, slightly altered)

Wee states, “When one speaks, that speech may be an act committing one to a particular position and, in certain cases, to implicit promises to take certain future actions. One

58 Xiufen Lu, “Rethinking Confucian Friendship,” in Asian Philosophy Vol. 20 No. 3 (November 2010), 240.
59 Furthermore, the etymological roots of ‘trustworthiness’ (信) in Chinese are ‘person’ (人, rén) and ‘speech’ (言, yán). See Wee, 2011 for a more detailed discussion.
Confucian friendship then, is formed when the soldier is sincere in her communications to others, especially when that communication commits her to a particular position. In doing so, the sincere soldier becomes trustworthy, as she is aware of “the care that one needs to take in one’s transactions with others, and the responsibility that one must fulfill towards others.”

We have seen how sincerity stems from the individual heartmind’s ability to transfer itself onto another person. All human beings, or at least those that have a functioning heartmind, are able to gain sincerity. It is gained mostly through familial interactions, but we have seen how obligatory relationships are sufficient for the development of sincerity. Also, because sincerity gives moral meaning to one’s actions, An terms it a “central conception.” What An means is that without sincerity, the genuine emotions of the heartmind do not find their expression in the individual’s actions. The heartmind is what attributes morality to action, only when action is sincere can it be seen as coming from a wellspring of virtue. An is thus justified in stating, “If there is sincerity, there must be various virtues.”

This section has showed how sincerity develops in the recalcitrant recruit, and how both sincerity and a fixed intention are required for meaningful moral development. It has also showed how the individual development of sincerity stems from meaningful social interaction, and leads to the possibility of friendship and trustworthiness. We now

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60 Cecilia Wee, “Xin, Trust, and Confucius’ Ethics,” in Philosophy East & West Vol. 61 No. 3 (July 2011), 523.
focus on how wider societal interactions have moral implications on the stage two soldier – who is no longer recalcitrant.

2.2 – Shame and Righteousness

We have thus far closely tracked the moral metamorphosis of the recalcitrant recruit. Through relationships, we have seen how the feelings of respect and compassion have been aroused – ultimately leading to her intention being fixed on the dào. This fixation has granted the now stage two soldier a reflective capability, which enables her to perform moral self-cultivation.

Thus far, I have described reflection as merely a natural product of intention fixation. The temptation here is to see them as having the same function. One must be careful to delineate these two linked, yet distinct terms. The fixation of intention grants the soldier sincerity, thus conferring moral value onto her actions by metaphysically linking the body and heartmind. The capacity for reflection grants the recruit the ability to confer value judgments on her actions. It is from reflection that a soldier knows whether an action is right or wrong in a particular situation. However, the genesis of this reflective ability from intention fixation has not been made explicit.

Remember that Confucian ethics is social. The soldier’s moral cultivation is achieved through interpersonal relationships, where the instrument of moral growth is the sprout of shame, which leads to righteousness – the ultimate validator of moral action within Confucianism.
Lai claims of stage two, “This phase of moral cultivation involves intensive experimentation because one needs to reflect on and extract the reasons or principles for specific decisions and responses.” My claim is that the most important principle to be extracted is righteousness. At this stage, experimentation with *li* involves the sincere practice of *li*, according to the soldier’s idiosyncratic understanding of the *dào*. From section 1.2, we have seen that for every situation, there is a moral requirement to be fulfilled in order to perform the right kind of *li*. Here, we continue that discussion – with particular attention paid to what happens when one does not meet the moral requirement.

Here, I want to comment on the use of Lai’s term ‘experimentation’ with *li*. I feel that this usage of experimentation implies a passive rather than active experimentation. What I mean is that a stage two soldier would not wander around her camp looking for individuals to try out esoteric *li* on. Readers should be mindful that experimentation with *li* here means that the soldier is not afraid to make mistakes when it comes to the performance of *li* – especially when she thinks the *li* is the appropriate one to perform in a given situation.

The performance of *li* has to be within a social context. That is, the *li* is the means by which relationships are formed and maintained. But remember that these experimenting soldiers are only stage two moral agents. As these soldiers are not yet fully moral, their main directive is to learn through experimentation. As such, when soldiers experiment with their *li*, their actions are unlikely to accord fully with the moral requirements as dictated by the situation. An example would be a soldier that salutes a

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64 Lai 2006, 74.
non-commissioned officer (NCO). Even though the soldier is clearly displaying respect, he is not performing the right ǐ. His đạo configuration would thus display an excess of respect and a dearth of ǐ – thus not meeting the moral requirement of the particular situation.

With reflection, the soldier will be able to correct herself and improve her endowment of ǐ. But how does she even know she is wrong? She knows she is wrong because of shame. Here, I will first unpack the concept of shame. Cua (2003) and Van Norden (2002) provide excellent analyses of the concept of shame in all three classical Confucian works. Interestingly enough, each of the three texts has a different word for shame. However, Cua and Van Norden are in agreement that all three terms are linked to form a consistent account of Confucian shame.

Van Norden defines shame, as the sprout of righteousness, in the broad, ethical sense. Ethical shame “is a sort of unpleasant feeling we have when we believe that we (or those with whom we identify) have significant character flaws.” The broad sense of shame is “a disposition to recognize when actions or situations are shameful (whether for oneself or for others, and whether past, present, future or hypothetical), and to have appropriate emotional and behavioral reaction to this recognition.” To have shame, then, is not only to have an internal moral compass, but also the means of correcting character flaws. Shame lets the soldier detect and correct moral wrongdoing.

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65 Within the military, a salute is reserved for a commissioned officer.
66 The Analects uses 耻 (chǐ), The Mengzi uses 羞 (xiū), and the Xunzi uses 辱 (rǔ).
The NCO, being of superior moral quality and thus respecting the soldier,\(^\text{69}\) wants to educate the soldier (a la the teacher-student relationship). The NCO then incites the soldier’s shame, letting the soldier know of some perceived ethical deficiency through the appropriate \(li\). Having perceived this fault, the reflective soldier is able to correct this flaw and thus not make the same mistake again. We thus see how shame leads to an improvement in the soldier’s moral position. Because of the NCO’s \(li\), the soldier’s own endowment of \(li\) has also increased. However, Cua notes, “Mengzi wisely connects shame with righteousness, rather than with \(li\), for fundamentally right conduct in a particular situation cannot always be determined by compliance with formal rules of proper behavior.”\(^\text{70}\)

A little more thought serves to illuminate this issue. Every situation brings with it its moral nuances, and to which the appropriate \(li\) changes with respect to. We must admit that the \(li\) for when the NCO is a sergeant and when she is a warrant officer is different.\(^\text{71}\) Moreover, the \(li\) differs according to the time of day – a ‘good morning ma’am!’ performed in the evening would seem odd at best. From this example, we can infer that there are countless variables upon which the correct \(li\) is determined. Building on the work of Arthur Murphy and Stuart Hampshire, Cua formalizes and examines the problem of infinite \(li\):

“The doctrine is both theoretically and practically futile. Firstly, the complexity of specific situations is such that no list of exceptions, drawn up in advance, will actually cover all morally questionable cases. Secondly, more fundamentally, no reference to rules as directives can

\(^{69}\)See section 1.4 on the reciprocity of respect.


\(^{71}\)Sergeants and warrant officers are different ranks of non-commissioned officers.
answer questions such as these: When ought such exceptions be made? Who’s to judge? And how is he or she to judge? Thirdly, the doctrine implausibly assumes that situations come with ready labels for identification or classification. Were this view acceptable, all practical problems would be conclusively soluble theoretical problems; …. The crux is in the labeling, or the decision depends on how we see the situation. Lastly, learning the doctrine as part of moral education requires a highly sophisticated, intellectual ability. It seems that any positive social morality, as contrasted with a critical morality, exists, for men and women of ordinary intelligence.”

Even though Confucian -li are considered norms of correct action, we must not forget that they are just social norms that have been inherited from past moral worthies. Confucian ethics has no objective source of correct action. Correct action, then, depends on the society an individual finds herself in. Righteousness can be seen as the socially sensitive virtue that allows for subjective correct action. The soldier’s task in stage two is thus to bridge the logical gap between shame and righteousness as much as possible.

Confucian society can be defined as the totality of interpersonal relationships within a self-contained system. Let us now analyze the simplest form of society – a single dyadic relationship. Let us return to the example of the soldier and the NCO. Assume the NCO is a sergeant. When the soldier performs the wrong -li, the sergeant corrects the soldier, thus invoking the soldier’s shame. The soldier’s shame makes her want to correct herself. The sergeant proceeds to educate the soldier in the right -li to perform in this circumstance – both explaining as well as demonstrating. The soldier reflects on the taught -li, and comes to the conclusion that it accords with virtue without under or

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overstepping the bounds of propriety. The soldier then puts this \( li \) into practice, and it would be completely righteous with respect to our simple, two-person society. This exactly conveys the meaning of the passage, “If a gentleman learns widely in culture, but limits it by propriety, he will surely manage not to overstep its proper boundary.”

(Analects 6:27)

Let us now expand our simple society to include a warrant officer. The soldier, having been taught the proper \( li \) when meeting an NCO, performs the taught \( li \) on the warrant officer, presuming that all NCO greetings are identical. Realize that the soldier does not know the correct \( li \), because this situation is novel to her. Of course, the \( li \) is incorrect again because the taught \( li \) was only correct if the soldier was greeting a sergeant. The warrant officer goes through the same educative process with the soldier, and the soldier in turn improves his endowment of \( li \) through shame.

Now, we see how Confucian value judgments are conferred by societal interactions. The point of the above example is not to show how shame leads to an improvement in \( li \), but how shame is the mechanism whereby society, as the arbiter of its own norms, is able to morally communicate with the individual’s heartmind. Through shame, the individual likewise detects right and wrong within the particular society, and conducts herself in accordance with righteousness.

Realize also that the mechanism of shame is equivalent to an internal moral force that allows the soldier to perform the \( li \) according to its moral requirement. Once the soldier learns the \( li \) for a particular situation, she is said to have increased her endowment of righteousness (through shame). In this sense, the soldier’s endowment of righteousness
is a special variable. It determines how close the soldier comes to performing the exactly correct \( li \). Before our simple society came to include the warrant officer, the soldier’s \( li \) was perfect. Our example first of all shows how shame can be used to improve righteousness. The other implication is the constant need to put oneself in shameful situations. The correct \( li \) to perform in a given situation depends on the soldier’s past experience, and knowledge as to whether the \( li \) is the correct one to perform in that situation.

Another important point is that even though the soldier did not perform the right \( li \) when greeting the warrant officer, the soldier was not completely wrong. The soldier performed what she believed to be the proper \( li \), due to the increase in righteousness caused by her interaction with the sergeant. Since the soldier’s endowment of righteousness has already increased as a result of the first interaction, the accuracy of her \( li \) increases. In terms of the dào space, an increase in righteousness decreases the moral distance between the soldier and the moral requirement. Specifically, a soldier who has met the moral requirements of the situation only has the possibility of performing the right \( li \). Whether she ultimately performs the right \( li \) depends on her endowment of righteousness.

We have now witnessed the value of \( li \) experimentation in stage two. The success of stage two however, falls on the soldier’s performance of moral reflection. The role of moral reflection is to extract the virtue from the prescribed \( li \). Returning to our NCO example, the sergeant renders shame and teaches the soldier the correct \( li \) to perform. What the sergeant cannot do is help the soldier extract the virtues necessary for an improvement in moral position.
“The Master said, If they are not eager, I don’t expound. If they are not urgent, I don’t explain. If I give out one corner and they don’t come back with three corners, then I don’t go on.”

(*Analects* 7:8)

Confucius implies the importance of reflection in moral growth. Soldiers are expected to do the bulk of the moral work through reflection, once they have reached stage two.

### 2.3 – Experimentation and Harmony

In the previous two sections, I have shown how moral cultivation is essentially learning to extend one’s innate feelings to other situations.

“People all have things that they will not bear. To extend this reaction to that which they will bear is benevolence. People all have things that they will not do. To extend this reaction to that which they will do is righteousness.” (*Mengzi* 7B31)

This passage comes into direct contention with another passage:

“One must work at it, but do not assume success. One should not forget the heart, but neither should one ‘help’ it grow. Do not be like the man from Song. Among the people of the state of Song there was a farmer who, concerned lest his sprouts not grow, pulled on them. Obliviously, he returned home and said to his family, ‘Today I am worn out. I helped the sprouts to grow.’ His son rushed out and looked at them. The sprouts were withered.” (*Mengzi* 2A2)
There is a certain dilemma here. On the one hand, Mengzi wants us to extend the scope of our feelings to other situations, which involves experimentation and experience. On the other hand, he does not want us to help the sprouts grow.

The key to understanding this dilemma is through the idea of harmony. In this section, we discuss the notion of individual harmony; that is intra-personal harmony between virtues. Li Chenyang states, “Nothing in the world can claim absolute superiority over everything else. Parties in a harmonious relationship are both the condition for and the constraint against one another’s growth. A harmonious relationship implies mutual complement and mutual support between the parties.”\(^{73}\)

The *Analects* states, “In the practice of *lǐ*, harmony is to be esteemed.” (*Analects* 1:12, slightly modified) This passage indicates that individual harmony is expressed in one’s actions. To further understand this passage, we return to the study of moral requirements. Using the example of the soldier who has to either apprehend his colleague or obey her commander’s orders,\(^{74}\) a soldier who is sufficiently *lǐ* and benevolent will be able to perform the correct action. But the question still remains: what if the soldier has an overabundance of *lǐ* and benevolence? The term ‘moral requirement’ might imply that endowments exceeding the requisite *lǐ* and benevolence would still result in the performance of the correct action. However, I propose that this is not the case. One could imagine the soldier performing an action that is at the same time over-*lǐ* and over-benevolent. One possible scenario would be if the soldier first assists in her colleague’s

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\(^{73}\) Li 2006, 589.

\(^{74}\) See section 1.2.
escape, then returns to her commander saying that her colleague evaded capture, and
volunteers to lead an international manhunt for her errant colleague. It would seem that
the soldier’s correct action, then, could only be performed if she has the exact endowment
of ī and benevolence.

A problem arises when we think of extension and moral progress. If moral
progress does not allow for the performance of correct action that requires less that the
agent’s endowment of virtue, then what is the point of undertaking moral cultivation?
The answer lies in individual situational harmony through righteousness.

From the previous section, we have already seen how shame provides the soldier
a mechanism for self-correction of ī. The soldier’s improved endowment of
righteousness increases the probability that she will perform the right action in a given
situation. This correct action extends to the case of a moral dilemma. As such, in the case
of an over-endowment of virtue vis-à-vis the given situation, it is righteousness that is the
ultimate arbiter of correct action. Chung-ying Cheng states:

“Righteousness is the very principle which should make a person’s conduct morally acceptable
to others and which should justify the morality of human action. In other words, it may be
suggested that righteousness is the fundamental principle of morality that confers qualities of
right and wrong on human actions and that produces a situation which intrinsically satisfies us
as moral agents.”75

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Every situation has a righteousness requirement. Dào space analysis of righteousness is unique, in the sense that over-endowment of righteousness does not lead to the wrong action. Instead, it leads to a quicker, relatively effortless performance of the correct action.

Realize also that we have just discussed Confucianism’s method of solving moral dilemmas – through constant experimentation, shame, and then the ensuing righteousness. The idea behind the Confucian solution to moral dilemmas is that the moral agent will experiment so much and so widely that she will know the appropriate plib for a whole host of situations. Rather than appealing to categorical concepts, Confucianism’s approach to moral dilemmas depends on moral praxis.

Readers may recognize that of the four cardinal virtues, I have detailed only three (compassion, shame, and respect). There is a reason for the exclusion of approval and disapproval until now, and that is because I want to offer a novel interpretation of the Mengzian sprouts/cardinal virtues.

Revisiting passage 2A6, Mengzi mentions the sprouts, the cardinal virtues, and the sprout-virtue pair in a specific order. First comes the compassion/benevolence pair, then shame/righteousness, then respect/lib, and lastly approval and disapproval/wisdom. My claim is that this ordering tells us more about each individual sprout and virtue, and also paints a picture of interconnectedness and harmony between the four virtues.

Mengzi mentions the compassion/benevolence pair first because benevolence is the premier Confucian virtue – it is the virtue that undergirds all of Confucianism. Readers have been given a glimpse of how Confucianism is a deeply social philosophy. Moral actions never take place in a vacuum, that is, all moral action and cultivation must be
understood within its social context. We have seen how compassion is the emotion that allows an individual to morally couple herself with another individual, and to join the two as a discrete moral unit. Compassion is thus the means by which individuals are able to forge meaningful relationships, and consequently create a Confucian society. Without compassion and benevolence, individuals would not be able to interact with each other on a moral level, and mutual shaping cannot take place.

When individuals are morally linked, respect and shame take center stage. We have seen how an improved sense of respect and shame lead to the improved performance of ANJI. A respectful individual is more receptive to emulating the morally worthy actions of role models. An individual with an acute sense of shame is able to know when she is wrong, and thus correct her wrong actions. With improved ANJI, relationships are better maintained, thus increasing the individual’s endowment of benevolence.

Notice that respect and shame are essentially two sides of the same coin – the coin being benevolence. I believe this picture is what Mengzi means by the feeling of approval and disapproval. Through respect, one approves of ANJI and benevolence. Through shame, one disapproves of wrong actions, improves ANJI, and increases one’s endowment of benevolence. Approval and disapproval then, is an overarching emotion that summarizes one’s moral growth. In terms of the dào space, one’s endowment of wisdom (the virtue associated with approval and disapproval) serves as a convenient measure of an individual’s overall morality – how moral a person is. If benevolence is the virtue that underlies all of Confucianism, then wisdom can be seen as the virtue that overarches it.
2.4 – Learning, Moral Equilibrium and Practical Policies

This chapter has traced the moral evolution of the soldier from the first day of basic training to her becoming a paradigmatic person. This last section of the chapter aims to tie up any loose ends in the account provided, as well as provide a preamble for the following chapters.

When we discussed the recruit-recruit relationship in section 1.4, I portrayed the relationship as one that unequivocally promoted moral progress, however, there is the strong possibility that the relationship would actually be mutually detrimental. In this final section of chapter 2, I will begin with a discussion of moral equilibrium.

We must remember that recruits are most likely stage one moral agents, and thus have less than excellent moral configurations. The reason the buddy system was able to flourish in section 2.1 was because of the commander’s supervision and external moral force. Thus far, we have concentrated on how the commander (a morally superior agent) is able to positively affect her recruits (morally inferior agents) through the formation of relationships. However, we have to realize that a relationship between two moral agents indicates two-way, mutual moral shaping. In the recruit-commander relationship, while the commander is exerting a positive moral force on the recruit, the recruit is simultaneously exerting a negative moral force on the commander. Evidence of moral opposition in relationships can be found in the *Xunzi*.

“Now if you live alongside people who are not good, then what you hear will be trickery, deception, dishonesty, and fraud. What you see will be conduct that is dirty, arrogant, perverse,
deviant, and greedy. Moreover, you will suffer punishment and execution, and you will not even realize it is upon you. That is due to what you rub up against.” *(Xunzi 23:386-391)*

The above situation seems to be an apt description of the recalcitrant recruit’s effect on her commander. The recalcitrant recruit and the commander are exerting opposite moral forces on each other. In terms of the *dào* space, it would seem that the moral positions of the recalcitrant recruit and the commander are converging, eventually reaching moral equilibrium. *^[76]* Under this view, the benefit to society brought about by the recalcitrant recruit’s moral progress is cancelled out by the commander’s regress. In morally cultivating the recalcitrant recruit, the commander is exposing herself to the bad practices of the recalcitrant recruit.

However, I want to suggest that in the recalcitrant recruit-commander system, net moral progress can still take place. I shall focus on the *Xunzi*. Xunzi’s views on learning (*學*, *xué*) are the key us how net societal moral progress can still be achieved. I will explain Xunzi’s argument using the simplest example of a society – the recalcitrant recruit-commander relationship that we have been studying for the past two chapters. I begin with the following two passages:

> “In learning, nothing is more expedient than to draw near to the right person.” *(Xunzi 1:159-160)*

> “The paradigmatic person says: Learning must never stop.” *(Xunzi 1:1)*

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*^[76]* See Appendix A, diagram 8.
We see that Xunzi places a dual emphasis on persistent self-cultivation and drawing near to the right person. I claim that these actions are in service of helping society increase its aggregate endowment of virtue. The first passage indicates that the first step in learning is to draw near to the right person. In light of the recalcitrant recruit’s bad moral configuration, we see that there is no way for her to achieve moral progress unless she comes into contact with her morally advanced commander. Of course, we have discussed above how in light of moral equilibrium, the recalcitrant recruit-commander relationship represents a kind of zero-sum game, where a society’s aggregate morality does not increase. The first clause by itself is insufficient in producing societal moral progress.

However, Xunzi introduces a second clause to learning: that learning must never stop. In section 1.4, we discussed the notion of learning, and how one’s capacity for learning is a consequence of one’s alignment of intention to the dào. Note here that the Confucian concept of learning has the connotation of being moral learning. That is, Confucian learning can only be attained through fixing of one’s intention on the dào. Unlike intention, learning is both a physical and a psychological activity. Learning can thus be thought of as the physical manifestation of one’s intention being fixed on the dào – it is what compels the stage two moral agent to experiment with lǐ, and thus to gain greater moral progress. Learning is what our shooter-runner displayed during shooting practice. It is through learning, the ensuing curiosity, and the drive to know, that extension and internal harmony can take place.

Xunzi’s second clause is in line with the need to maintain the fixation of one’s intention on the dào. Remember that external moral factors are able to influence the

77 This is an example we used in section 1.4.
alignment of one’s intention, potentially sabotaging an individual’s moral progress. Xunzi’s exhortation to learning is meant to remind us of the intention’s malleability, and that lapses in learning could have dire moral consequences (not excluding regress back to being a stage one moral agent).

“The paradigmatic person learns broadly and examines himself thrice daily.” (Xunzi 1:9-10)

In the above passage, Xunzi is stating that becoming a paradigmatic person requires one to constantly engage in learning and reflection. Through these twin engines of moral progress, the individual whose intention is aligned to the 道 is able to perform self-cultivation. She has the ability for self-locomotive moral progress in the 道 space. Not only does she morally participate in society, she is also able to reflect and draw virtue from her interactions with others, propelling her forward in the 道 space.

Through self-cultivation, the morally good individual ‘replenishes’ her moral goodness, that is, her moral position improves as a result of self-cultivation. Returning to the recalcitrant recruit-commander moral equilibrium, we see how the commander constantly increases her endowment of virtue. She is thus able to cultivate the recalcitrant recruit without incurring lasting moral harm.

Through our investigation of Xunzian learning, we are now in a position to offer practical policy advice to the military. In an earlier footnote, I mentioned the possibility of recruits whose moral configurations could not be positively influenced by the commanders. First of all, these recruits should not be allowed to graduate from basic training. It goes without saying that, being unable to receive positive moral influence from the commanders, these recruits are not able to progress to stage two. However, I
propose a more drastic policy with regards to these evil recruits – that they be expelled from the organization after failing to graduate. This policy proposal is based on the idea of moral equilibrium. Not only are these recruits draining moral resources from their commanders, they are also moral hindrances to the other recruits’ moral growth. Through the recruit-recruit relationship, these evil recruits will be a negative influence on the other recruits. It is indeed unfortunate that such recruits are unable to be morally shaped. However, if the organization is to improve morally as a whole, there is no room for such ‘moral parasites.’

In our earlier discussions, we put off a discussion of filial piety. Confucianism is famous for its adherence to filial piety. Indeed, Mengzi even lists the father-child relationship first, indicating the primacy of the family in terms of the relationship hierarchy. It cannot be denied that most, if not all, soldiers have links to the outside world through their biological families. As of December 31st, 2014, the Defense Manpower Data Center reports that the Department of Defense employs about 1.3 million military personnel, who have a total of 1.8 million dependents. Now, these dependents certainly stand in close relation to the soldiers themselves, as they are financially dependent on the soldiers for their livelihoods.

These close relationships could serve as the vehicles of a wider societal moralizing effect. As soldiers experience moral progress, their family members will certainly experience a positive external force. This effect can be described as a military-initiated moral ‘ripple effect’ that spreads Confucian morality through the whole of society.

78 https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports.jsp
We have seen how the controlled environment of the military allows for the effective moral reshaping of a soldier. However, we must also remember that the military is not completely removed from wider society. Soldiers have relationships in the wider world, and a moralized military could serve as the catalyst for a wider societal change. This is particularly important when it comes to the decision to go to war, as a joint civilian-military body often makes the decision. The importance of this moral evangelism will be highlighted in the next chapter, where I attempt to answer the question, “When is it right to go to war?”

Chapter 3: Fight or Flight?

Confucianism, *Jus Ad Bellum*, and Everything in Between

“Although a soldier by profession, I have never felt any sort of fondness for war, and I have never advocated it, except as a means of peace.” – Ulysses S. Grant

3.1 - Introduction
Just War Theory (JWT) is the most renowned branch of academia that deals with the notion of justice in all aspects of war. Within JWT, *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*\(^{79}\) have received the most scholarly attention due to their direct implications on individual and societal morality. The conduct of a war is often judged by its cost in terms of dollars and coffins. It should come as no surprise that the morality guiding such an expensive undertaking receives intense scrutiny.

Borne of the changing military-ethical realities of the Vietnam War era, one criticism of JWT is its exceedingly Western Liberal nature. Within the JWT tradition, concepts such as justice and right are overwhelmingly discussed in terms of rules and laws. While such a formulation of JWT might address some moral problems, the reality of modern war is such that its proper and righteous conduct cannot be reduced to a finite set of rules and laws that govern soldierly action. Politicians and generals deciding whether to send their own soldiers towards mortal danger must have the capability to properly detect and react to the moral subtleties embedded in the continuously evolving antebellum situation.

From chapters 1 and 2, we have already witnessed how Confucianism bases correct ethical action not on a set of principles, but on moral cultivation and perceptiveness. As a result, Confucian ethics affords the individual a viable method of resolving moral dilemmas.\(^{80}\) We shall see in this chapter how it helps the individual decide whether to go to war, based on what James Pattison terms individual-centric *jus ad bellum*.

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\(^{79}\) (Latin) *Jus ad bellum* translates to ‘right to war’, and deals with issues pertaining a nation or military’s decision to wage war. *Jus in bello* translates to ‘right during war’, and deals with the conduct of belligerents during the combat phase.

\(^{80}\) As seen in section 2.3.
Unfortunately, war is an activity that pits groups of individuals, rather than mere individuals, against each other. In constructing a Confucian conception of JWT, we have to investigate the moral behavior of groups, as well as the relationships between these groups. As such, our discussion in the previous chapters is inadequate. The primary aim of this chapter, then, is to construct and assess a Confucian conception of *jus ad bellum* at the group level.

Here, I acknowledge that the term ‘*jus ad bellum*’ is certainly not Confucian in etymology. However, I feel that a fair analysis of this topic must acknowledge the body of work already present, and show how a classical Confucian reinterpretation of *jus ad bellum* issues adds sufficient value to contemporary Western JWT scholarship. I begin the chapter with a brief outline and appraisal of current issues in JWT – especially with regards to *jus ad bellum*. I then use the perceived limitations of JWT as a means to begin discussion of a Confucian *jus ad bellum*, showing how Confucianism is able to address these shortcomings.

In presenting my view, I will draw heavily on the work of Sungmoon Kim and Justin Tiwald – both of whom provide in-depth, yet ultimately insufficient accounts of Confucian *jus ad bellum*. My method of investigation will thus be to reconstruct and fuse their accounts, while simultaneously attempting to address the deficiencies in their arguments. As a preamble for chapter 4, I conclude by arguing for the importance of what I term ‘comprehensive *jus ad bellum*’ – consideration of *in bello* and *post bellum* issues in the formulation of *jus ad bellum*. 
Section 3.2 – Explaining Western Just War Theory

For almost a millennium, Just War Theory (JWT) has been the dominant system of ethics that governs just action concerning war.\textsuperscript{81} Igor Primoratz provides a succinct statement on why JWT has received so much scholarly attention:

“Together with many philosophers, moral theologians, and legal scholars, I believe the best approach to the ethics of war is that of just war theory. None of the alternatives seems very attractive. Realism is quite implausible (and, more often than not, self-serving too). The utilitarian approach to the ethics of war, just as to other areas of moral concern, is compromised by an array of unacceptable implications. Pacifism is a noble philosophy, but one that proves dangerously otherworldly in the face of utterly unrestrained oppression or aggression.”\textsuperscript{82}

Traditionally, JWT dealt exclusively with \textit{ad bellum} and \textit{in bello} issues. Recent scholarship in JWT highlights the importance of two additional questions – whether actions after the war is just (\textit{jus post bellum}), and whether the war was ended justly (\textit{jus ex bello}). Accordingly, I structure my chapters around these broad issues. The question this chapter is trying to answer, however, is very much under the jurisdiction of \textit{jus ad bellum}, and will thus be motivated by a preliminary discussion of JWT’s \textit{jus ad bellum} conditions.

The giant in the field of JWT is Michael Walzer, who proposes a collectivist approach. What this means is that individuals are judged “according to their membership

\textsuperscript{81} Most modern scholars attribute the birth of JWT to Thomas Aquinas and his \textit{Summa Theologica}.
of the armed forces…. Those who fight for an institution that is pursuing a just war are
deemed as acting permissibly.” Rightness in war can be determined and gained by
passing certain criteria. Karsten Struhl states, “The main criterion for jus ad bellum is that
the war be fought for a just cause; which is usually taken to mean that it be a war of self-
defence against aggression. Other criteria of jus ad bellum are that war must be a last
resort, that it must be waged by a legitimate authority and for the right motive, and that
the good to be achieved must outweigh the probable harm of going to war.”

Walzer’s account is problematic as individual morality is deferred to that of the
collective. A soldier’s actions are deemed moral purely on the basis of the collective’s
perceived morality. Under Walzer’s account, a soldier would not be held morally
accountable if she carried out an order to massacre enemy POWs, claiming that she was
merely acting in accordance with the moral imperative handed to her by higher
authorities. The reasoning behind such a view is that the collective leadership is the body
that makes the decision to go to war. Realize that the leadership is the one that assumes
moral responsibility for bringing a collective into war, as well as being the source of all
military orders concerning the conduct of war. Such a view allows soldiers to adopt what
Andrew Sola terms “invincible ignorance” in their ad bellum and in bello conduct,
deferring all moral responsibility for individual action to the collective leadership.

While logically consistent, Walzer’s view is problematic for two reasons. Firstly,
there exists dissonance between a commander’s orders and a soldier’s actions. While the
commander’s orders might be morally sound, soldiers are the ones who translate those

85 Sola 48.
orders into tangible actions. As such, the soldier’s actions might not be completely in line with the commander’s moral intentions. For example, a soldier who is ordered to ‘make safe the road for food to be delivered to the village’ could interpret the order as ‘mercilessly slaughter all non-friendly elements on the road.’

Secondly, Walzer’s view would render our discussions on individual morality largely moot. We have already seen the moral potential of each and every individual under Confucianism, and Walzer’s brand of JWT fails to draw on this veritable wellspring of morality.

Here, I want to formally distinguish the individual and the collective as metaphysical objects. The collective is a full description of its constituent individuals and the relationships between each individual (if the relationship exists). Though the collective contains the individual, I want to be explicit in stating that the collective can be treated as an independent, discrete object. A good example would be the soldier and her unit.

Note that by so defining the collective, there are many levels of collectives that can be discerned within a single political entity. For example, within the United States Armed Forces, collectives range from the squad (comprising ten soldiers) to the service (Army, Navy, Air Force, etc., each comprising thousands of soldiers). More importantly, it allows for analysis of different kinds of war (revolutionary, civil, etc.). I do admit that analysis of collectives can get messy, especially since they do not technically need to be a defined social or political body. As such, extra care will be taken when describing collectives, as well as when locating them within political and social bodies.
Noam Zohar, accordingly, treats the individual and the collective as two separate moral entities, and motivates the individual-collectivist argument:

“Where the spectre of an ‘enemy collective’ has completely displaced attention to individual persons, then indeed justification appears to be required only for the state act of going to war without further (moral) regard for the means and the cost in human lives.”  

Under Walzer’s view then, an individual soldier participating in Operation Enduring Freedom could justifiably kill an innocent non-combatant based on the justice of the collective’s (the United Nations Coalition’s) decision to go to war. Zohar’s view highlights the need for distinct *ad bellum* justifications for both the individual and the collective. Spearheaded by Pattison, recent work in JWT addresses the individual-collective moral gap by allowing for increased individual moral participation. In what Pattison terms the Individual-Centric Approach, which asserts “the justifiability of an individual’s contribution to the war, rather than the justifiability of the war more generally, determines the moral acceptability of their participation.”  

Under this view, soldiers continuously assess their roles in the war effort and determine whether the role is in line with jus in bello.

Even though JWT is an exclusively Western Liberal conception, there is no reason why Confucianism cannot contribute to this active debate. In response to Primoratz’s earlier statement, I want to show how Confucianism is able to provide a viable alternative to Western JWT. As a starting point, note that Pattison’s move to

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increase the moral responsibility of the individual soldier is in line with Confucian thought. Because the Individual-Centric Approach still relies on set principles to guide the soldier’s actions, there still remains room for ambiguity and error in what a soldier should do under specific circumstances. As implied from chapter 1, Confucianism allows for the possibility of the perfectly moral war (where every soldier’s every action is perfectly moral), or at least a military that strives toward waging a perfectly moral war. Individual moral action depends on the soldier meeting the moral requirement of the situation. Even if she does not meet the moral requirement, the soldier will learn from the failure and thus improve her moral position on the dao space.

3.3 – Confucian International Moral Hierarchy and Mengzi’s (Counter) Revolution

Having likened Confucianism to individual-centric JWT, it is tempting to conclude our discussion by stating that every individual will either approve of or object to the war effort, with the collective remaining in harmony. While this is true, a few problems still remain. First, recall that the collective cannot be thought of simply as a set of individuals, and that the collective, as a concept, is distinct from the individual. Since it is usually the collective’s leadership that decides if the collective goes to war, how does the collective decipher its jus ad bellum? Moreover, Confucian jus ad bellum requires a baseline of moral maturity to be properly enacted. In this section, I aim to show how this problem can be solved through an analysis of the collective.

Due to its sophisticated political philosophy, I will largely be utilizing the Mengzi in my analysis. Mengzi differentiates between the ideal and non-ideal international
political situation. The ideal political situation is “a harmonious political order without state boundaries and governed by a sage by means of virtue, without any coercive power at all.” This ideal polity is established when a sage attains rule over a certain territory, and uses her moral brilliance to inspire the people of the world into accepting her rule – thereby establishing world peace. The *Analects* states:

“All Kangzi asked Confucius about government, saying, If I kill those who have not the dào in order to uphold those who have the dao, how would that be? Confucius replied, You are there to govern; what use have you for killing? If you desire the good, the people will be good. The virtue of the paradigmatic person is the wind; the virtue of the little people is the grass. The wind on the grass will surely bend it.” (*Analects* 12:19, slightly modified)

Mengzi elaborates and expands on Confucius’ idea, stating that the ideal sage-ruler can attain said moral brilliance through self-cultivation. Moreover, that the reach of her moral influence is the whole world.

“If one loves others and they are not affectionate to oneself, one should examine one’s own benevolence. If one rules over others and they are unruly, one should examine one’s own wisdom. If one treats others with li and they do not respond, one should examine one’s own respect. If in one’s actions one does not succeed, one should always seek for it in oneself. If one is proper oneself, the world will turn to her.” (*Mengzi* 4A4, slightly modified)

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88 Daniel Bell, “Just War and Confucianism: Implications for the Contemporary World” 24.
It is indeed troubling then, that in final passage of the *Mengzi* (7B38), Mengzi claims that epochs of sage-rule come about only once every five hundred years. That is, at least historically, ideal Mengzian government cannot be perpetual. Mengzi seems to be espousing a self-defeatist view of international moral harmony – that his own view can only be enacted once every half-millennium.

Our contemporary world is also, at best, less than ideal. To us, Mengzi’s ideal polity might seem like nothing more than utopian daydreams. In order for Mengzian political philosophy to be relevant, then, we have to look at the portion of the *Mengzi* that details the inter-sage-rule periods. Here, we turn to the non-ideal Mengzian political philosophy, and what Kim Sungmoon terms the “Confucian international moral hierarchy” (CIMH). Kim further states, “What distinguishes Confucian moralpolitik from utopian moralism is its pragmatic remedy to the excessive moral zeal to realize a lofty moral ideal here and now without a serious consideration of actual social, economic and political condition of such a possibility.” Indeed, despite Mengzi’s apparent belief in the ideal of sage-rule, he is seen seeking audiences with local rulers; advising them on practical policies to be undertaken during the Warring States period.

We begin with Kim’s work, noting that he discusses jus ad bellum at the state level. For now, we will discuss the state as a fixed level of collectives. Much like the Warring States period, our non-ideal world consists of states that differ along the lines of economic and political power. If left to the dictates of amoral realpolitik, the powerful states would likely subjugate the weaker states to their political influence. Mengzi’s theory of international relations places a high value on the political self-determination of

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89 Kim 35.
90 Kim 37-38.
all states, whether strong or weak. Thus, Mengzi proposes the use of Confucian morality, as expressed through morally proper relationships between states, as the arbiter of international relations.

“King Xuan of Qi asked, ‘Is there a dào for interacting with neighboring states?’

Mengzi replied, ‘There is. Only the benevolent are able to serve the small with the big…. Only the wise are able to serve the large with the small. Those who serve the small with the big delight in Heaven; those who serve the big with the small are in awe of Heaven. Those who delight in Heaven care for the world; those who are in awe of Heaven care for their state.’”
(Mengzi 1B3, slightly modified)

It is important to note that Mengzi “subjects each state’s otherwise narrow political interest to the Confucian moral perspectives of benevolence and wisdom and ultimately to his overarching moral ideal of international harmony.”\(^{91}\) Powerful states that serve the weaker ones can be seen as being benevolent because are taking care of the less powerful states. Less powerful states that serve the powerful ones are wise because they maintain their political self-determination through strategic alignment. A good example could be the relationship between Qing Dynasty China (the powerful state) and Joseon Korea (the less powerful state). Remember that relationships are formed and maintained through lì. Joseon Korea was paid regular tribute to Qing China, in exchange for political sovereignty, cultural influence, and military protection.

\(^{91}\) Kim 41, slightly modified.
Here, it is important to note that ‘hierarchy’ in the CIMH refers not to a moral hierarchy *per se*. That is, in a harmonious CIMH, there are no morally superior or inferior states – all states are treated as moral equals as long as they treat each other with benevolence or wisdom. What Kim means when he uses ‘hierarchy’ in CIMH is that harmony and moral equality can exist despite a political hierarchy of powerful and weak states. Kim states, “the mutual submission (in terms of care) and the smaller state (in terms of service) to each other implies not a relationship of domination and subservience but moral hierarchy that is mutually fitting in its political implications.”

Membership into the CIMH is predicated on the states (or at least the state leaders) adherence to the *dào*. This adherence is indicated by the maintenance of said moral relationships and the performance of the appropriate *lǐ*, as shown by the example of Qing China and Joseon Korea.

Mengzi’s point in requiring states to maintain said moral relationships and to perform the appropriate *lǐ* (a la Qing China and Joseon Korea) is not so much for mere political self-determination, but to ensure these states’ adherence to the *dào*. Remember that Mengzi’s ultimate goal is not the perpetual existence of the CIMH, but using the CIMH as a means to achieve world harmony. The CIMH then, is not meant to be a static entity, but one that is continually achieving aggregate moral progress.

A problem arises when a member state of the CIMH is seen to not adhere to the *dào*.

Here, we begin our discussion on Confucian *jus ad bellum* at the state level. Kim cites an example from the *Mengzi*, and provides the necessary backdrop.

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92 Kim 42-43.
“Shen Tong, a minister of Qi, asked Mengzi whether it would be justified for Qi to attack Yan, a state of almost equal size and strength. At the time, Yan was in the middle of great political turmoil. The Prime Minister Zizhi, through rather clever manipulation, took the throne from Lord Zikuai, the then ruler of Yan, and was wielding power arbitrarily, eventually driving the entire population that generally resisted the Zizhi government to civil war.”

Due to the non-benevolent rule of Prime Minister Zizhi, the state of Yan could no longer be considered to adhere to the dào. A state in Yan’s circumstance could potentially jeopardize the relative harmony and moral progress of the CIMH, thus bringing the world political order further away from Mengzi’s ideal of global harmony. Using this line of reasoning, it seems that Qi is justified in invading Yan, in order to restore political order by installing a government that adheres to the dào. Indeed, Qi does invade Yan – to the disapproval of Mengzi. It thus seems that Confucian jus ad bellum is predicated on more than a state’s non-adherence to the dào. The following passage provides us with a clue:

“Shen Tong asked whether it was permissible to invade Yan. I answered, ‘It is.’ They then invaded it. If they had asked me, ‘Who may invade it?’ then I would have answered, ‘One who is the agent of Heaven may invade it.’ Suppose there is someone who murders another. Someone asks, ‘May this person be executed?’ then I would answer, ‘The Chief Warden may execute him.’ In the current case, why would I encourage a Yan to invade a Yan?” (Mengzi 2B8)

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93 Kim 46.
Even under seemingly transparent circumstances of an evil state, Mengzi strictly imposes the need for the agent of Heaven (天吏, tiānlì) to order a punitive expedition. A punitive expedition (征, zhēng) is a military conflict that occurs between a superior and an inferior within the CIMH. Recall, though, that states are moral equals in the CIMH. The role of the agent of Heaven, then, is to establish moral superiority within the CIMH, which allows the order for a punitive expedition to come from a place of moral authority. However, the agent of Heaven’s moral authority stems from her possession of the Mandate of Heaven (天命, tiānmìng) – something that only Heaven itself is able to confer on an individual. Given the ethereal nature of Heaven⁹⁴ and its operations, how can one identify its agent?

Mengzi’s solution involves the radical substitution of the Mandate of Heaven with the welfare of the people of Yan.

“The people of Qi invaded Yan and were victorious. King Xuan of Qi asked, ‘Some say that We should not annex Yan; others say that We should annex it. For a state of ten thousand chariots to have invaded another state of ten thousand chariots, and to have taken it in fifty days, is something that human power alone could not have achieved. So if We do not annex it, there will certainly be some Heavenly retribution. How would it be if I were to annex it?’

Mengzi said, ‘If annexing it would please the people of Yan, then annex it…. For a state of ten thousand chariots to invade another state of ten thousand chariots, whose people then welcome that King with baskets of food and pots of soup – what other leader could they have? But if they flee You like fire, then they will simply reject You.’” (Mengzi 1B10, slightly modified)

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⁹⁴ See discussion of Heaven with regards to the heartmind in section 1.2.
In 2B8, Mengzi conditions the legitimacy of Qi’s expedition on the agent of Heaven’s dictates, while in 1B10, Mengzi states that the welfare of Yan’s people is sufficient. This argument leads Kim to state that “Mencius… elevated the moral worth of the people’s welfare to the extent that it can be practically equal to the Mandate of Heaven, particularly when it comes to the removal of a tyrant either by rebellion or by means of welcoming the liberating force.”

It is tempting to equate the Mandate of Heaven to the welfare of the affected people as Kim has done. Indeed, this view is consistent with our earlier discussions of individual morality. Because of the people’s functioning, potentially good heartminds, their reactions to the morally good invader can be viewed as an indicator of the incumbent leadership’s moral worth. Kim’s account seems to leave open the possibility of a sort of moral democracy, where the people are able to essentially choose their leader based on displays of approval. Using an example, I will show how this view is problematic. Consider the case of state A and state B. Being members of the CIMH, the polities of state A and B are adherent to the dào. For some reason, the people of state A feel that they would be happier under the leadership of state B’s ruler. The people of state A then petition state B’s leader to invade state A. Regarding their petition as the will of Heaven, state B invades state A.

Was state B acting in accord with Confucian jus ad bellum? In “practically equating” the welfare of the people (as expressed by their happiness) to the Mandate of Heaven, Kim’s view endorses state B’s actions. This situation is problematic because

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95 Kim 52.
96 Kim 52.
state A’s leadership seems to have been punished for no good reason (Remember, both state A and state B were adherent to the dào). The crux of the problem lies with the exact role of the people with regards to the Mandate of Heaven. Are the people allowed to choose their leaders? Or is it the case that the people are merely to be consulted when a potential invader is contemplating a punitive expedition?

Unfortunately, Kim does not clearly specify the role of the people in determining jus ad bellum. Here, I want to incorporate Tiwald’s work – for two reasons. Firstly, Tiwald clearly defines the role of the people, claiming that they merely play a passive, ex post role in jus ad bellum. Secondly, Tiwald’s article is about the right of (intrastate) rebellion, instead of international politics. Exploration of Tiwald’s work thus allows us to move away from the state, and shift the focus of our discussion to the more general collective level.97

Tiwald believes that Mengzi is committed to the idea of political appointments being necessary for leadership of the particular polity, and states, “Even in times of political upheaval, Mengzi is first and foremost a proceduralist about political authority.”98 Textual evidence can be found in Mengzi 2B8 above, where only the Chief Warden, an officially appointed position, is able to execute murderers.

Using Tiwald’s addendum to Kim’s work, we see that state B does not possess Confucian jus ad bellum. Tiwald’s argument allows us to circumvent a whole new problem – what exactly is the welfare of the people with respect to the collective’s leadership? One can certainly approve of and be happy at an individual in a completely amoral context. Indeed, “It is not uncommon to love and esteem someone and yet

97 Analysis at the collective level allows us to explain intrastate phenomena such as the right of rebellion and civil war.
98 Tiwald 275.
simultaneously believe her an imperfect fit for her rank and position."\textsuperscript{99} For example, one could certainly esteem one’s parents without judging them to be good parents.

Tiwald’s tightening of \textit{jus ad bellum} conditions rules out the possibility of an immoral people expressing their belligerent tendencies under the guise of collective morality. Recall that the welfare of the people is expressed by their love and esteem for the leader. This esteem is the only tangible thing that expresses \textit{jus ad bellum} at this point. Such a view is problematic. Take the example of a barbaric society whose aim is to maximize their murder and plunder. If Tiwald’s strict \textit{jus ad bellum} is not enacted, then these barbarians could very possibly select a murderous leader who appeals to their murderous tendencies. The murderous leader would then possess the Mandate of Heaven, and her murderous exploits would be morally justified.

Under this view, it would seem that the people are afforded a diminished role in their leadership selection process. However, I would argue that it actually makes the selection process more inclusive. Tiwald states:

“No doubt the agent of Heaven has to earn the affection of the people in order to be loved and esteemed by them, but the people need not judge her a capable political authority in order for this to happen. In general, we would do better to think of the interaction between Heaven’s will and human behavior as one in which human nature – and not just human moral and political deliberation – does much of the heavy lifting. When Mengzi suggests that the people will flock to an exceptionally virtuous leader, he is not suggesting that the people make authoritative

\textsuperscript{99} Tiwald 278.
judgments about her virtues as leader, but simply that they find conditions in her state amenable and welcoming.”

The only requirement for political participation in the CIMH, then, is the possession of a heartmind. When it comes to the selection of the agent of Heaven, the people will naturally flock to the most virtuous candidate; not as a result of the people’s moral and political deliberation, but because of the virtue and political track record of the candidate. The Analects describes the natural attractiveness of the virtuous candidate:

“To conduct government by virtue can be compared to the North Star: it occupies its place, and the many stars bow before it.” (Analects 2:1)

In solving one of Kim’s problems, Tiwald highlights a threat to the continued existence of the CIMH. The happiness of the people at their potential leader is an indication of that the potential leader possesses the Mandate of Heaven and thus, jus ad bellum. However, Tiwald’s argument relegates the emotions of the people to the amoral, psychosomatic level. In accordance with our discussion in chapter 1, a usurper/invader possessing benevolence would very likely evoke feelings of approval from the people. However, a non-benevolent leader could very well buy off the approval of the people. Using the previous example, we see that the non-benevolent, murderous leader is able to gain power.

This mini case study underscores the fact that the affected people’s judgments regarding the usurpers/invaders are not always morally correct. More importantly, it

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100 Tiwald, 279, slightly modified.
brings to our attention a seemingly fatal deficiency in the combined Kim-Tiwald account of the CIMH. Kim states, “What qualifies all states to be legitimate members of the international community of moral hierarchy is the shared understanding and practice of morality in terms of the five relationships.” For Kim, a collective’s adherence to the dào is wholly signified by the performance of lǐ commensurate to its role within the inter-collective relationship. As overlord, the Russian Empire performed the proper lǐ of granting the Bolshevik party political self-determination and a space for political expression. As vassal, the Bolshevik party submitted to the wishes of the Russian Empire; deciding to participate in the proposed bicameral system rather than carry out its plans for violent revolution (at least until 1917).

Kim does not account for the fact that both parties in the relationship could perform these lǐ without moral consideration. Indeed, both these collectives could be said to be performing empty lǐ, devoid of benevolence and wisdom. The Russian Empire severely curtailed the power of the Duma, thus negating the political self-determination of the Bolsheviks. On the other hand, the Bolsheviks always had violent revolution in their minds, and were biding their time – waiting for the right time to strike. Kim thus offers a dào adherence condition that is too lenient, resulting in a loss of robustness for the Kim-Tiwald CIMH.

Though Kim does not provide any direct solution to his lenient dào adherence condition, he does offer an ex post method of correction in such a case of ‘false punitive expeditions’ (such as in the case of the Bolshevik Revolution). Realize that thus far, we have only discussed punitive expeditions in terms of unilateral, inter-collective actions. In the initial considerations of jus ad bellum, Kim states:

101 Kim, 45-46.
“Other collectives must refrain from or can even be indifferent to the war between the intervening and the intervened collectives, however suspicious the ulterior political motif of the intervening collective is. It is because… they have no right to punish a state of equal status in the international moral hierarchy; the intervening state is morally justified if the intervention is welcomed enthusiastically by the local people at least initially, because this initial and enthusiastic support creates the moral equivalent of the Mandate of Heaven.” 102

Kim’s view in this passage is consistent with our investigation thus far. Now, given that the intervening collective turns out to be non-benevolent, Kim adds another stipulation:

“However, if the welcome turns out to be only an immediate enthusiasm and not long-term and, more importantly if the intervention subjects the conquered people to more tyranny instead of liberating them, a punitive expedition now sanctioned multilaterally by (the majority of) other (de facto sovereign independent) collectives is not only justifiable but also necessary.” 103

Our simplistic analysis of the CIMH as a two-collective system may have obfuscated the fact that anything resembling the CIMH in the real world would likely constitute more than two collectives.

3.5 – A Role for the United Nations?

The Kim-Tiwald CIMH is in line with the Mengzian idea of practical applicability without compromising the goals of world harmony. Notice that the CIMH only works in

102 Kim, 51 slightly modified.
103 Kim 52, slightly modified.
times of aggregate moral good – notice that these multilateral actions can also serve to
deteriorate the delicate harmony of the CIMH if the multilateral states are not benevolent.

Realize that Kim’s multilateral expedition would be *necessary* under the CIMH. His statement is problematic for two reasons. The first of which is that he is trying to
fight fire with fire. We have just seen how members of the CIMH need only perform the
proper *li* to be considered members. Given that the members’ moral worth is
questionable, I doubt that a multilateral invasion of the already war-torn territory would
be the best idea.

The second has to do with contemporary international relations. Given that Kim
attributed such a strong mandate to the later, multilateral force, it suggests that there are
certain moral grounds for the United Nations to retain a larger peacekeeping force, and to
be able to sanction punitive expeditions. Though merely a thought experiment, a more
powerful United Nations could possibly enact the Kim-Tiwald CIMH, as states would not
want to incur the U.N.’s multilateral wrath.
“Now, if it is to get safely through this perpetual conflict with the unexpected, two qualities are indispensable: in the first place an understanding which, even in the midst of this intense obscurity, is not without some traces of inner light, which lead to the truth, and then the courage to follow this faint light.” – Carl von Clausewitz

4.1 – Why Fight?

In an ideal world, a sage would unite the world under his rule without fighting. However, we established at the end of the previous chapter that in a non-ideal world, some form of military conflict would likely take place – even if a benevolent collective acted in accordance with Confucian *jus ad bellum*. In a non-ideal world then, an invading force would have to deal with two general groups of people in a punitive expedition – enemy combatants and affected non-combatants.

We thus see the twofold task of the invading force. The first is to subdue the enemy forces; the second is to keep the affected non-combatants happy. From the previous chapter, we see that the invading force has to keep the non-combatants happy in order to retain the Mandate of Heaven. However, our discussion of Confucian JWT has not yet discussed how invading soldiers are to treat enemy combatants. Readers might suspect that proper treatment of combatants involves the invading soldiers exercising a modicum of compassion and benevolence. But how do you treat someone who is actively
trying to kill you with any sort of compassion? Does Confucian JWT even call for the benevolent treatment of enemy combatants?

I use these questions as motivation, and begin this chapter with a careful treatment of combat issues in Confucian JWT. I propose using the Confucian Golden Rule. I then proceed with an investigation of the invading soldiers. Specifically, I tackle how these soldiers are elicit courage in the face of extreme, wartime conditions, and how they can deal with the fear of death and death of their comrades.

4.2 – The Confucian Golden Rule

Do to others, as you would have them do to you. Jesus’ saying, as recorded by the prophet Luke, is the most renowned ethical maxim in Western thought. Known as the golden rule, this concept is also present in Confucianism, albeit in its negative formulation.

“Zhong Gong asked about benevolence. The Master said, He leaves the gate as though he were meeting an important visitor, he uses the people as though he were assisting at a great sacrifice. What he himself does not want, let him not do it to others. In the state he will have no resentment, in the family he will have no resentment.” (Analects 12:2, slightly modified)

Many attempts have been made to generalize the golden rule, most notably by Immanuel Kant, who suggests that the golden rule is categorical and universal if one is to live a moral and free life. Taken at face value, Confucianism’s incorporation of the golden rule seems to solve our problem of dealing with enemy combatants. If we assume that the golden rule is universal, then the enemy combatants must adhere to it as well.
Given that they are attempting to kill the benevolent soldiers, the benevolent soldiers could viably attempt to kill the enemy combatants.

While the above application of the golden rule may seem sound, there is one crucial flaw in the argument. Unlike its Western conceptions, the Confucian golden rule is not universal. The Confucian golden rule is actually steeped in the idea of community, and is governed by the concepts of loyalty (zhōng) and empathy (shù). Qingjie James Wang states that, “loyalty makes human community possible, caring makes community humane.” What we see here is actually what makes relationships reciprocal. A similar argument could be found in chapter 1 when discussing the root of compassion. The Confucian golden rule, then, is a positive, morally charged rule, and thus cannot be used to justify engaging the enemy.

The golden rule though, can definitely be applied on civilian non-combatants in order to consolidate their happiness and support. Even in this situation, though, there is the risk of inter-collective differences ruining any chance of reciprocity. For example, the United States Armed Forces failure to understand the cultural norms of the various Afghan tribes caused severe misunderstanding between these collectives.

Drawing on the discussion of righteousness in section 2.4, I want to build an argument for the universality of Confucian moral action. Such a view would allow our system to resolve the problems posed by cultural differences as shown in the paragraph above.

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104 Much scholarship has been dedicated to analyzing the concepts of loyalty and empathy within Confucianism. For a overview of historical interpretations, as well as an in-depth analysis of the golden rule, see Ivanhoe (1990).
According to Wai-yong Wong, the universality of Confucian ethics depends on one’s conception of it. She proposes four levels at which Confucian ethics can be understood.\(^\text{106}\)

1. The ultimate moral principle
2. Ethical virtues and maxims
3. Institutional moral norms
4. Customs and etiquette

When thought of in ascending order, we can think of these levels as a nested sequence of sets. To be precise, level 1 contains level 2, level 2 contains level 3, and level 3 contains level 4. What this means is that in the formulation of action in accordance with each level, the level above is necessarily invoked. For example, in forming institutional moral norms (level 3), one needs to invoke ethical virtues and maxims (level 2) that accord with the collective in which that moral norm is being formulated.

For any collective, then, we can formulate an analogous system of levels. Using a military example:

1. Benevolence
2. Respecting the hierarchy of military rank
3. Treating military superiors and inferiors accordingly
4. Saluting commissioned officers

Wong’s key insight is that moral conflicts that arise at each level can be resolved by invoking higher levels, terminating with benevolence. Using the discussion in chapters 1 and 2, this claim is easily demonstrated. If two soldiers are disputing whether to treat superiors and inferiors commensurately to their rank, they need only to appeal to their sprout of respect. Respect in turn informs these soldiers to perform the appropriate li,\textsuperscript{107} which express respect for the superiors’ relative moral excellence and the inferiors’ infinite moral potential.

However, complications arise when two collectives, each with its own distinct set of ethical virtues and maxims, meet. Continuing with the example of Operation Enduring Freedom, the United States and Afghanistan are almost literally a world apart. As such, we can see the tension that could potentially arise between individuals at levels 2, 3, and 4. A tribal warrior who lives in an isolated, egalitarian society might not see the need to respect military rank. Upon meeting a senior American commander, this tribal warrior may not salute the commander due to her disregard for military rank. This might lead to a conflict whereby the commander is displeased at the tribal warrior’s apparent lack of respect. Meanwhile, the tribal warrior is displeased at being made to pay excessive respect to who she views as merely another soldier.

Enter the heartmind – the one thing that all human beings possess. Using a Confucian view of the self, we are able to attribute compassion and benevolence to both the American commander and the tribal warrior. Now, Wong explicitly draws the link between benevolence and the golden rule.

\textsuperscript{107} Remember that respect is the sprout of li, a Mengzian cardinal virtue.
“Benevolence is a universal principle since when it is operating, the empathetic feeling it generates would ask one to put oneself into another’s shoes and consider the other’s interests, desires, and preferences impartially as if they were one’s own.”\(^{108}\)

Because the American commander and tribal warrior are able to take part in a meaningful, reciprocal relationship based on benevolence, the morally advanced commander\(^ {109}\) is able to morally cultivate the tribal warrior through the performance of \(lì\).

4.3 – Courage in the Face of Death

Let us now turn our attention to the other side, and discuss the realities facing the soldiers waging righteous war. Remember that what separates the aggressor from the defender in a righteous war is that the aggressor is the moral superior of the defender under the dictates of the CIMH and the Mandate of Heaven.

That is not to say that the defending soldiers are not subject to the same realities as those of the aggressor, or that there necessarily exists individual aggressor moral superiority over the defenders. Examination of aggressor soldiers is merely to guarantee baseline Confucian morality within the individuals in question, and the moral consequences of their engagement with battlefield realities.

This section deals with the notion of courage. Courage is often construed as a purely martial quality, the epitome of which is the soldier charging headlong towards

\(^{109}\) As a commander, she is morally advanced and thus possesses ample benevolence.
certain death, devoid of any physical indication of fear. An ethical dimension of courage is suggested by the following passage:

“The Master said, The ways of the paradigmatic person are three, and I am not capable of them. The benevolent man is never anxious, the wise man is never in doubt, the courageous man is never afraid. Dz-gung said, This is our Respected Master’s own dào!” (Analects 14:28, slightly modified)

Confucius ranks courage as one of the three most important attributes of an advanced moral agent, and courage surely warrants further investigation. Regardless of its conception, though, we can agree that possession of courage is advantageous in war. The idea of courage is intimately related to the idea of fear or cowardice. Mission success often pivots on soldiers being steeled in situations where an individual would normally feel fear. The representative scenario here is one of a firefight. In order to overcome the fear of pain or death (as a result of getting shot by the enemy) and to actually return fire, a soldier presumably has to retain a measure of courage. Now, imagine that this soldier notices that an enemy soldier is not shooting her. Moreover, this enemy soldier is a child, and is cowering behind a wall clutching a rifle while the battle rages around her. Our soldier has the enemy child soldier in her crosshairs – the question is; does our soldier pull the trigger? If our soldier does not pull the trigger, she risks the child soldier killing her. On the other hand, the child soldier is visibly incapable of and unwilling to fight.

The scenario above serves as a catalyst for our discussion of yong (勇, courage/bravery). Unlike general conceptions of courage, yong encompasses both martial and moral manifestations of courage. We turn to two passages in the Mengzi that details
two distinct gradations of courage; namely, small courage (小勇, xiaoyong) and great courage (大勇, dayong). On small courage:

“I ask Your Majesty to not be fond of small courage. Wielding a sword, angrily staring, and saying, ‘How dare he face me?!’ – this is the courage of a common fellow…. I ask Your Majesty to enlarge it.” (Mengzi 1B3)

The only passage in the Mengzi that explicitly mentions great courage is as follows:

“Forlmerly Zengzi said to his disciple Zixiang, ‘Are you fond of courage? I once heard about great courage from Confucius:

If I examine myself and am not upright, even if opposed by a man in baggy rags, I would not try to intimidate him. If I examine myself and am upright, even if it is thousands or tens of thousands of people who oppose me, I shall go forward.” (Mengzi 2A2, slightly modified)

The distinction between small courage and great courage is ethical in nature. Small courage is very similar to the martial conception of courage. Small courage is characterized by machismo and the idea of never backing down from a fight. It is concerned with the wanton preservation of honor is the face of perceived insult. One can liken small courage to drunken abandon.

Great courage involves one’s examination of herself and a self-affirmation of her inner ethical uprightness with regards to the situation. Ivanhoe states, “One of the characteristic features of great courage is that those who possess it know that they are in
the right and justified in their cause. This provides them with the motivation to confront and engage even the greatest of dangers.\textsuperscript{110} Mengzi 2A2 shows that great courage is predicated on the moral uprightness of the individual. A soldier in possession of great courage thus has a positive dao configuration and a degree of moral sensitivity. She would realize that the child soldier is probably an innocent bystander in the war, forcibly drafted to bolster troop strength without consideration of the child soldier’s capability and willingness to fight. The upright soldier, then, would not pull the trigger.

Having great courage, then, entails being an advanced moral agent capable of careful moral introspection. However, the passages above are not explicit into how exactly great courage is gained. Ivanhoe continues, “a cognitive or abstract understanding that one is in the right, by itself, seems to offer little or no motivation to act.”\textsuperscript{111} Great courage is clearly not equivalent to moral uprightness. Mere knowledge of the proper action does not grant our soldier the strength to actually perform it on the battlefield. Moral uprightness is epistemologically prior to great courage. The attainment of great courage and how to elicit it in the face of danger lies in the concept of floodlike qi (浩然之气, haoran zhiqi), and is discussed in a now familiar passage:

“Mengzi replied, ‘Your will is the commander of the qi… When your will is unified, it moves the qi. When the qi is unified, it moves your will.’

Gongsun Chou next asked, ‘May I ask wherein you excel, Master?’

Mengzi replied, ‘I understand doctrines. I am good at cultivating my floodlike qi.’

Gongsun Chou continued, ‘May I ask what is meant by ‘floodlike qi’?’


Mengzi replied, ‘It is difficult to explain. It is a qi that is supremely great and supremely unyielding. If one cultivates it with uprightness and does not harm it, it will fill up the space between Heaven and Earth. It is a qi that harmonizes with righteousness and the Way. Without these, it starves. It is produced by accumulated righteousness. It cannot be obtained by a seizure of righteousness. If some of one’s actions leave one’s heart unsatisfied, it will starve.’” (Mengzi 2A2)

It should now be clear that floodlike qi is obtained through the alignment of the zhi towards the dao, and the subsequent self-motivated improvement of one’s dao configuration. A direct link can be drawn to the first chapter, whence we realize that a junzi has floodlike qi.

Though we can be fairly certain that our soldier’s zhi is aligned to the dao, she is not necessarily a junzi. Simultaneously, the attainment of floodlike qi does not require one to be a full-fledged junzi, only that one’s qi be unified. What exactly is the unification of qi? Ivanhoe offers some insight into the matter:

“Spiritual energy (qi), the motivational force of moral courage, is cultivated by the regular and repeated performance of right moral courage. An inner strengthening through the repeated intentional performance of explicitly ethical, often political, actions builds up and fortifies one’s courage.”112

Through the continued, self-motivated practice of lǐ, one attains floodlike qi. It is not difficult to sketch a rough psychological picture of this process. Upon the successful completion of an ethical action, one experiences moral satisfaction. This satisfaction in

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turn reaffirms one’s conviction to the performance of said ethical action, and can even motivate the extension of the action to other contexts. One’s dao configuration is thus improved, through the strengthening of the alignment of the zhi. One experiences a constant moral rejuvenation through the habitual practice of an ethical action, which allows one to tackle increasingly challenging moral problems.

Now, imagine a different scenario where our soldier is resting with her squad mates. Suddenly, a grenade is lobbed right into the middle of their resting area. Our soldier is again presented with two options. She could attempt to find the nearest form of cover, which would mean almost certain death for her whole squad, or she could use her body to cover the grenade, thereby minimizing loss of life and saving the rest of her squad. This scenario situates the soldier face to face with death, as she is forced to choose between her own mortality and the moral good.

This scenario is meant to show that “the highest form of moral courage is best embodied in a person who risks his/her life for what is right.”

Section 4.4 – Experiential Learning: Dealing with Pain and Death

In chapter 1, I claim that a soldier cannot become a paradigmatic person unless she receives some degree of experiential learning. I will explicate that view in this section through dealing with pain and death.

I bifurcate pain into two separate concepts – physical and emotional pain. The difference is that physical pain is more of a sensation than an emotion. In the language of

the heartmind, pain is a sensation felt by the body, and can be considered an external force that stimulates the heartmind. Conversely, emotional pain is a product of the heartmind, often evoked when experiencing loss, such as when a soldier loses a platoon mate to enemy fire. Note here that one’s experience of physical pain need not evoke emotional pain, though there are certainly cases where it does. For example, when the enemy shoots a soldier, she feels physical pain, which can lead to the emotion of anger.

I begin with a discussion of physical pain. Generally, physical pain can be likened to discomfort. My claim is that physical pain is an important tool in Confucian self-cultivation.

“Hence, when Heaven is about to bestow a great responsibility on a particular person, it will always first subject one’s heartmind and resolution to bitterness, belabor one’s muscles and bones, starve one’s body and flesh, deprive one’s person, and thwart and bring chaos to what one does. By means of these things it perturbs one’s heartmind, toughens one’s nature, and provides those things of which one is incapable. One must often make mistakes, and only then can one improve. One must be troubled in one’s heart and vexed in one’s deliberations, and only then rise up…. Only in these ways do we know that we live through adversity but die through ease.” (Mengzi 6B15, slightly altered)

Physical pain can be felt during peacetime operations, during events such as tough training. However, the sort of physical pain experienced in war is unique and vital to the moral development of the soldier. Remember that a stage two soldier’s duty is to experiment widely in li.
Mengzi claims that physical pain and depravation is almost necessary to moral cultivation. The point of physical pain is that it evokes emotions more acutely. This provides an account of why individuals are receptive to pain as a means of behavioral change. Unlike the recruit, the stage two soldier is able to reflect on this pain. By experiencing physical pain, the soldier is given greater amounts of raw emotional material for her to reflect on. (Almost same thing as next paragraph)

We thus see that wartime deployment is beneficial to the soldier’s moral growth for two reasons. Firstly, it provides unique situations for the stage two soldier to experiment with her *li*. Secondly, wartime conditions exercise the soldier’s heartmind to great lengths. Through these new situations, stronger emotions, and the soldier’s reflection on these situations, moral growth is accelerated. In terms of the *dào* space, war increases the soldier’s moral momentum.

Given that wartime capabilities are essential to the job scope of any soldier.

By experiencing physical pain in wartime, then, a soldier is more likely to be able to attain stage three status – that is to become a paradigmatic person.

However, what if the physical pain is so great that the soldier faces the possibility of death? The example to be used is the case where a soldier is captured as a prisoner of war (POW), and is being tortured by the enemy. Here, a soldier is confronted with her own mortality.

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114 See section 1.3.
Now, we have to explicate how suicide is in line with benevolence and righteousness. According to Ni, the four sprouts of the heartmind “can serve as the basis of… dignity exactly because it is relational and outwardly directed.”

There are several avenues of recourse that the POW can resort to, using the concepts of reciprocity, dignity, and moral dilemma that we have just discussed. The main variable is the POW’s endowment of righteousness.

Because the torturer interacts with the POW, a relationship is formed. This relationship allows for the transmission of virtue through the POW’s li. Given that the torturer is human, the POW’s li might be able to morally transform the torturer. There are certainly historical accounts where a POW’s tolerance of persistent torture led to the torturer gaining respect for the POW. The POW recognizes a level of basic humanity in the torturer, and thus deems an attempt to morally transform the torturer as the righteous thing to do. Here, the POW is attempting to regain her dignity through by exerting a moral force on the torturer. Because of the reciprocal nature of relationships, Ni states that one’s “recognition and respect for others in turn entails the demand for self-respect…. Respecting oneself is achieved precisely through respecting others.”

However, if the torturer were deemed as inhuman (and therefore not in possession of the four sprouts), then an effort to moralize the torturer would not be successful. In such a situation, the POW cannot expect to be able to moralize the torturer. The moral dilemma forces the POW to choose between bodily preservation and dignity. Here, the righteous course of action is dependent on the POW’s moral perceptivity – as determined by her moral position.

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115 Ni 182.
116 For example, the case of Lim Bo Seng, a resistance fighter during WWII who was captured by Imperial Japanese forces and tortured extensively.
If the torturer is demanding information that would endanger the lives of the POW’s peers, then suicide might be the righteous course of action. If the POW thinks that she has a decent chance of surviving until her release, then she might deem toleration as righteous (realize here that she is also undergoing moral cultivation due to her experiencing physical pain under unique circumstances).

The performance of torture would thus seem to be impermissible for morally advanced soldiers. Indeed, Ni states, “recognition and respect for others in turn entails the demand for self-respect…. Respecting oneself is achieved precisely through respecting others.”¹¹⁷ Ni’s view is consistent with our construction of the heartmind. Advanced moral agents should be able to recognize the basic level of goodness in all human beings. Indeed, Ni’s claim amounts to the fact that morally advanced soldiers would not even engage in torture, because failing to respect the tortured is equivalent to harming all of humanity, by virtue of the common trait of owning a heartmind.

Lastly, we deal with emotional pain. I propose that emotional pain be likened to the feeling of loss – whether it is a body part or a fellow soldier. During times of war, death is part and parcel of a soldier’s life. Dealing with death, especially the deaths a soldier’s comrades is an important experience in the moral growth of the soldier. Naturally, one would feel emotional pain at the death of a close friend. Confucianism can explain this emotional pain as a result of the disintegration of relationships. Relationships, as transmitters of virtue between two individuals, can be viewed as the link between two heartminds. Upon death, one heartmind ceases to exist, thus causing the relationship to break down. The other heartmind thus responds to this relationship

¹¹⁷ Ni 2014, 182.
collapse with the emotion of pain. The stronger the relationship, the greater the pain experienced.\textsuperscript{118}

Confucianism both acknowledges and accounts for the inevitability of death through elaborate funeral \textit{li}, as seen from, “When they are alive, serve them with \textit{li}; when they are dead, inter them with \textit{li}, and sacrifice to them with \textit{li}.” (\textit{Analects} 2:5, slightly modified)

In life, relationships are formed and maintained through \textit{li}. It is fitting, then, that in death, relationships are also formed and maintained through \textit{li}, albeit in an indirect manner.

“An officer cannot but be broad and resolute, for his burden is heavy and his road is far. Benevolence makes up his burden; is that not indeed heavy? Only with death is he done; is that not indeed far?” (\textit{Analects} 8:7, slightly modified)

This passage shows us that Confucianism treats death as inevitability. Moreover, it also serves to show that the acknowledgement of death should precede not a sense of helplessness and despair, but a renewed vigor in moral cultivation whilst one is alive.

Nevertheless, Confucianism incorporates detailed funeral ceremonies as \textit{li},\textsuperscript{119} and sees the performance of funeral \textit{li} as an important part of moral cultivation. The \textit{Xunzi} further shows how death should be regarded as part and parcel of life.

“\textit{Li} is that which takes care to order living and dying. Birth is the beginning of people, and death is the end of people. When the beginning and end are both good, then the human way is

\textsuperscript{118} This explanation can also be used for cases where a relationship breaks down without death occurring – an example of which is when two friends have an argument.

\textsuperscript{119} See chapter 19 of the \textit{Xunzi} for detailed lists of funeral \textit{li}.
complete. Thus, the paradigmatic person is respectful of the beginning and careful about the end.” (Xunzi 19:201-205)

Take the example of a funeral for a soldier who was killed in combat. His unit would almost certainly be in attendance at the funeral, as members of the unit would have had a relationship with the deceased soldier. Because the unit performs the unique funeral li together, their interpersonal relationships are strengthened, thus increasing collective harmony and aggregate morality. This renewed sense of community assists in dealing with emotional pain as well as to improve each soldier’s moral configuration.

4.5 – Are the People Really Happy?

Under the aegis of Confucian jus ad bellum, the righteous collective launches a punitive expedition against the tyrannical collective. The affected populace rejoices at the righteous collective’s decision – they know that the righteous collective will enact a benevolent polity. The military forces of the righteous collective swiftly defeat the combat elements loyal to the tyrannical ruler, and indeed establish benevolent rule within the affected collective. The world is one step closer to achieving harmony, all thanks to the moral actions of the righteous collective. Under Confucian JWT, such a situation should unfurl once jus ad bellum is attained.

Yet, to my knowledge, no collective in modern history has ever conducted war in this manner. The closest could be found in World War II, where the Mandate of Heaven was granted to the Allies to stop Hitler’s subjugation of Europe and its Jewish population. However, even in this case, flaws could be found. For example, the United States had to
wait until Japan attacked Pearl Harbor before declaring war, deciding that a policy of isolationism was appropriate despite the Nazis and Japan having conducted systemized mass slaughter for years before. Moreover, the Soviet Union’s conduct of war was less than ideal, with Stalin subjugating people of the ‘liberated’ territories in Eastern Europe.

The seeming impossibility of attaining Confucian *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* might dishearten some readers. What is the point of even trying when we know that situations will not pan out ideally in reality? The answer is in self-cultivation and participation in government. Only when the leaders of collectives in the CIMH are benevolent can there be a lasting peace.

**Chapter 5: Practical Policies and Concluding Remarks**

I end with a discussion of practical policies, building on the material that we have discussed throughout this whole essay.
5.1 – Distance Warfare

Our discussion of drones brings us to the question of drone warfare. More generally, we will be discussing the topic of distance warfare and an increase in moral distance in its conduct. Imagine playing a video game where you fly an aircraft loaded with high explosives. Your mission is to destroy an enemy command center. You fly the aircraft at a high enough altitude that the enemy cannot detect you. Upon acquiring your target, you pull the trigger, and the command center is vaporized within seconds. No human remains are seen in the debris. The only catch to playing this video game is that ten human lives were just erased from existence. You yawn as you sip on your diet soda, wondering who will win tonight’s football match. As you take your feet off the console, the electronic display on your screen issues you another mission. You tilt your joystick ever so slightly to the left as you head to your next target – an enemy field hospital.

While the above scenario might be exaggerated, it expresses exactly the dangers of ‘screenfighting’, which “implies the disappearance of the vulnerable face and body of the opponent and thus removes moral-psychological barriers to killing.”120 The problem is that unlike conventional soldiers, drone pilots may not see their enemies as human beings with heartminds, due to what Coeckelbergh terms “moral distance.”121 If the drone pilot has difficulty in identifying her target as a human being, then the pilots feeling of compassion towards her target would be diminished. In extreme cases, pilots may even come to see their targets as inanimate objects.

120 Coeckelbergh, “Drones, Information Technology, and Distance,” 87.
121 Ibid.
Distance warfare poses a serious threat to Confucian JWT. As seen from chapter 4, Confucian *jus in bello* requires soldiers to actively engage with enemy and friendly elements on the ground. Removing this personal interaction component of war leaves the drone pilot morally inert, as she receives little to no external stimuli, which serve to elicit moral responses from the heartmind.

I propose a policy. The military could only employ higher-ranking soldiers to be drone pilots. Remember our discussion in chapters 1 and 2, where rank was to be partially determined by moral advancement. Moreover, this is a useful policy as it restricts drone piloting to soldiers with heightened moral perceptiveness. These higher-ranking soldiers would thus be more effective at closing the moral gap between themselves and the target.

5.2 – Weapons of Mass Destruction and Disarmament

Now, distance warfare brings to mind the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) – in particular, the use of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs). The use of ICBMs highlights the destructive capacity of distance warfare. The fear is that the moral distance will be even larger, thus making it harder to bridge. For example, the soldier in charge of Jupiter missiles will most likely be sitting in a dark room, on a cramped submarine hundreds of miles away from the actual target. Also, unlike the forms distance warfare discussed in the previous section, this soldier most likely has not had the privilege of observation before striking. To this soldier, her target is merely a bunch of dots and lines on a computer screen.
This scenario highlights the potential danger behind distance warfare. This soldier has little to no moral link between her target and herself. At the same time, that soldier has the power to wipe out entire civilizations at her fingertips.

My point here is to emphasize the need for moral responsibility when handling weapons. The greater the destructive capacity of the weapon one is responsible for, the more morally advanced the soldier handling it must be. Fortunately, in the case of ICBMs, the decision to utilize it or not falls to senior leadership within the collective. Contemporary nuclear-armed states all require the permission of their head of state when their use is brought into question.

We can localize this problem to less destructive weapons. For example, at what level of moral advancement would a soldier be allowed to use a tank instead of a rifle? As we have seen in section 2.4, military organizations have an in-built system to deal with increasing responsibility – rank.

More importantly, our discussion of distance warfare and WMDs brings to our attention the issue of disarmament and deterrence. Here, there seems to be a chicken and egg situation, where collectives build military strength in response to the threat of military belligerence by other collectives. Simultaneously, all collectives realize the destructive potential of their amassed military might. The only way the situation can simmer down is if all parties agree to disarm at a collective pace. This way, (although still unideal) states can keep their sense of national security while still ensuring a safer world.

5.3 – A Brief Case Study: Switzerland and the Swiss Armed Forces
To sum everything up, I shall provide a real-world example of an ideal collective – Switzerland. I will also show how the Swiss Armed Forces (SAF) and its leadership are in line with much of Confucian theory.

I start with a bottom-up analysis, focusing first on the relationship between the Swiss citizen and the SAF. Although the SAF does not have an explicit program of Confucian moral education, there are implicit moralizing elements in the aforementioned relationship. The fact that the SAF allows its citizen soldiers to bring their military-issued weapons back to their personal domiciles\(^{122}\) is indicative of a trusting relationship. As discussed in section 2.1, a trusting relationship is the breeding ground for benevolence – the foremost Confucian virtue. Such a policy is indicative of how the collective is able to foster moral development within the individual.

The SAF and its leadership have a long history of collective benevolence. Switzerland is famous for its policy of neutrality in war. Indeed, the last time that Switzerland (or any of its progenitor states) went to war was in 1815. Even then, it was only under extenuating circumstances of self-defense – against the self-proclaimed ‘god of war’, Napoleon, no less. This strict policy of neutrality and self-defense is seen in the mission of the SAF.

“Switzerland has been enjoying peace, security and freedom for many years: from the freedom of movement for all citizens and the freedom of expression to economic freedom. Preserving this security in our country for the long-term is the mission of our security policy. The Swiss

\(^{122}\) Moreover, until 2007, the military allowed for personal possession of military-issued ammunition along with the citizen-soldiers’ weapons.
Armed Forces form part of it. The Federal Constitution and the Military Act assign the following three missions to the armed forces:

1. Defense
2. Support of the civilian authorities
3. Promotion of peace within an international context

Defense against an armed attack, whether on the ground or in the air, is the central mission of the armed forces.”

The mission statement is further indicative of Switzerland’s overall commitment to international peace and harmony – in line with Confucian doctrine. Beginning with its own society, the SAF has aided Swiss society by bringing together young men and women in a common experience, creating a harmonious society. This harmony is indicated through various third party reports, such as Switzerland’s consistently stellar ranking in the United Nations’ World Happiness Report, and Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index. This harmony is even more impressive given the multi-cultural nature of Swiss society, where language, race, and religion are potential flashpoints for intra-state conflict.

The SAF’s relationship to Switzerland is a good example of how military organizations are able to shape the wider society that they are part of. The SAF is the mutually beneficial, moral link between each citizen and the Helvetic Confederation. We

125 http://www.transparency.org/cpi2014/results
can see a self-perpetuating moral cycle, beginning with the Swiss state and the SAF morally sculpting the individual soldier through a relationship of trust. Based on the individual soldiers’ moral advancement in terms of benevolence, the SAF and Swiss society in general is able to advance morally. One concrete example of this mutual, individual-collective harmonization is the decrease in suicide rate\textsuperscript{126} following Switzerland’s Army XXI reform.\textsuperscript{127}

I realize that my investigation is shallow, and that there exist myriad other factors that might confound my analysis of the situation.\textsuperscript{128} But the fact still remains that a military organization is seen to benefit the society it serves through the betterment of each individual soldier. Swiss Defense Minister Ueli Maurer even claims, “Abolishing military service would break the genuine link uniting the people and the army.”\textsuperscript{129}

My thesis has shown that through Confucian self-cultivation and the use of relationships as moral transmitters, any single individual has the ability to shape the collective that she is part of. If she is sufficiently morally advanced, she could lead her collective and make a positive moral impact on the world stage. The task of moral cultivation in the service of world harmony falls to each and every one of you, dear readers. Are you up to the task?

\textsuperscript{127} The Army XXI reform reduced Swiss military strength by half, further showing their commitment to international harmony through disarmament as discussed in section 5.4.
\textsuperscript{128} One confounding factor could be Switzerland’s strong financial sector, which suggests greater individual financial security (an amoral notion) and thus, a more harmonious society.
\textsuperscript{129} http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-24195870
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