

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910791550203321
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Titolo	Harmony and war [[electronic resource]] : Confucian culture and Chinese power politics // Yuan-Kang Wang
Pubbl/distr/stampa	New York, : Columbia University Press, c2011
ISBN	1-282-91929-6 9786612919299 0-231-52240-1
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (329 p.)
Collana	Contemporary Asia in the world
Disciplina	327.51
Soggetti	Confucianism - China - History Confucianism - Political aspects - China - History Power (Social sciences) - China - History Harmony (Philosophy) - Political aspects - China - History Militarism - China - History China History Song dynasty, 960-1279 China History Ming dynasty, 1368-1644 China Military policy China Strategic aspects
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Confucian strategic culture and the puzzle -- Culture and strategic choice -- The northern Song Dynasty (960-1127) -- The southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279) -- The Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) -- The Ming tribute system -- Chinese power politics in the age of U.S. unipolarity.
Sommario/riassunto	Confucianism has shaped a certain perception of Chinese security strategy, symbolized by the defensive, nonaggressive Great Wall. Many believe China is antimilitary and reluctant to use force against its enemies. It practices pacifism and refrains from expanding its boundaries, even when nationally strong. In a path-breaking study traversing six centuries of Chinese history, Yuan-kang Wang resoundingly discredits this notion, recasting China as a practitioner of

realpolitik and a ruthless purveyor of expansive grand strategies. Leaders of the Song Dynasty (960-1279) and Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) prized military force and shrewdly assessed the capabilities of China's adversaries. They adopted defensive strategies when their country was weak and pursued expansive goals, such as territorial acquisition, enemy destruction, and total military victory, when their country was strong. Despite the dominance of an antimilitarist Confucian culture, warfare was not uncommon in the bulk of Chinese history. Grounding his research in primary Chinese sources, Wang outlines a politics of power that are crucial to understanding China's strategies today, especially its policy of "peaceful development," which, he argues, the nation has adopted mainly because of its military, economic, and technological weakness in relation to the United States.
