

# "Point of View Paper"

## Lessons for Youth from Contemporary Chinese Leadership

Dr. Mohamed Noman Galal\*

Expert in Chinese and International Strategic Issues  
Former Egyptian Ambassador to China

Received: 28 Aug. 2017, Revised: 26 Oct. 2017, Accepted: 28 Oct. 2017.  
Published online: 1 Nov. 2017.

---

### **1 Introduction**

Most recent development and youth inspiring experiences have come mostly from western management science and leadership. However, the Chinese have been developing lots of contemporary management practices that humanity and specially youth need to learn from and try to apply.

In this paper I shall introduce just mere facts with observations that youth can contemplate deeper in and take a pause to reflect onto learn more from that experience.

It is an attempt to introduce China Contemporary Strategic Leadership history with more realistic perspective that is rarely available in the body of knowledge today.

### **2 Revolution Leadership**

When the Chinese revolution came in October 1949 led by Mao Tzedong , and succeeded by Deng Xiao Ping the world didn't witness a power of a revolution only, but even a beginning of new era for Chinese contribution by a new Chinese mentality based on a strategic Vision. With more forward-looking mentality of Deng. China started to open gradually technologically, economically, socially, culturally and administratively.

The Chinese experience has been based on the revolutionary concept, the ideological doctrine and the leader's vision that led the whole country to progress. But in a few steps, sometimes two steps forward, a step back and again sometimes several steps back, as was the case with the Great Cultural Proletarian Revolution, which lasted ten years from 1966 to 1976 and under which China became more backward with collapsing economy, administration and politics. But China, as a nation with a long-standing civilization, big number of population and plenty of resources, had been challenged.

\*Corresponding author e-mail: [galal\\_m@hotmail.com](mailto:galal_m@hotmail.com)

Despite that the revolution did not control the proponents of the hatred and revenge. However; it brought more attributes and lots of experiences that can be studied. Many thinkers see the early era with satisfaction and no matter how Mao tze-dong is criticized it was a learning period for all Chinese Leadership thereafter.

### ***3 Confucious and Chinese Intellectuals and Revolutionary As Well As Political leaders Mindset***

The Chinese leaders since then didn't confine themselves to the communist ideology and the old slogans but rather became open-minded leaders who took the experiences of others countries without hesitation. The Chinese leaders studied their civilization in great depth, its long history to benefit from its wisdom and culture. The transformation movement in China recent history didn't serve a nominal goal of having unprecedented achievements in all various fields with miraculous speed in achieving the set goals. Famous Scholars of ancient China, such as Confucius contributed with many of their thoughts such as the concepts of harmony, concept of the five virtues as with as concept of YIN and Yang (i.e. positive and negative or darkness and light .etc.) .Another scholar in strategy long before Italian politician and strategist such as Machiavelli or German 19<sup>th</sup> century military strategist such as Clausewitz .The thought of the ancient Chinese Strategist in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. was Sun Tzu who gave a strategic ideas about how to unite China without a war with shrewd strategy, safeguarded by the ancient rulers of China is still a strategic reference taught in the world military academies. Today China has established institutes promoting in many countries of the world called after the name of China's most prominent scholar/thinker i.e. Confucius which is well known in many countries of the world.

The other attribute of the Chinese management leadership is about firmness, determination, reward and punishment immediately and without hesitation that would push the Chinese judiciary to act in style and with no hesitation and deceleration. The fourth attribute of the Chinese management leadership is the lack of selfishness and unwillingness to remain in power for China and even in the annals of world history as a remarkable figure no less than George Washington, Benjamin Franklin or Winston Churchill or Charles de Gaulle along with Nilsson Mandela of South Africa and other great leaders who influenced world history and the history of their countries such a Mahatma Gandhi of India .Nasser of Egypt.

### ***4 Selective Leadership - Choosing Specific good Qualities from Capitalism as well as the Best of Socialism and Called it “Socialism with Chinese Characteristics”***

As part of the Deng Xiaoping experiment, China has opened up to capitalism, taking its best qualities: production, export, serious work, reward and punishment. Special export zones have been set up and established after foreign investment laws have been issued giving each party its right in the sense that the Chinese people benefit from foreign investors and the latter benefit too. The Chinese was unique and fast in establishing the investment infrastructure besides the legal and administrative structure have been established. The Chinese leaders humbly learned from the experience of a small, progressive and exemplary country that is Singapore, led by Lee Kwan Yew, the legendary leader who shares with Deng Xiaoping, lots of management and leadership characteristics.

When Deng Xiaoping opened up China to trade with America, Europe and Japan, the country started a modern history without sensitivity. China shifted to new technology keeping political differences aside. This helped to develop the old factories that China had obtained from the Soviet Union under Mao Zedong, even though China didn't follow complete openness model without regulation or control.

### ***5 Learning from Chinese Contemporary Management***

In the ancient Chinese culture, Deng Xiaoping took many examples. Three famous examples are: "To teach man how to fish better than to give him a fish" is similar in English and Chinese. This means providing the opportunity for vocational training to raise the level of the workers and their workmanship in all sectors rather than giving him a fish to eat and then asking for any more aid or aid in kind or cash to eat and sleep. The Chinese experience teaches us how to create industrious citizens that believe in continuous training and development and move away from laziness, neglect and dependence on others.

The Chinese management philosophy is unique since its moves based on clear goals and the real goal is not to stifle intellectuals, administrators and politicians only to focus on the practical side or what is called pragmatism in American thought. This means using any tools or channels as long as the goal could be achieved in other words, think outside of the box "do not cross the river until you reach it".

It is the science, precision, experience, supervision, follow-up and sound planning that has transformed modern China from a communist state to unique leadership style that carries lots of lessons to learn for modern governments.

One important thing today is focused on by Chinese current president and Leader of China is "Xi Jinping": who is innovative in his own way as well as decisive in his decisions in fighting against corruption even to the top leaders of the Communist party without hesitation.

In his philosophy, the Chinese thinker Confucius was keen to begin correcting the concepts and defining the meanings of the terms so that each person understands the precise meanings of the words and phrases he is uttering. That is why China has made the most important political philosopher Confucius interested in education and the definition of concepts and terminology as a cornerstone of his work and scientific approach.

### ***6 Leadership as Set by Deng Xiaoping***

This experiment was based on the principle of changing the leadership of the field on a continuous basis, no more than five years in office by any post, if those who have remarkable achievements in their posts they could be promoted to a higher level of responsibility and if not made tangible achievements are changed after the initial period and if tangible achievements are renewed To him for a new period once, and if there are major mistakes, he/she will be dismissed and tried if he /she is corrupt or showed negligence in work or duties. For example, the Minister of Transportation was immediately sacked as a result of a train collision. The Minister of Health was dismissed as a result of the spread of SARS the Minister of Irrigation in mid-1998 due to massive floods in southern China and caused

disasters in the South of the country, which led to the descent of the Chinese armed forces to face the disaster and the Chinese Prime Minister The Chinese President and stayed for a week at the site to make sure of the control of the flood and then returned to Beijing. The accusation against the two ministers was that none of them had drawn up emergency plans and strategies for foreseeable incidents or forecasting the likelihood of them occurring and did not act as quickly as needed to cope with the disasters consequently. A senior figure from party top leaders was dismissed and put to trials as a result of corruption in which that person and his wife took advantage of his being a mayor of one of the major big city in the country. He was one of the rising stars and candidates for the top of the power. He was the governor of the largest Chinese province. There are others in other provinces.

The Chinese leadership is merciless and uncompromising. Do not tolerate mistakes. It is a sign of the experience of former President Jiang Ze- min, the most prominent person after Deng Xiao ping where his predecessor, the head of state (party secretary), and the prime minister sacked as a result of incident of Tiananmen Square in 1989, less than two years after they took office as president of the country and the other as prime minister, were accused of failing to deal firmly with the youth demonstrations in the field that nearly overthrew the entire Communist system. Jiang Zemin, Secretary General of the Party and Head of State the other is a prime minister called Zhu Rongji he was graduated from the best university in China called Tsinghua.

The new leaders remained for two terms, during which if they have excellent achievements and restored order and stability in China and changed economic and administrative policies. It was the role of the Chinese army which, at the beginning of reform and opening up, gave it several advantages in the economic and construction works. It was withdrawn so as not to spoil economic spoils and forget the focus on the professionalism and military performance of the army and cared to update it scientifically, professionally and technologically.

## ***7 Chinese Strategic Leadership System***

The Chinese Leadership system for the government is unique since it is based on collective leadership. Even through the Chinese president has more powers than the other members of the leadership; the leadership system in China is usually composed of the speaker of the parliament and chairman of the Political Consultative Conference of the Chinese People. He is like the Second Parliamentary Assembly, the president, his deputy, the prime minister, the two largest political leaders in the party hierarchy, and the first two phases in the transfer of power after Deng Xiaoping. This leadership was one of the senior commanders of the Chinese army. After that, the tradition was abandoned and all seven of the top echelon of the party became civilian leaders. They reached the party leadership as a result of their work and integrity, and none of them made serious mistakes. However, they are left their positions after the completion of the elections. Two sessions of the five-year parliament each.

The visionary leadership of China are responsible for developing the economy, culture and politics, according to plans developed and prepared from many Chinese research centers and studies in China, then it is studied by different Main Party levels. The strategic plans are

then adopted by the parliament and then the leadership of the ruling party finally there is no official whatever his position can take decisions, unilaterally or at random. Each official is held accountable for its decisions and the Chinese regime makes every official responsible for his decision.

### **8 Final Words**

China is bringing to the world new leadership and management style that worth to be explored for its harmony and peaceful society transformation. More studies however is needed to analyzed and offer critique to this leadership model, in order to have it generalized as the Western Leadership model that we know and practice today.

### **Bibliography**

- GALAL, MOHAMMED NOMAN (2007) ARAB AND CHINESE CULTURES ROLE IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION, A PAPER SUBMITTED TO A SEMINAR IN RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA, DEC. INTERNET SERIES (2009), "CHINA CULTURE: CORE CONCEPTS SERIES ON CHINESE CULTURE POSTED AT THE INTERNET (SERIES OF 8 PARTS). PP.1-6.
- GALAL, MOHAMMED NOMAN (1979) "POLITICS AND CULTURE IN CHINA ", AL-AHRAM CENTER FOR POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC STUDIES, CAIRO, PP.10-12.
- WIKIPEDIA, "CONFUCIUS", AT THE INTERNET .
- KONARD SEITZ (2001), "CHINA: A RISE WORLD POWER", SIENDLERVERLOG , RANDOM HOUSE , GERMANY , CHAPTER 3 ,PP.37-52.
- GALAL, MOHAMED NOMAN (2012) THE CONCEPT OF HARMONY IN CHINESE AND MUSLIM CULTURES : A SEARCH FOR COMMON DENOMINATORS, A RESEARCH PAPER SUBMITTED TO A CONFERENCE ON CHINESE AND MUSLIM CULTURES, CHINESE ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND IRCICA, A TURKISH CENTER IN ISTANBUL AFFILIATED WITH OIC, BEIJING, PP. 5-12.
- CHAN, STEVE (2000) CHINESE PERSPECTIVE ON WORLD ORDER, IN T.V. PAUL & JOHN A. HALL, INTERNATIONAL ORDER: AND FUTURE OF WORLD POLITICS. CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, UK, PP 197-198.
- GALAL, MOHAMMED NOMAN (2013) CHINESE DEVELOPMENT MODEL OF DEMOCRACY" IN, "CHINA DEVELOPMENT: ROAD AND PROSPECTS (ED.), THE INSTITUTE OF CHINA STUDIES, SHANGHAI ACADEMY FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES, SHANGHAI CHINA, FIFTH WORLD FORUM ON CHINA STUDIES ENLIGHTENMENT, PP.46-64.
- MAHBUBANI, KISHORE,(2013),"THE GREAT CONVERGENCE". PUBLIC AFFAIRS, MEMBER OF PERSEUS BOOKS, NEW YORK. PP247-268.
- Clark, J (1997) Oriental Enlightenment and Western Thought, Rutledge, 1997. Translated into Arabic by Shawki Galal, Published in Dec.2007, No.346. Alam Almarifa, Kuwait, PP. 65-90.
- Xiaosi, Ren (2013) The Chinese Dream ", New World Press, Beijing, pp. 101-102 and compare with Mahbubani who builds the concept of convergence on necessity due to the current evolution of humanity op.cit.254-259.
- Galal, Mohammed Noman (2009) China concept of human Rights, A paper submitted to international conference on Human Rights, Beijing, China.

- Zheng Bijian (2012) China's Peaceful Development and Building a Harmonious World, Peoples Publishing House, Beijing, pp.123-185
- Yun Sun (2014) China's peaceful Rise: Peace through Strength, Pac.Net 25, March 31, pp.1-2.
- Abdul Malik, Anwar (2005) On the Origins of Civilizations (in Arabic Language), Al Hilal Book, Egypt.
- Burstein Daniel & kaijzer Arna De(2001) Big Dragon: The Future of China. Translated into Arabic 2001 by Shawki Galal, Alam Almarifa No. 271, Kuwait.
- Galal, Mohammed Noman (1979) Politics and Culture in China, Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies “. Cairo, Egypt.
- Mahbubani, Kishore,(2013) The Great Convergence. Public Affair, Member of Perseus Books, New York
- Zheng, Bijian et al, (2012) China`s Peaceful Development and Building A Harmonious World, People`s Publishing House, Beijing.