Understanding the Chinese Just War Tradition

An Analysis of the “Seven Military Classics”

Margaret Ward
Faculty Advisor: Professor Giandrea, History Department
University Honors
American University, Fall 2013

A “just war” tradition has existed in Chinese war theory since the Warring States period (475 BCE-221 BCE). Focusing on the Seven Military Classics, a corpus of ancient Chinese military theory, this paper determines the structure and characteristics of the just war tradition as it existed in China. A further analysis of Ming China’s involvement in the Japanese Invasions of Korea during the sixteenth century establishes the extent to which such a tradition was utilized. The presence of each of the tradition’s key characteristics indicates that the Chinese just war tradition was not simply idealistic but guided the participation, leadership, and conduct of the Ming during the invasions.
How do we determine how civilized an ancient society was? Many scholars have recently began to study the wars of the past in search of indicators that may allow us to gauge how civilized a society may have been. One frame through which we have begun to evaluate the past is that of the western Just War Theory.

**Western Just War Theory**

The “Just War” Theory is a western doctrine which asserts that wars should be fought following a set of ethical and philosophical criteria. These criteria are often organized as two groups—those that pertain to the right to go to war, called *jus ad bellum*, and those that relate to the right way in which to conduct war, called *jus in bello*.¹ If a war adheres to these standards, it is determined to be a just conflict.

Though this theory arose in the West, similar notions of ethical conflict can be seen throughout the ancient world, including within Chinese academia. By studying ancient Chinese war texts through the lens of the western Just War Theory, we can determine the specific factors that constituted a Chinese just war doctrine.

**The Warring States Period**

The Warring States Period was a period of Chinese history, which occurred between 475 BCE and 221 BCE and marked the end of the late Eastern Zhou dynasty. As its name suggests, this period is most distinguished by the large amount of violent struggles that occurred between the small principalities that arose in the power vacuum left by the weakening of the Zhou state. These small states engaged in countless battles in an effort to gain the power

---

necessary to declare oneself the ultimate authority in the land. Due to the large volume of conflict during this period, many political minds of the era turned their focus away from the study of the art of governing and instead focused their attention upon the conduct of war. This change in concentration gave rise to many of the most important works of Chinese war theory, works that continued to impact Chinese thought for millennia, and which we now refer to as the *Seven Military Classics*.

In the eleventh century, T’ai Kung’s “Six Secret Teachings,” “The Methods of the Ssu-Ma,” Sun Tzu’s “Art of War,” Wu Qi’s “Wu-tzu,” “Wei Liao-tzu,” the “Three Strategies of Huang Shih-kung,” and “Questions and Replies Between T’ang T’ai-tsung and Li Wei-kung” were chosen by Emperor Shenzong to be bound together to form an anthology of war theory known as the *Seven Military Classics*. These classics dissected every component of war and prescribed varying strategies for leaders to follow when involved in conflict. But now we must ask the question, did these classics also contain a Chinese-style just war tradition?

*Historiography*

Though much effort has been expended exploring the presence of just war traditions throughout the history of the Western world, very little time has been dedicated to the investigation of ideas on the legitimate use of force in the East. Sumner Twiss and Jonathan Chan’s research on the classical Confucian view of military force sought to fill this gap.

---

In their article, Twiss and Chan examine the writings of Mencius and Xunzi, two of the most prominent Confucian philosophers who lived and studied during the Warring States period, in an effort to understand the general Confucian view on the legitimate use of military force. Twiss and Chan determined that force was deemed legitimate by Confucian scholars if it adhered to a series of criteria. Force was described as legitimate if it was being used for precise reasons, in a specific manner, and only by particular leaders. Though the authors do not utilize the Just War Theory as a means by which to examine the texts, Twiss and Chan’s conclusions could be classified as evidence of a just war tradition in ancient China because the criteria that they discuss is very similar to the *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* characteristics of the western theory of just wars. Despite the similarity of the findings to notions of “just war,” the examination of Confucian writings is far too narrow. Mencius and Xunzi were Confucian scholars whose writings discuss a wide variety of philosophical topics and who do not discuss war extensively. This does not allow for a full understanding of Chinese war ideology to be garnered.

The research of Ted Gong takes a step in resolving this issue by focusing on a wider variety of Chinese texts and evidence. Gong brings together a great deal of past research on varying topics related to Chinese philosophy. Additionally, he also utilizes Confucian texts and several of the military classics, all in an effort to support his argument that a just war mode of thought did not exist in China. Rather, he argues that bureaucratic restraints acted upon the military machine preventing it from engaging in conflict. Though Gong’s research takes into account several sources that focused more fully on war than those sources employed by Twiss and Chan, his argument focuses on the reasons why Chinese dynasties were prevented from going to war. The author completely neglects the motivations behind Chinese decisions to

---


Ward- 3
engage in conflict. Gong’s use of authoritative sources is a positive step forward; however, his
inability to fully engage all sides of ancient Chinese war theory, to look at both the reasons why
the Chinese did not engage in war and the reasons why they did engage in war, limits the utility
of his work.

Ping-cheung Lo is one of the first scholars to provide a well-rounded analysis of ancient
Chinese war theory. He purports that previous research into ethical perspectives on warfare in
the East are brief, too narrow in their scope, and suffer from generalizations due to their one-
sided handling. Such previous works, like that of Gong, focused too heavily on one portion of
the Chinese just war tradition, thereby not allowing for a full understanding of the issue to be
comprehended. Lo seeks to resolve this issue by comparing the *Seven Military Classics* to the
work of James Turner Johnson, a prominent contemporary scholar who has extensively studied
the western Just War Theory and its interplay with modern religious thought. Lo takes the
arguments made by Johnson and utilizes them as a frame within which he fits the ancient
Chinese theories of war. Though his writings are a much needed addition to the field, Lo’s work
itself suffers from too narrow a scope. Rather than using the theory described by Johnson as a
lens or guide, looking for what constituted a “just war” tradition in China and the east, Lo
superimposes the western theory on the *Seven Military Classics*. The author’s conclusions
indicate that he relies too heavily on the western theory of just war and allows it to dictate his
analysis of the military texts.

This paper seeks to fill the previously noted gaps created by the aforementioned scholars.
I assert that an ethical perspective on warfare existed within ancient Chinese war theory and that

---

Ethics* 40, no. 3 (2012): 404.
A close analysis of the *Seven Military Classics* reveals a tradition of a “just war” mode of thought. These seven classics provide the best insight into ancient Chinese thoughts on war as they are focused solely on this topic and, the majority having been crafted during the Warring States Period, were directly influenced by the three prominent schools of Chinese philosophy—Confucianism, Taoism, and Legalism. Rather than broaden the focus of this paper to include the key texts of these three schools, none of which focus fully on conflict but address it only briefly, the *Seven Military Classics* allow for a more efficient and effective degree of analysis.

Though the use of the western Just War Theory as a guide to understanding the characteristics that encompass the Chinese just war tradition will provide a thorough analysis of these seven classics, it is unclear whether or not the tradition was actually used by the ancient Chinese. In order to determine the degree of practicality, it is imperative that an actual event be studied.

**Ancient Chinese War Theory**

A careful analysis of each of the seven texts that constitute the Chinese military classics indicates that, similar to the western Just War Theory, the ancient Chinese just war tradition also prescribes a set of criteria that must be adhered to in order for a war to be considered just and fair. Though both the western and Chinese perspectives on ethical warfare organize these criteria into categories, these groupings differ in several ways. The western perspective contains numerous criterions that must be considered, however the organization of this theory indicates that the motivations behind engaging in conflict and the conduct of war itself are deemed the most important notions to consider. Chinese perspectives on conflict found within the military classics emphasize these same ideas of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* but also stress the
importance of a third grouping of conditions, a factor that the west places under the heading of the “right to go to war”—the competent authority to launch and lead a war. It is through the exploration of these three categories that the just war tradition as it existed in ancient Chinese war philosophy can best be determined and understood.

 Reasons to Go to War (jus ad bellum)

When determining whether or not a war is “just” according to Chinese tradition, it is important to first understand the reasons that led to the launching of the war. The classics outline several reasons when the use of violent military force is acceptable.

The most reasonable cause for war, in the eyes of the Chinese, was self defense. When a foe attacked first and threatened the people and lands of the emperor, war was an expected response. The obviousness of such a response in the eyes of the authors of the classics led to little mention of this righteous cause for war in the texts themselves. However, these ancient scholars did often expound upon their shared belief that war was deplorable. In “Questions and Replies Between T’ang T’au-tsung and Li Wie-kung,” it is stated that “the army is employed only when there is no alternative… among [the] implements of violence, none is more terrible than the army.”8 This opinion that military force should be a regrettable last choice is repeated throughout the Seven Military Classics, including within the “Three Strategies of Huangshigong:”

“The Sage King does not take any pleasure in using the army… Thus when he is leisurely slow, displays no enthusiasm, and makes no advances; he takes it seriously that his action will hurt people, other living beings and property. Weapons are ominous instruments, and the Dao of Heaven abhors them.

8 Sawyer, Seven Military Classics, 348-350.
However, when you have no choice but to use them, it accords with the Dao of Heaven.”

Despite the persistence of the notion of war as a last resort throughout the corpus of the classics, the ancient scholars go to great lengths to clearly indicate the proper, just causes and the illegitimate, unjust causes for utilizing military force.

The most frequently discussed just cause for the use of violence was in the preservation or reestablishment of harmony. A harmonious world to the ancient Chinese ruling elite was a world in which China was the center. In this world, the emperor ruled by the grace of god and all other states and their leaders kowtowed to him, or bowed down and acknowledged his great power and position. The people of this world were supposed to live as the children of the emperor—in peace and without fear. “When a ruler’s actions are cruelly violent… when the taxes are onerous, impositions numerous, fines and punishments endless… this is referred to as a ‘lost state.’” When harmonious world order had been lost or threatened in such a way, regardless if it was by internal or external forces, war was sanctioned. It was believed that “if one must kill men to give peace to the people, then killing is permissible. If one must attack a state out of love for their people, then attacking is permissible.” In fact, this maintenance of peace was seen as the responsibility of China, as it was the most civil and powerful state, and was accepted by the general public. Wu-tzu provides two examples of such acceptance in his description of the ousting of “the evil tyrant Chieh” and the “vile King Chou.” In both instances, the forceful replacement of these leaders was met with joy by the people rather than displeasure.

---

10 Sawyer, Seven Military Classics, 298.
11 Sawyer, Seven Military Classics, 126.
at the use of violence.\textsuperscript{12} Though many today consider them to be opposing forces, the ancient Chinese viewed the violence of war as a simple means to reestablishing and securing the harmony of the Chinese realm.

The Chinese did not simply wish to maintain harmony; they also felt that it was acceptable to instigate war in order to spread civility among those they believed to be barbaric, thereby spreading peace and harmony. Wei Liao-tzu described these barbarian leaders, the “brigands,” as individuals who kill, steal, profit off of the misfortune of other men, and enslave the sons and daughters of the state.\textsuperscript{13} In his eyes, “the military provides the means to execute the brutal and chaotic and to stop the unrighteous.”\textsuperscript{14} Though violence was not the preferred method, it was viewed by the ancients as a tool that could be used to bring order among the uncivilized peoples and better their lives.

In addition to the acceptable causes to go to war, the Chinese philosophers also extensively discussed the unjust motives for violence. Wu-tzu highlights five key reasons to employ the army:

“In general the reasons troops are raised are five: to contend for fame; to contain for profit, from accumulated hatreds; from internal disorder and from famine. The names [of the armies] are also five: ‘righteous army,’ ‘strong army,’ ‘hard army,’ ‘fierce army,’ and ‘contrary army.’ Supressing the violently perverse and rescuing the people from chaos is termed ‘righteous.’ Relying on [the strength of] the masses to attack is termed ‘strong.’ Mobilizing the army out of anger is termed ‘hard.’ Abandoning forms of propriety and greedily seeking profit is

\textsuperscript{12} Sawyer, \textit{Seven Military Classics}, 208.
\textsuperscript{13} Sawyer, \textit{Seven Military Classics}, 254.
\textsuperscript{14} Sawyer, \textit{Seven Military Classics}, 254.
termed ‘fierce.’ While the country is in turmoil and the people are exhausted, embarking on military campaigns and mobilizing the masses is termed ‘contrary.’”

In this passage we see the employment of the term “righteous” to describe only a single type of war—a war in which the people are saved from disharmony. All other motivations for war, fame and recognition, greed, revenge, and internal chaos, are deemed unjust. War and violence was not seen by any scholar to be acceptable if it was not for the good of the people.

*Who Should Launch a War*

In Western Just War Theory, *jus ad bellum* does not simply describe the precise cause for a war, it also includes several other categories. These categories include notions of last resort, right intention, proportionality, probability of success, and acceptable authority. Though the just war tradition in ancient Chinese philosophy includes many of these same categories under its own version of *jus ad bellum*, it emphasizes the importance of the individuals who launch and lead wars far more than the west.

According to the seven classics, only two individuals held the authority to declare a war—a heaven-appointed emperor and a lord-protector. Though they were both viewed as acceptable authorities to initiate military violence, the justification behind their authority and the extent to which they could lead a war varied greatly.

The emperor of China ruled on behalf of the heavens. He was viewed as existing on a level above that of average humans. It was believed that in order for an emperor to be

---

15 Sawyer 208
considered a legitimate ruler he must have four key qualities: (1) spiritual enlightenment; (2) brilliance; (3) the ability to engage in vast discourse; and (4) a lack of enemies. If he displayed these characteristics, the emperor would be considered a ruler sanctioned by the gods and would possess the “mandate of heaven.” It was imperative that the approved “Son of Heaven” remained pure, unselfish, and that he continued to work towards the preservation of harmony within the world. If he failed or was found lacking, the mandate of heaven would forsake him and be transferred to another more suitable leader. Such transfers of the mandate of heaven embodied the rise and fall of each of the Chinese dynasties.

When a just cause for war, as described previously, arose in China, it was a legitimate emperor, one who possessed the mandate of heaven, who was viewed as the sole party able to initiate the launching of troops. It was believed that a “true king enriches the people…when a true king attacks the brutal and chaotic, he takes benevolence and righteousness as the foundation for it.” It was the Son of Heaven who was the only individuals capable of reading the situation and determining if military violence was a proper course of action. If a war was initiated by an emperor who did not, in the eyes of the people and ruling elite, possess the mandate of heaven, no matter if the motivations were just, the war was considered illegitimate. Additionally, if the military was deployed for any of the previously discussed unrighteous motives of war, it was considered an indication that the mandate of heaven had passed from the hands of the emperor.

Though large-scale wars could only be initiated by a heaven-sanctioned emperor, the use of violence in smaller arenas could be launched by a lord-protector. The position of lord-

17 Sawyer, Seven Military Classics, 261.
18 Sawyer, Seven Military Classics, 249, 273.
protector was one that was created and thrived during the Warring States period prior to the complete collapse of the Zhou dynasty.\textsuperscript{19}

As previously discussed, the Warring States period witnessed the rise of several small feudal states, all of which vied for power and the right to displace the Zhou dynasty. Before any one feudal lord was capable of suppressing all of his competitors, the leaders of these states would occasionally come together in order to protect their lands from foreign invaders from the north. When these leaders met, they would elect one official to act as the head of the group—the lord-protector. This man was recognized by the Zhou emperor and viewed by his fellow lords as a capable military leader.\textsuperscript{20} It was the lord-protector who was seen as the most capable individual to protect the people by waging war against the northern nomads who often encroached on their lands.

Unlike a heaven-sanctioned emperor, the lord-protector did not have the gods on his side. For this reason, his actions were not viewed as quite as “just” as those of an emperor. However, because he had the support of the people through his election to the position of lord-protector, his military actions were supported and seen as legitimate because they were in the name of and for the people.\textsuperscript{21}

\textit{How War Should be Conducted (jus in bello)}

Though the \textit{Seven Military Classics} discuss just causes for war along with the individuals who have the proper authority to initiate war, they spend the most amount of time outlining the way in which military violence should be used. As in the West, \textit{jus in bello} or the conduct of

\textsuperscript{19} Chan and Twiss, “Classical Confucian Position,” 448–450.
war encompasses several groupings of factors, including the use and type of force employed, the treatment of the opposing military forces, and the impact of violence on the innocent noncombatants.\textsuperscript{22}

When launching a war, the classics stress the notion of necessity or the idea that only a proportional amount of violence should be used to overcome the threat—no more than is needed. This position is logical when one considers the ancient philosophers’ displeasure and attempts to refrain from the use of military violence. In “T’ai Kung’s Six Secret Teachings,” directions on how to besiege fortified cities reveal the military classics’ preference to a proportional response.

“When our chariots and cavalry have deeply penetrated their territory, racing far off, none of the enemy’s army will dare approach. Be careful not to engage them in battle; just sever their supply routes, surround and guard them… Do not set fire to what the people have accumulated; do not destroy their palaces or houses, nor cut down the trees at gravesites or alters. Do not kill those who surrender nor slay your captives. Instead show them benevolence and righteousness, extend your generous Virtue to them. Cause their people to say ‘the guilt lies with one man.’”\textsuperscript{23}

In this passage, the ancient philosopher instructs military leaders to limit their destruction. He stresses that battles can be won without much harm having to befall captured soldiers, civilians, or the land. If a military force does respond to a foe with excessive force and violence, if they plunder and raze the land, the conduct of the war is considered unjust and the morality of the entire conflict is brought into question.

\textsuperscript{22} Hensel, \textit{Prism of Just War}, 13-17.
\textsuperscript{23} Sawyer, \textit{Seven Military Classics}, 87.
In addition to the amount of force used, the classics also advise military leaders to treat captured soldiers with care. As the previously quoted passage emphasized, enemy soldiers who had surrendered should be shown kindness and generosity. Likewise, if a foe is found wounded, the “Methods of the Ssu-ma” instructs the military to “provide medical attention and return him” to his people for further care.\(^\text{24}\) It was believed by each of the authors of the military classics that war is not the choice of soldiers. The decision to use military force is one made by a higher authority—an enemy of the emperor—and it should be that individual only who should be held responsible. This belief is embodied in the concluding sentence of the aforementioned excerpt from “T’ai Kung’s Six Secret Teachings.” “Cause their people to say ‘the guilt lies with one man.’”\(^\text{25}\) This recognition of the submission of the people is a key step in the path towards the reestablishment of harmony.

Nearly all of the classics also implore leaders to minimize the damage caused to civilians as much as is possible. Ancient Chinese war philosophy draws a clear distinction between enemy forces and civilians. Though soldiers who do not surrender will unfortunately have to be cut down in battles, civilian populations should always be left alone.\(^\text{26}\) The classics state that Chinese troops should avoid the razing and pillaging of villages—“wherever your army goes do not cut down the trees, destroy houses, take the grain, slaughter the animals, or burn their supplies… thus you will show the populace that you do not harbor vicious intentions.”\(^\text{27}\) Since the key motivation behind all wars should be the reestablishment of harmony, it is imperative that the righteous army help the peasantry to succeed and live happily in peace.\(^\text{28}\) If civilians or

\(^{24}\) Sawyer, *Seven Military Classics*, 128.
\(^{25}\) Sawyer, *Seven Military Classics*, 87.
\(^{26}\) Sawyer, *Seven Military Classics*, 161.
\(^{27}\) Sawyer, *Seven Military Classics*, 223.
\(^{28}\) Sawyer, *Seven Military Classics*, 128.43
their lands are harmed, the people will turn against the troops and harmony will become more difficult to achieve.

A careful analysis of *The Seven Military Classics* provides us with a clear image of how the ancient Chinese ruling elite viewed just wars and the legitimate use of military violence. Yet they do not detail if the constructed Chinese just war tradition was truly followed. Were wars initiated and conducted following the tradition? Or was this tradition an idealistic pursuit that never became an actuality? It is only possible to determine the answer through the exploration of an actual military conflict.

*Japanese Invasions of Korea (1592-1598)*

Between the years 1592 and 1598, the famed Japanese general Toyotomi Hideyoshi launched two related invasions of the Korean peninsula. The aims of these invasions were to suppress Joseon Korea and gain a foothold on the mainland before launching an attack intended to overthrow the Ming dynasty of China. Some have argued that these invasions may represent the first instance of a quasi-modern “Great East Asian War” as this was the “single largest military conflict in the world during the sixteenth century” and it was the first instance in which China, Korea, and Japan all fought amongst one another. This involvement of three kingdoms in a conflict that resembles that of modern multistate wars is an excellent example to study in order to discover whether the Chinese just war tradition was in fact implemented or was purely idealistic.

---

In order to understand whether or not the Chinese just war tradition was utilized during the sixteenth century Japanese Invasions of Korea, it is best to reexamine the Chinese involvement in these battles through the lens of this tradition. What was China’s motivation for engaging in the war? Who decided that the Chinese military should be involved? And how did the Chinese conduct themselves during the prolonged period of engagement?

*Reasons to Go to War*

The relationship between the dynasties of China and Korea stretched back centuries prior to the Japanese Invasions. Even before the formation of the Joseon dynasty in Korea, the two kingdoms had shared a peaceful tributary relationship. As one seventeenth century account to the war states, “Since ancient times China and Korea have enjoyed friendly relations akin to those of elder and younger brothers. They share both history and culture and have thus prospered together.”

In fact, within China’s vast network of tributary states, Korea ranked as number one.

When Japan first initiated its invasions of the peninsula, the Joseon military attempted to repel the invaders on their own. This proved too great a task for the Koreans and the capital city was soon overrun by the Japanese, thereby forcing the Joseon king to flee. On the verge of defeat, the Korean king sent envoys to the Son of Heaven begging for help. A popular historical account claims that the Chinese emperor was touched by the loyalty expressed by the envoy but initially refused to send troops as he felt that none could be spared at that time. After having vivid dreams in which a ghostly general approached him and claimed, “Elder brother you guard all under heaven, yet you do not know the ties between brothers?” it was said that the

---

31 Swope, *A Dragon’s Head*, 43.
emperor reversed his decision and sent his army to assist his Joseon neighbors. Though this account may seem questionable, it was crafted not long after the invasions took place and is a reflection of the feelings of the Chinese people. From this dream we can recognize the motivation behind the Chinese involvement in the war—their tributary relationship with Korea. Though it was known that the overarching Japanese goal was to one day seize power from the Ming, many scholars have argued that such a threat from a state China considered to be far inferior did not play a large role in the decision to go to war. Rather, the Son of Heaven recognized that it was his duty to assist his loyal neighbor.

The Chinese decision to aid the Joseon armies in defending Korea from the Japanese can be classified as a righteous cause for war. The Chinese emperor was not motivated by greed, hatred, or the desire for revenge; but rather, sought to reestablish peace in the land of his most favorite tributary state. Though this cause is not explicitly stated as being just, it does seem that the Chinese just war tradition was an underlying factor in the decision to engage in the Japanese Invasions. In addition to the causes that launched the Chinese troops into Korea, it is also imperative that we discuss who it was that made the decision to become involved in the situation.

Who Should Launch a War

Emperor Wanli occupied the Ming throne for the latter quarter of the sixteenth century as well as the initial quarter of the seventeenth century. For nearly fifty years Wanli was the driving force behind all decisions made by the Chinese dynasty. He is most well known for the three successive campaigns he launched, the second of which was against the Japanese invaders

---

34 Kenneth M. Swope, “The Three Great Campaigns of the Wanli Emperor, 1395-1600: Court, Military, and Society in Late Sixteenth-Century China” (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2001), 162.
in Korea.\textsuperscript{35} Though modern scholars often describe Wanli as an ineffective ruler, this view generally stems from the fact that Wanli was one of the last emperors of the Ming dynasty and not long after his death the dynasty succumbed.\textsuperscript{36} Despite this unfortunate circumstance, Wanli’s reputation was quite different during his reign.

His succession to the throne following the death of his father immediately suggests that the general public viewed Emperor Wanli as being the new possessor of the mandate of heaven. Having led several successful campaigns during his first decades on the throne, Wanli’s status as the Son of Heaven was solidified. The recognition of Wanli as the heaven-sanctioned emperor, or the true king, indicates that he was considered a proper authority to initiate the Chinese military’s involvement in Korea during the Japanese invasions.

\textit{How War Should be Conducted}

In order to complete an analysis on the application of the Chinese just war tradition during the Japanese Invasions of Korea, the way in which the Chinese army conducted itself must now be considered. Since no fighting ever spilled over into Japan, it is difficult to determine the extent to which the Chinese response was proportional; however, a wealth of information does exist relating to the management of the Koreans by the Chinese after the Japanese had been repelled.

During the six long years of fighting, the Japanese invaders ravaged the Korean peninsula. Cities were destroyed, housed burned to the ground, and villages ransacked.\textsuperscript{37} When the Chinese and Korean forces had successfully pushed the Japanese out of the country the Korean

\textsuperscript{35} Swope, \textit{A Dragon’s Head}, 15-18.
\textsuperscript{36} Swope, “The Three Great Campaigns,” 380.
\textsuperscript{37} Swope, \textit{A Dragon’s Head}, 288.
population had become extremely desperate. In order to assist his younger brother in reinvigorating the state, Emperor Wanli ordered food, supplies, and money to be sent to the Joseon king. In addition to supplies for the general public, guns, weapons, and several Chinese battalions remained in Korea so as to protect the country as it worked to reestablish its military infrastructure. These gestures indicate that the Chinese continued to treat their devastated neighbors with courtesy, kindness, and generosity even after the war had been won—just as the Chinese just war tradition prescribes.

*Just War Tradition in Ancient Chinese War Theory*

Through a close analysis of the *Seven Military Classics* it is evident that an ancient Chinese-styled just war tradition existed. Though this tradition shared many similar characteristics with the modern western Just War Theory, it too had its own unique features. Rather than focus solely on *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* as the western theory does, the Chinese tradition focuses on the causes for war, the leaders who initiated campaigns, and the ways in which wars were conducted. A case study of the sixteenth century Japanese Invasions of Korea also reveals that this tradition was actually utilized as the basis for military action. In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the extent to which this tradition continued to influence Chinese wars, future research must analyze a broader and more varied selection of conflicts.

---

38 Swope, *A Dragon’s Head*, 295.
Bibliography


