

Leiden University  
Faculty of Humanities

Master Thesis

---

# Thinking Hybrid

An Exploration of 'Hybrid Warfare' in Chinese Strategic Thought

---

*Author*  
Wolfgang Minatti

*Supervisor*  
Prof. Dr. Isabelle Duyvesteyn

*Student Number*  
2265753

*Second Reader*  
Dr. Lukas Milevski

July 2019



*My biggest thanks to Isabelle Duyvesteyn for her support in a game-changing year, my parents for their open ears, Leonie for the everlasting motivational and intellectual support, Johannes for the inspiring talks and Bernhard for the occasional reality check.*



*Warfare is a great affair of the state.*

*The field of life and death,*

*The way of preservation and extinction.*

*It cannot be left unexamined.*

*(Sun Tzu 2007, 76)*



---

## Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
2	Literature Review .....	3
3	Research Design .....	9
3.1	Strategy and Strategic Thinking.....	9
3.2	The Concept of ‘Hybrid Warfare’.....	10
3.3	Methods .....	11
4	Chinese Strategic Thought.....	13
5	Sun Tzu’s Art of War.....	15
5.1	Sun Tzu’s Strategic Thinking .....	16
5.2	Sun Tzu’s Hybrid Warfare.....	22
6	Mao Tse-Tung’s War of Resistance .....	25
6.1	Mao Tse-Tung’s Strategic Thinking.....	27
6.2	Mao Tse-Tung’s Hybrid Warfare .....	34
7	Conclusion .....	36
8	References.....	<b>Fehler! Textmarke nicht definiert.</b>





## 1 Introduction

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has seen its share of allegedly novel and innovative concepts that claim to explain a changing character of war and the new security challenges the West is facing. While ‘low-intensity’, ‘new’, ‘asymmetric’, and ‘compound’ warfare proved to be little more than buzzwords and failed to gain a foothold in the broader defence community, the concept of ‘hybrid warfare’ managed to consolidate itself. Initially an analytical lens to describe the convergence of conventional and non-conventional tactics on the battlefield (Hoffman 2007), the concept’s meaning gradually expanded along with its rise to prominence within NATO defence circles in the wake of the Crimea crisis (Lasconjarias and Larsen 2015a, 7). It started to encompass both military and non-military means and describe their simultaneous use to achieve synergetic but deniable effects. Hence, hybrid warfare significantly shapes recent transatlantic defence planning and deserves close scrutiny (NATO 2010, 2017).

The concept’s popularity is puzzling not least in light of the substantial criticism that has been levelled against hybrid warfare. Some have argued that the breadth of the concept robs it of most analytical value (Tenenbaum 2015; Almäng 2019; van Puyvelde 2015). Others have criticised the categorisation of warfare in general (Strachan 2013; Gray 2012) and argue that Western notions of war and peace, conventional and non-conventional warfare have manufactured the *problématique* of hybrid warfare (Rinelli and Duyvesteyn 2018). Most importantly, however, scholars have repeatedly called into question the novelty of the phenomenon (Mansoor 2012a; Scheipers 2016). These criticisms have significantly contributed to our understanding and contextualisation of hybrid warfare and led some scholars to conclude that the concept should be dismissed altogether (Caliskan 2019).

While this thesis concurs with this assessment regarding hybrid warfare, it argues that the concept of hybrid warfare has not yet been sufficiently explored from the angle of strategy. Indeed, most studies that engaged with the historicity of hybrid warfare have understood the concept as an analytical framework and failed to consider whether hybridity has historically been part of the strategic considerations of strategic thinkers. Where studies did engage with hybrid warfare as a strategy, they have focused on Western states, failing to take into account

the strategic thought of non-Western and non-state actors. This is unfortunate given that many of today's security challenges are indeed posed by such non-state actors in a non-Western context (Rudolfson 2017; Newman 2014).

Hence, addressing this gap in the literature on hybrid warfare, this thesis examines to what extent hybridity features in the strategic thinking of non-Western and non-state strategists. More specifically, it asks the following question: *what role does 'hybrid warfare' play historically in the written strategic thinking of the two Chinese strategists Sun Tzu and Mao Tse-Tung?* Those two particular thinkers do not only illustrate very well the strategic thought beyond a state-centric and Euro-centric paradigm but also count among the most influential strategists of all times. Moreover, although difficult to compare, both their writings have inspired many subsequent generations and shaped strategic theory until the present (Angstrom and Widen 2015).

The thesis hypothesises that rather than being a novelty, hybridity has indeed always been a characteristic of warfare and strategy, particularly prominent within Chinese strategic thought. Both Sun Tzu and Mao Tse-Tung attribute great importance to hybridity and consider it a fundamental cornerstone of their strategic thought. The simultaneous use of conventional and non-conventional means, the coexistence and coordination of military and non-military means as well as the creation of ambiguity do all feature within the strategists' thinking. While this way of thinking might defy Western norms and codifications of warfare, it by no means constitutes an uncommon or unique way of war. As such, the concept of hybrid warfare creates an unnecessary category which portrays an inherent feature of war and strategy as something novel and extraordinary and thus, should be rebuked by NATO in favour of concepts that more accurately describe current security challenges.

The thesis' relevance is threefold. First, the thesis offers a framework that seeks to clarify the vague and equivocal phenomenon of 'hybrid warfare' to allow for a more meaningful debate. Indeed, the thesis proposes to discard the value-laden term of 'hybrid warfare' and adopt the more neutral label of hybridity instead, separating the broad concept into two specific ones. Second, a deeper understanding of hybridity within the strategic thinking of non-Western strategists challenges the concept's alleged novelty and its utility a category of warfare also

from the viewpoint of strategic thinking. By shedding light on the strategic value which has been attributed to hybridity by strategists, it challenges the often-assumed universality of Western categorisations like conventional and non-conventional warfare. Third, the thesis adds to our understanding of the strategic thinking of non-state actors who have largely been overlooked as active participants to strategic thinking within the literature of strategic studies (Black 2016). Evaluating the role of hybridity within the strategic thinking of non-state actors adds to our conceptual understanding of hybrid warfare but also contributes to our knowledge of rebel strategy.

The thesis will advance its argument in four steps. First, it will review the current debate on hybrid warfare in order to locate this thesis within said debate, explore the concept's different meanings and point towards gaps in the literature. Second, introducing this thesis' research design, it will define key terms, present a methodology and propose an attempt to clarify the concept of hybrid warfare by separating it into two distinct concepts on different levels of abstraction: operational hybridity and strategic hybridity. Third, the thesis will introduce Chinese strategic thought and conduct two interpretive case studies on the strategic thinking of both Sun Tzu and Mao Tse-Tung to explore the role of hybridity within their most significant strategic writings. Last, the thesis will give concluding remarks and present avenues for future research.

## 2 Literature Review

The following section will introduce the literature on hybrid warfare, first by elaborating on the roots and developments of the concept, second by reviewing the offered criticism, and finally by showing the gaps in the current literature.

The concept of hybrid warfare emerged out of the 'new wars' debate on the one hand, and the experiences of the US military in Afghanistan and Iraq on the other. After the Cold War, several scholars suggested that a fundamental change in the nature of war was underway (Münkler 2005; van Creveld 1991; Kaldor 1999). Concepts like asymmetric warfare, fourth-generation warfare and compound warfare popped up, hybrid warfare being one buzzword among many (Johnson 2018, 145). The concept gained wider recognition following a seminal

article authored by Lieutenant Colonel Frank Hoffman and General James Mattis entitled 'Future Warfare' in 2005 (Mattis and Hoffman 2005). Hoffman later expanded on the concept, describing hybrid warfare as

the full range of different modes of warfare including conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts including indiscriminate violence and coercion, and criminal disorder (Hoffman 2007, 8).

Hoffman argued that future wars would be characterised by a convergence of state and non-state actors, of conventional and non-conventional means of warfare and of combatants and non-combatants. To illustrate the trend, Hoffman drew on a case study of the second Lebanon War in 2006 where Hezbollah employed both conventional and irregular tactics against the invading Israeli forces.

Subsequently, the concept became more and more widely adopted, eventually being introduced to both US and NATO defence circles around 2010 (Jacobs and Lasconjarias 2015, 9; Lasconjarias and Larsen 2015a, 7). NATO's initial definition remained relatively close to Hoffman's, defining hybrid threats as

those posed by adversaries, with the ability to simultaneously employ conventional and non-conventional means adaptively in pursuit of their objectives (NATO 2010, 2).

In the wake of the Crimea crisis in 2014, the concept of hybrid warfare rose to its current prominence as NATO officials started to delineate the Russian actions as part of a strategy of hybrid warfare (Veljovski, Taneski, and Dojchinovski 2017, 294). Consequently, the concept was expanded, describing a convergence of both military and non-military means that are employed to achieve a certain political goal (Reichborn-Kjennerud and Cullen 2016, 2). Strategic ambiguity and, more importantly, 'plausible deniability', a concept which describes how means are employed in a way where the perpetrator can disclaim responsibility for its actions, were often referred to as additional elements of hybrid warfare (Lanoszka 2016, 180). This departure from a solely military focus towards a more inclusive concept is mirrored in NATO's current definition of hybrid threats.

Hybrid threats combine military and non-military as well as covert and overt means, including disinformation, cyber attacks, economic pressure, deployment of irregular armed groups and use of regular forces. Hybrid methods are used to blur the lines between war and peace, and attempt to sow doubt in the minds of targets (NATO 2018).

This short historiography has suggested that the concept of hybrid warfare has been subject to changes and disparities. Indeed, four tensions are discernible within the literature on the concept of hybrid warfare: whether it describes state or non-state actors; whether it is an analytical lens or a strategy; whether it describes new security threats or raises awareness to certain challenges; and whether it encompasses only military or also non-military measures.

First, the concept is torn between describing the behaviour of non-state or state actors. Although Hoffman's definition considered both state and non-state actors as capable of employing hybrid warfare, '[i]mplicit was that it would generally be a tactic of insurgent states or non-state actors' (Galeotti 2016, 286). Indeed, observations of hybridity were originally largely deduced from non-state actor behaviour. Walker (1998) applied the concept to the United States' war against Native American tribes, Nemeth (2002) analysed the Chechnyan rebels and, as mentioned above, Hoffman (2007) used Hezbollah as his case study. The concept gained popularity in the wake of ever more non-state actors using sophisticated weaponry and conventional means, thereby challenging prevailing notions within Western militaries that clear categorisation of warfare is both possible and sensible (Reichborn-Kjennerud and Cullen 2016, 1).

However, the 2014 Crimea crisis shifted the focus of hybrid warfare towards state actors, particularly Russia (Chivvis 2017; Lasconjarias and Larsen 2015b). Moreover, hybrid warfare has recently also been applied to states in East Asia, especially China and its policies in the South China Sea (Gawthorpe 2018; Aoi, Futamura, and Patalano 2018; Patalano 2018). Hence, scholars acknowledged that state actors might be able to employ hybrid warfare as well (Veljovski, Taneski, and Dojchinovski 2017). Moreover, their ability to centralise command could lead to advanced synergistic effects when converging different means of warfare, thus posing a considerably larger threat than hybrid non-state actors (Reichborn-Kjennerud and Cullen 2016, 2).

The second tension in the literature is the question of whether hybrid warfare is an analytical framework to explain modern warfare or rather a military doctrine which actors employ to advance their objectives. Originally, the concept of hybrid warfare was one of many attempts to make sense of what appeared to be a fundamentally altered military landscape (Renz and Smith 2016, 3). Hoffman (2007), for one, clearly sought to illuminate the reasons for the recent US military failure in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, Gray (2012, 4) has argued that we should ‘forget qualifying adjectives: irregular war; guerrilla war; nuclear war; naval strategy; counterinsurgent strategy. The many modes of warfare and tools of strategy are of no significance for the nature of war and strategy’. Similarly, Strachan (2013) criticises the emphasis of Western militaries to place operational considerations above strategy as ‘astrategic’. More specifically, Caliskan (2019) opines that hybrid warfare adds little to our understanding of war and strategy but rather decontextualizes conflict. Moreover, Rinelli and Duyvesteyn (2018, 22) have criticised hybrid warfare to be based on a Western notion of war and peace, conventional and non-conventional warfare, which must not necessarily enjoy universal validity. Cusumano and Corbe (2018) also level a normative argument against hybrid warfare as an analytical tool, namely its connotation as an unjust or illegitimate form of warfare which is often implicit in statements of the Western defence community. Angstrom (2017, 841) points towards a similar obstacle, arguing that while the concept’s elasticity makes hybrid warfare a problematic analytical lens ‘with which to understand modern war’, it makes ‘an effective tool with which to debate defense posture and scare-mongering’.

Hence, some scholars have started to consider hybrid warfare a military doctrine or strategy, investigating the active coordination and planning of such warfare by an actor (Lanoszka 2016; Reichborn-Kjennerud and Cullen 2016). As one scholar has argued, ‘[r]ather than being a new form of conflict, hybrid warfare is a strategy that the belligerent uses to advance its political goals on the battlefield by applying military force subversively’ (Lanoszka 2016, 176). Again, this shift largely corresponds to Russia’s activities, more precisely, to an article of the Russian General Staff Valery Gerasimov, sometimes referred to as ‘Gerasimov doctrine’, which has been claimed to be a Russian doctrine of hybrid warfare (Galeotti 2014). However, scholars have shown that such a reading of the article is a gross misinterpretation of

Gerasimov's intentions (Renz 2016; Galeotti 2018). Instead of 'proposing a new Russian way of warfare or a hybrid war', Gerasimov simply outlined what 'he perceives [as] the primary threats to Russian sovereignty' (Bartles 2016, 37). Hence, scholars criticised that hybrid warfare does not actually exist as an autonomous strategy but is rather a label assigned to specific actors by the West (Renz 2016; Rinelli and Duyvesteyn 2018; Kofman and Rojansky 2015). Furthermore, as Scheipers (2016) has argued, the effective convergence of different means of warfare would likely result in contradictory objectives, thus limiting the concept's applicability as an actual strategy.

A third tension can be found in the question of hybrid warfare being a tool to understand future security challenges as opposed to a tool of raising awareness. Some scholars hold that hybrid warfare accurately describes the West's current security challenge (Veljovski, Taneski, and Dojchinovski 2017; Fleming 2011; Lanoszka 2016). Others, more critical of the concept, have argued that hybrid warfare is nothing new but instead has been a fundamental trait of warfare throughout history. Indeed, 'hybridity is at the essence of war as a social activity, as every war forms a potential hybrid of previous ones' (Rinelli and Duyvesteyn 2018, 18). While some have traced hybridity through history on the operational level (Mansoor 2012a), others have highlighted the continuity of hybridity in strategic thought (Scheipers 2016; Galeotti 2016). However, while holding that hybrid warfare is hardly an accurate description of current security challenges, some argue that it can serve to bring to the attention of defence planners the importance to look beyond traditional categorisations, initiating a process of transformation and adaptation (Echevarria II 2016; Reichborn-Kjennerud and Cullen 2016).

Last and most fundamentally, the concept is torn between describing a convergence of military means alone or including non-military means like informational and economic measures as well. Initially, the concept of hybrid warfare focused solely on the convergence of kinetic means but in the wake of Crimea, some, including its creator, have criticised the original concept as too narrow, ignoring non-military means such as information warfare (Hoffman 2014; Fridman 2017). Hence, the current NATO definition of hybrid warfare has expanded the concept so it does not even require a kinetic element and is marked by ambiguity and deniability regarding the employed means (Almäng 2019, 4; Lanoszka 2016). Most critics

hold that hybrid warfare is too broad of a concept to be of use, rendering ‘any threat ... hybrid as long as it is not limited to a single form and dimension of warfare’ (van Puyvelde 2015; Almäng 2019; Tenenbaum 2015). This is especially true for the NATO definition of hybrid warfare, with some scholars arguing that it has become just another term for foreign policy or grand strategy (Caliskan 2019; Renz 2016).

Despite the concept’s tensions and equivocation as well as the criticism levelled against it by academia, hybrid warfare has risen to prominence in defence planning circles, particularly within NATO. While the heated debate on hybrid warfare has furthered our understanding of the complex term and unveiled many of its weaknesses, there are key issues that have yet to be addressed by scholarship.

First, the topic has not yet had sufficient attention from the angle of strategy. Indeed, as Johnson (2018, 158) notes, ‘[w]hat is curiously absent from most of the literature on hybrid warfare is the presence of strategy’ as most accounts engage with the concept as an analytical framework or on an operational or tactical level (for an exception see Caliskan 2019; Scheipers 2016). Historical accounts, moreover, have scrutinised hybrid warfare as an analytical tool but did little inquiry on hybrid warfare in the strategic thinking of past strategists (Mansoor 2012a; Tenenbaum 2015).

Second, while the concept has been used to describe rebel and insurgent behaviour, the perspective of rebel groups has been largely ignored and their strategic thinking is under-researched with regards to hybrid warfare. This is unfortunate since the rebels’ perspective and insights from their strategic endeavour might not only further our understanding of hybrid warfare as a strategy but also shed more light on the historical continuity of hybridity in warfare.

Third, the literature on hybrid warfare is heavily Western-biased. While some scholars have applied the framework to a non-Western setting (Gawthorpe 2018; Ong 2018), the concept nevertheless remains a Western invention to describe – perceived or real – security challenges to the West. While many scholars of strategy concur that strategy is of universal applicability (Luttwak 2001; Gray 2010), others have questioned this approach and criticised the neglect of non-Western strategic minds (Black 2016). Analysing hybrid warfare within a



non-Western context would, therefore, help to contextualise the historical and spatial occurrence of hybridity in warfare.

### 3 Research Design

The review of the literature on hybrid warfare has pointed towards three gaps which this thesis seeks to address by posing the question of what role ‘hybrid warfare’ plays in the strategic thought of non-Western strategists, specifically Sun Tzu and Mao Tse-Tung. However, before proceeding with answering the question, several of its elements need clarification. First, both strategy and strategic thinking have to be defined to clarify the thesis’ scope. Second, the concept of ‘hybrid warfare’ needs further unpacking to make it analytically tangible. Third, the thesis’ method of interpretive case studies used to expand on strategic thinking in a non-Western and non-state context will be introduced.

#### 3.1 Strategy and Strategic Thinking

Strategy has generally been defined as ‘the art or science of shaping means so as to promote ends in any field of conflict’ (Bull 1968, 593). More crisply, one US colonel has referred to strategy as ‘E[nds] + W[ays] + M[ans]’ (Lykke 1989, 2). Notably, there are multiple interdependent levels of strategy. The highest level is grand strategy which refers to the ‘direction and use made of any and all among the total assets of a security community for the purposes of policy as decided by politics’ followed by military strategy, described as the ‘direction and use made of force and the threat of force for the purposes of policy as decided by politics’ (Gray 2013, 2). Next, the operational level translates military strategy into battleplans that guide and coordinate forces within a certain theatre of war. Last, the tactical level addresses the actual conduct of battle and the employment of forces in specific engagements. Ultimately, strategy constitutes a civil-military bridge that translates policy into feasible military plans. Hence, we might consider strategy as the plans to combine political ends with military ways and means (Gray 2010, 7).

Strategic thinking, then, is the act of making up and drafting these plans and can be defined as *the deliberations, considerations and plans which deal with the question of how to achieve a political objective in a conflict by taking into account all levels of strategy*. Thereby, strategic

thinking is necessarily speculative. On the one hand, it is about the ‘making of plans, the fulfilment of which depends on decisions taken by the opponent as well as on those we take ourselves’ (Bull 1968, 595). On the other hand, ‘the context of available resources and technology, the time horizon, the geographical conditions, history, culture, morality, ethical considerations, emotions and intuition need to be incorporated’ as well (Duyvesteyn 2013, 4).

### 3.2 The Concept of ‘Hybrid Warfare’

What the review of the literature on hybrid warfare has suggested is that the concept has become increasingly equivocal and thus, analytically intangible and unmanageable which is why this thesis proposes to separate hybrid warfare into more precise and tangible working concepts. Still, it is necessary to elaborate more on what a concept is in the first place. Sartori (1970, 1039) defined concepts as ‘data containers’ which have three qualities: (1) the *label*, meaning the word used to describe the concept; (2) *extensions*, meaning the sum of empirical events to be described by the concept; and (3) *intensions*, meaning all properties that define the concept (Gerring 1999). The number of intensions automatically influences the concept’s level of abstraction, illustrated by Sartori’s ‘ladder of abstraction’. By moving a concept up or down the ladder, a concept becomes more abstract or more specific as intensions are subtracted or added, influencing the number of extensions it encompasses.

This ladder of abstraction is also relevant to the concept of hybrid warfare as it allows to illustrate ‘the multidimensionality of concepts, particularly insofar as this relates to work on the history of concepts and their changes of meaning over time’ (Mair 2008, 189). Notably, when altering a concept’s level of abstraction, its label should be adapted accordingly. In the case of hybrid warfare, however, scholars have repeatedly altered the concept’s level of abstraction without indicating this change in the label. This has caused much of the conceptual confusion surrounding hybrid warfare outlined in the literature review. To clarify the tensions and ambiguities within the concept of hybrid warfare, it is useful to consider them two instances of the same concept that range on different staves of the ladder of abstraction.

Notably, this thesis will investigate the concept of hybrid warfare in terms of its use as a military strategy, not as an analytical tool which is why hybrid warfare is not confined to state or non-state actors but a strategic consideration viable to any strategic actor. Then, there are

two concepts discernible that describe different strategic postures, one on the bottom end of hybrid warfare's ladder of abstraction, and one on its upper end.

First, what we will call *operational hybridity* is hybrid warfare in a narrow sense. It essentially follows Hoffman's (2007) original definition and focuses on military means, describing the strategic use of the convergence of conventional and non-conventional means of warfare. Hence, operational hybridity can be understood as a military doctrine at the operational level which can be employed by both state and non-state actors.

Second, what we will call *strategic hybridity* is hybrid warfare in a broader sense which follows the definition by NATO (2018). It can be understood as a strategy that seeks to coordinate the simultaneous use of both military and non-military (political, economic and informational) means to achieve a political goal while seeking to create ambiguity about one's intent and deniability regarding the ownership of these means by ways of deception and subversion. It might also be employed by both non-state and state actors although the latter are said to enjoy an advantage due to a more centralised command.

Both operational hybridity and strategic hybridity offer a way to sharpen the edges of the concept of hybrid warfare by separating it into two distinct concepts residing on two different levels of strategy. The departure from the label 'hybrid warfare' towards the more neutral label of hybridity also allows avoiding the use of the unnecessarily value-laden term hybrid warfare has become. As such, operational and strategic hybridity offer a thorough framework with which to examine the role of 'hybrid warfare' within the strategic thinking of Sun Tzu and Mao Tse-Tung.

### 3.3 Methods

To explore the role of hybridity in the strategic thinking of non-Western strategists, the thesis will conduct two exploratory case studies. More specifically, it will employ what Lijphart (1971) referred to as 'interpretive case studies' and what Levy (2008) calls 'theory-grounded case studies'. Starting from a theoretical and conceptual consideration, it seeks to explore the theoretical implications within the cases themselves without necessarily deducting a generalisable theoretical claim (Levy 2008, 5). Hence, guided by the theoretical and conceptual lens of hybridity, the thesis will select case studies that centre on the strategic thinking of specific

actors in order to explore their reflections on both operational and strategic hybridity in warfare. Notably, the study's explanatory power will be largely limited to the selected cases themselves. Nevertheless, as Eckstein (2000, 135) remarks, 'the application of theories to cases can have feedback effects on theorizing' and thus help to advance our general understanding of hybridity in war and strategy as such.

Each case study will scrutinise a specific actor's strategic thinking by conducting a historical inquiry as outlined by Sager and Rosser (2015). Each case will draw on primary sources in the form of the actors' most important military writings and secondary sources to contextualise the actors' strategic thinking historically and culturally. These sources will then be used to construct a narrative of the strategic thinking of the actors from which inferences can be made regarding the role of hybridity in their strategic thinking. The thesis' case selection will be guided by the three gaps identified above which is why each case will discuss the strategic thinking of an actor in a non-Western and non-state context.

First, the thesis will centre on Sun Tzu and his famous treatise *The Art of War*. Written more than two thousand years ago, the treatise is one of the most fundamental and timeless contributions to the field of strategic studies and it is also illustrative of strategic thinking in a non-Western context (Handel 2001, 1; O'Dowd and Waldron 1991, 26). As such, finding hybridity within Sun Tzu's strategic thought would not only show the historicity of the phenomenon but also suggest its central position within strategy and warfare in general.

Second, the thesis will study Mao Tse-Tung's *War of Resistance*, advanced in several pamphlets and writings in the late 1930s. Mao is said to be 'one of the most influential theorists of insurgency in the twentieth century' (Beckett 2001, 70) and his strategic thought has been referred to as a model for subsequent insurgencies from the Vietnamese communists to more recent ones like the Islamic State (Girling 1969; Whiteside 2016; Marks 2007). Hence, Mao's strategic thinking is one of the most important strategic blueprints for violent non-state actors and a clear departure from Western strategic thought. Finding hybridity within Mao's strategic thinking would suggest its prominent role within non-Western, non-state warfare.

Certainly, this case selection limits the analysis to Chinese strategic thought. Nevertheless, Sun Tzu and Mao Tse-Tung illustrate the strategic thinking of completely different historical

periods. Moreover, both have been influential well beyond their own time and thus, it is plausible to assume that elements of their thought did also shape the strategic thinking of later military theorists. As such, these cases only form a first attempt to explore the role of hybridity within non-Western, non-state strategic thinking, but both are meaningful and significant in their own right and beyond.

#### 4 Chinese Strategic Thought

Before transgressing further into the two case studies, it seems reasonable to set the stage by a short discussion of Chinese strategic thought. Interestingly, two major historical studies of strategy start their historical investigation in ancient China (van Creveld 2015; Freedman 2013) which is not surprising given that ‘China has the longest continuous tradition of military literature of any culture, dating from about 500 BCE right through the present’ (Sawyer 2012, 108). While the twentieth century introduced Western military works to China which did make a mark on subsequent strategists, not least Mao Tse-Tung (Marks and Rich 2017, 410), they never superseded the particularities and characteristics of Chinese strategic thought (Sawyer 2012, 108). Not only did many technological innovations like the crossbow and gunpowder emerge in China (Fairbank 1974, 2), strategy itself is ‘a Chinese military term with thousands of years of tradition and culture behind it’ (Thomas 2007, 47). In the so-called Warring States period (400-200BCE), a rich tradition of Chinese strategic thinking developed, Sun Tzu’s writings being only one among many. The ‘Seven Military Classics’, compiled by later rulers and still relied upon today, all stem from this time and form the cornerstone of Chinese strategic thought, serving as the major frame of reference for subsequent writings and reflections on strategy (Sawyer 1993, 17; van Derven 2000, 7).

While both technologies and ideas transpired into the West, the ‘dominant Western understanding of Chinese strategic thought is based on translated sayings and principles’ (Yuen 2014, 13). Much of Chinese strategic thought in the West is only selectively read with simplistic axioms gaining the most prominence (Yuen 2014, 14). Moreover, historical surveys of strategy only have given limited attention to Chinese thought or ignored it altogether (Freedman 2013; van Creveld 2015; Parker 2005).

This is unfortunate as Chinese strategic thought diverges in many respects from a Western understanding of strategy and is a distinct tradition of strategic thinking shaped by the country's historical, cultural and geographical conditions. While Western thought is closely entangled with the use of force, a clear separation of war and peace and conceptualisations of rationality, these elements play a lesser role in Chinese strategic thought. Instead, van Derven (2000, 9) identifies three major elements. A first consideration was the socio-political status of the military. As Fairbank (1974, 4) notes, '[h]ow to keep the military under control within the social order ... became an early focus of Chinese concern'. Thus, civil-military relations remained a central element of strategy from Chinese antiquity to the present. Second, Chinese strategic thought generally holds that war should never be waged for personal glory or gain but 'serve the preservation or the restoration of the perceived cosmological and moral order' (van Derven 2000, 9). The understanding of war as an instrument of politics was another enduring cornerstone of Chinese strategic thought long before Clausewitz noted it in the West (Kane 2007, 113).

Third and most importantly, war was never limited to the occurrence of violence as a Western understanding of the term would suggest (Rid 2012). Since the 'offensive or excessive use of force' was generally opposed (Zhang 2002, 76), military means were considered 'a last resort when disorder had reached such proportions that neither indoctrination in the classical teachings nor suasion by rewards and punishments was efficacious' (Fairbank 1974, 6-7). This gives rise to two diverging elements in Western strategic thought and that of the Chinese. On the one hand, Western strategic thought seeks victory by engaging in decisive battles with maximum force while in Chinese thinking would recommend avoiding battle or else, win by employing minimum force (Handel 2001, 16; van Crevelde 2015, 16). On the other hand, the West's notion of war and strategy focuses narrowly on military strategy and solely military means with non-military means being ranked secondary (Handel 2001, 46). The Chinese, however, adopt a strategic thinking that is 'grand-strategic and systemic in nature' (Yuen 2014, 14). It is grand-strategic as it seeks to employ both military and non-military means, attributing the prevalent role to non-military means (O'Dowd and Waldron 1991, 33). It is systemic as it does not consider the various dimensions that constitute war as a social activity

in isolation (military, economic, organisational and moral) but acknowledges their interdependence and contexts (Yuen 2014, 13).

Notably, Chinese strategic thought is anything but static and has developed throughout the centuries, but although being millennia apart, the strategic thinking of both Sun Tzu and Mao Tse-Tung is illustrative of these three traits as the following chapters will show. As such, ancient China developed a tradition of strategic thought that in some regards differs markedly from Western conceptualisations and continues to shape Chinese strategic thought until today.

## 5 Sun Tzu's Art of War

The Chinese treatise of Sun Tzu, commonly referred to in the West as *The Art of War*, is one of the earliest military writings on strategic thinking and arguably among the most influential to date. Already widely known at its time of origin, more than two thousand years ago in China, it was adopted frequently by later Chinese dynasties. Subsequently, it travelled to Japan and coined the strategic thinking in much of Asia (O'Dowd and Waldron 1991, 25). In the eighteenth century, *The Art of War* became known to the West when a French translation was published for the first time which soon was widely endorsed by military circles in Europe, eventually becoming a standard work of military studies also in the West (Macdonald 2017, 68).

The following analysis will argue that hybridity is an essential trait of Sun Tzu's strategic thinking. First, operational hybridity becomes apparent in his discussion of the interplay between the orthodox and unorthodox, a crucial dialectic in his strategic thinking. Second, strategic hybridity is displayed by Sun Tzu's grand-strategic approach and his emphasis on non-military means next to any military endeavour as well as his frequent recommendation to conceal oneself and one's plans in order to create what today would be called strategic ambiguity. Moreover, his philosophical assumptions, inspired by Taoist dialectics, makes the simultaneous existence of contradictions an essential trait of Sun Tzu's thought, causing the concept of hybridity to emerge much more naturally than in Western philosophical thought.

Sun Tzu's treatise is a so-called *bingfa*, a type of military writing designed to serve as a practical guide for generals and strategists. While *The Art of War* was not the first of its kind, it is the oldest document that survived the centuries. Moreover, it was 'the most succinct, comprehensive and best-structured *bingfa* of the era, offering a systematic analysis of operational tactics combined with the first-known outline theory of military strategy' (Macdonald 2017, 28).

Notably, Sun Tzu as a historical figure and author of *The Art of War* has long been subject to debate. Conventional knowledge holds that the book was authored during the Autumn and Spring Period in China (500BCE) by the military genius Sun Wu at a time when ritualised, aristocratic battle gave way to 'bigger and more disciplined armies of conscripts, coordinated in action by signals and commanded by professional military men with more concern for winning and less for ritual' (Fairbank 1974, 5; Freedman 2013, 44). Because Sun Wu may or may not be a historical figure, some attribute the treatise to the historically well-attested figure of Sun Bin, a military theorist during the Warring States period (400-200BCE). Others argue that *The Art of War* is not a coherent work authored by only one person but a compendium with texts from different authors from different decades (Macdonald 2017, 4). The question of authorship aside, *The Art of War* certainly gives insight into the strategic thinking of one or more persons (hereafter Sun Tzu) several centuries BCE in China.

It should be noted that a multitude of translations of *The Art of War* exists, some of which contradict each other due to the ambiguity and vagueness surrounding some of the ancient Chinese characters (Sullivan 2018). Furthermore, depending on the level of abstraction that is given to certain characters, one arrives at more or less precise meanings and, more importantly, at either the operational or strategic level. However, as Griffith (1971, 43) notes, Sun Tzu's insights should be understood on both the operational and the strategic level. This thesis draws primarily on the translations of Mair (2007) and Ivanhoe (2011). Other translations are used to emphasise diverging interpretations.

## 5.1 Sun Tzu's Strategic Thinking

The central consideration in Sun Tzu's treatise is the achievement of *shih*, a term that is hard to translate but might best be described by 'strategic dominance' (Macdonald 2017, 40). Sun



Tzu likens strategic dominance to the ‘swiftiness of a raging torrent [which] can sweep away boulders’ (Sun Tzu 2007, 92) and to ‘turning over a round boulder at the top of a mountain ten thousand feet high’ (Sun Tzu 2007, 94). Strategic dominance, then, is the tipping point when the balance of forces shifts in one’s favour. Thereby, *shih* is best understood in both an operational and strategic manner: It might describe the tactical advantage in terrain, a psychological weakness in the adversary’s moral, a loophole in the adversary’s defence or an over-reliance on allied support, everything that can be utilised in a decisive manner to achieve victory. Hence, Sun Tzu seeks to gain a comparative advantage over the adversary on a strategic rather than material level to avoid a decision of victory by numbers (Lord 2000, 302). ‘Therefore, he who is skilled in battle places emphasis upon configuration [*shih*] and does not put undue responsibilities on his subordinates’ (Sun Tzu 2007, 93).

The question in Sun Tzu’s strategic thinking then becomes how to achieve *shih*. Inspired by Taoist thought, *The Art of War* offers four dialectical concepts whose employment would lead a strategist to achieve strategic dominance in any conflict. These four dialectics are harmony and chaos; emptiness and solidness; orthodox and unorthodox; and form and formlessness.

Before further examining these dialectics, we should first explore the epistemological and philosophical assumptions of Sun Tzu to get a more substantial understanding of his use of dialectics. Indeed, as Black (2004, 88) notes, Western observers have frequently failed to fully grasp the strategic thought of Sun Tzu due to their failure to acknowledge the role of Taoism, ‘the philosophical basis of the *Art of War*’. The religious and philosophical movement of Taoism originated in the sixth century BCE with an influential work of Lao Tzu although its core ranges back even further into 1100BCE to the dialectical contradictions of *yin* and *yang* (Yuen 2014, 61; Lao Tzu 1982; Cleary 1988, xvi). Notably, Taoist dialectics differ from the in the West more commonly known Hegelian dialectics in the need to resolve dialectical contradictions, thesis and antithesis, in a synthesis. Rather than pursuing such a resolution, Taoist philosophical thought accepts the notion of dialectical monism, which appreciates the bigger whole that is made up of two opposing poles (Yuen 2014, 16). In that sense, dialectics are also not fixed but describe a circle and ‘while remaining in complementary, dynamic tension,

revert to their opposite after reaching their pinnacle or extreme' (Sawyer 2007, 55). This dialectical approach allows Sun Tzu to adopt a more holistic and inclusive perspective on strategy where the 'enemy and even the situation are part of the overall "system" and have been taken into consideration in the first place ... since whatever is the opposite is always complementary' (Yuen 2014, 16).

The first and arguably most central dialectic in Sun Tzu's strategic thinking is that of *ho* and *luan*, harmony and chaos, which gives rise to two diverging sets of prescriptions, the preservation of order and the causing of chaos. On the one hand, Sun Tzu emphasises that one should avoid disrupting harmony in any war, holding that it is best 'to take the opposing country intact, whereas destroying the opposing country is next best. Taking an opposing army intact is best, whereas destroying it is next best' (Sun Tzu 2007, 84). Indeed, Sun Tzu's recommendation 'to subdue the enemy's troops *without* fighting' (Sun Tzu 2011, 17) to minimise the disruption of harmony, induces him to adopt a somewhat larger scope on strategy (Handel 2001, 24). Essentially, Sun Tzu's 'advice is to use the economic, the social and political as an alternative to military action' in both war and peacetime (Coker 2003, 18). Fairbank (1974, 7) attributes this stance to a Confucianist pacifism while Lord (2000, 304) argues that his emphasis on non-military means comes from a pragmatic rather than moral consideration. As war always places a great burden on one's polity and economy, it could possibly disrupt one's own harmony.

On the other hand, chaos should be a tool employed to achieve victory. Sun Tzu 'believed that the political goals of warfare could be achieved by creating a state of chaos (*luan*) in the enemy's society' (O'Dowd and Waldron 1991, 27). Indeed, while chaos should be overcome on one's own side, one should attempt to magnify it on the adversary's side. However, the creation of chaos does not point toward military means but rather 'meant the destruction of the psychological, social, and political order' (O'Dowd and Waldron 1991, 27). Guided by this maxim, Sun Tzu provides a ranking of possible targets in war.

[T]he most superior stratagem in warfare is to stymie the enemy's plans; the next best is to stymie his alliances; the next best is to stymie his troops; the worst is to attack his walled cities (Sun Tzu 2007, 85).

Sun Tzu suggests to disrupt the opponent's plans by 'diplomatic and political bargaining, negotiations, and deception' and ranks the disruption of alliances, again preferably by non-military means, second best (Handel 2001, 44). Only then does he recommend to choose purely military means in the pursuit of one's objective. As Yuen (2008, 188) points out, this emphasis on non-military means blurs the distinction between war and peacetime. Indeed, disrupting plans and alliances is not confined to wartime and thus, defies the narrower Western definition of military strategy.

A second dialectic is that of *hsu* and *shih*, emptiness and solidness. Understood on a tactical level, emptiness refers to a poorly defended position and solidness to a fortified position. However, on a strategic level, emptiness hints at weak moral or illegitimate generalship and solidness at high troop morale and strong leadership (O'Dowd and Waldron 1991, 31). Both *hsu* and *shih* are in constant flux and should be exploited to confuse the adversary and lead it to attack or target those positions or factors most disadvantageous to it. Sun Tzu likens this effect to 'a grindstone [thrown] on an egg' as an example of 'emptiness and solidity' (Sun Tzu 2007, 92).

A third dialectic is that of *ch'i* and *cheng* whose translations are manifold. While *cheng* describes something 'traditional, correct and proper' and is most commonly translated as orthodox, *ch'i* delineates the 'unpredictable and unorthodox' (Macdonald 2017, 33). Sun Tzu holds that the 'basic battle configurations are only the conventional [*cheng*] and the unconventional [*ch'i*]' (Sun Tzu 2007, 92), thus attributing central importance to this dialectic. Notably, strategic dominance (*shih*) 'derives from the *combination* [emphasis by author] of both' (Lord 2000, 303). Indeed, Sun Tzu holds that it 'is common to join battle with conventional tactics and to achieve victory through unconventional tactics' (Sun Tzu 2007, 92). Notably, this dialectic does not necessarily equal the Western categorisation of conventional and non-conventional warfare as 'the orthodox and unorthodox are situationally defined', depending on the expectations of the adversary (Sawyer 2007, 64; Lau 1965, 331). Moreover, the two concepts are dialectically related as '[i]ndirectness and directness, in a mystical way, are considered to be part of the same substance or energy. A *cheng* force can turn into a *ch'i* force, and a *ch'i* force can become a *cheng* force' (O'Dowd and Waldron 1991, 30).

The tactical meaning of the dialectic becomes apparent in Griffith's (1971) translation of the above-quoted sentence when he translates that '[i]n battle there are only the normal [*cheng*] and extraordinary [*ch'i*] forces' (Sun Tzu 1971, 92), thus equating *ch'i* and *cheng* with types of forces. Understood in this way, Sun Tzu argues to simultaneously employ both orthodox and unorthodox units during an engagement, the former to 'engage and fix the enemy', the latter to achieve 'surprise and maneuver' (Lord 2000, 303). At the time, unorthodox forces might have conducted night-time raids, flank attacks or diversionary manoeuvres (Sawyer 2007, 64). Other translators have understood this dialectic on an operational level. Ames (1994, 64) translates the terms with 'irregular and regular deployments' while Cleary (1988, xli) even refers to them as 'orthodox and guerrilla methods of war'. Such a perspective would understand this dialectic as the employment of different forms of warfare.

Notably, both interpretations have been criticised by sinologists. While the *ch'i/cheng* dialectic was indeed often interpreted by later (Chinese) strategists as tactical or operational concepts and the 'terms ... sometimes apply to forces, as in the phrase *ch'i ping* ... in general they have much wider application than that' (Lau 1965, 330; Graff 2007, 911). Indeed, even Griffith (1971, 43) notes that this dialectic should be considered on a strategic level as well. Wey (2014, 134) suggests that, strategically, *ch'i* and *cheng* should be understood as the simultaneous and interrelated use of military and non-military means. This sounds reasonable in the light of a famous Taoist saying that goes '[w]ith the orthodox govern the state, with the unorthodox employ the army' (Lao Tzu 1982, vs. 57).

A last dialectic in the strategic thinking of Sun Tzu is that of *hsing* and *wu hsing*, form and formlessness. He seeks to 'cause my enemy to reveal his dispositions [*hsing*] while hiding my own [*wu hsing*]. Thus, my forces are intact while those of my enemy are divided' (Sun Tzu 2007, 97). Yuen (2008, 188) notes that Sun Tzu understands form not in a physical but rather systemic sense. As such, two sets of prescriptions can be deduced from this dialectic, to unveil the adversary's *hsing* and to conceal one's own to achieve *wu hsing* (Lord 2000, 304).

On the one hand, Sun Tzu argues that a strategist should try to unveil one's adversary's form, stating that '[h]e who knows his opponent and knows himself will not be imperiled in a hundred battles' (Sun Tzu 2007, 87). Consequently, he devotes a whole chapter to the

question of espionage as a tool to gather intelligence about one's adversary. Sun Tzu 'views intelligence as one of the most important force multipliers available to political and military leaders' which is why he 'emphasizes the need for meticulous intelligence-related preparations before the outbreak of war and preceding each campaign and battle' (Handel 2001, 177). Notably, Sun Tzu's conceptualisation of intelligence goes beyond the mere gathering of factual information. He includes a psychological dimension as well which 'addresses the necessity to correctly grasp and evaluate the intentions, traits, and thought patterns of the enemy's decision maker' (Yuen 2008, 190). Only this allows to correctly assess an adversary's *hsing* and employ an according strategy.

On the other hand, Sun Tzu holds that one should try to conceal one's own form. '[T]he extreme skill in showing one's positions may reach to the degree of there seeming to be no position. When there are no positions [*wu hsing*], even deeply planted spies cannot detect them, and even a wise foe will not be able to make plans against me' (Sun Tzu 2007, 99). Like before, this dialectic should be understood both operationally and strategically as the 'enemy must be physically misdirected on the ground and mentally wrong-footed in his planning and preparations, in both cases expending valuable energy and resources before battle' (Macdonald 2017, 35–36)

Thus, on an operational level, *wu hsing* should be understood as the utilisation of feints and facades. Sun Tzu recommends to 'take a circuitous route to reach the enemy, tempt him with advantages' (Sun Tzu 2007, 101). By compelling the adversary to anticipate one's tactics, one would have the possibility to concentrate one's forces for a decisive blow while the adversary either concentrates his forces on a wrong position, due to bad intelligence, or has to disperse his troops to cover all possibilities (Sun Tzu 2007, 97).

On a strategic level, *wu hsing* should be understood as formlessness in a more abstract sense. Indeed, Sun Tzu recommends to '[p]onder and weigh before moving. He who is the first to know the planning of how to make the circuitous [*wu hsing*] straight [*hsing*] will be victorious' (Sun Tzu 2007, 102). Hence, while strategy is by its definition something to be countered, Sun Tzu suggests that a good strategy, through the use of *wu hsing*, 'will remain undetected and thus not countered' (Yuen 2008, 188). Far from only keeping one's plans

ambiguous, formlessness should also allow a strategist to provoke a particular response from the adversary.

The achievement of such formlessness necessitates two elements. First, one needs the ability to adapt. A ‘body of soldiers has no constant configuration ... [just like] a body of water has no constant form. He who can gain victory in accordance with the transformations of the enemy is called daemonic’ (Sun Tzu 2007, 99). Second, Sun Tzu recommends the use of deception. ‘War is premised on deception’ and ‘[t]he prime concern in war is carefully attending to the enemy’s intentions ... This is known as “using cleverness to achieve success.”’ (Sun Tzu 2011, 102, 82). Notably, Sun Tzu employs a rather broad understanding of deception, covering both military and non-military measures that must be employed before and during war. These include ‘both active and passive measures, from elaborate deception plans, simple baits, and diversion, to secrecy and concealment’ (Handel 2001, 167).

## 5.2 Sun Tzu’s Hybrid Warfare

Having outlined both the historical context of Sun Tzu’s writings and his strategic thinking in the form of four dialectics, we can now ascertain the role of hybridity within his strategic thought.

Operational hybridity, meaning the convergence of conventional and non-conventional means on an operational level, clearly finds resemblance within the *ch’i/cheng* dialectic. Understood as tactical concepts, Sun Tzu recommends the use of two kinds of units, one employing orthodox, the other unorthodox means in a single engagement, for example the joint employment of frontal and flank attacks. Understood operationally, the dialectic can be interpreted as the use of different methods of warfare, like guerrilla warfare and compound warfare.

What renders this dialectic a manifestation of operational hybridity is, first, Sun Tzu’s emphasis on the simultaneous use of *ch’i* and *cheng* when he states that it ‘is common to join battle with conventional tactics and to achieve victory through unconventional tactics’ (Sun Tzu 2007, 92). Second, he emphasises the dialectical monist nature of the two approaches where both poles form the extremes of a circle, always in flux, converging and diverging, with a *ch’i* approach becoming *cheng* and vice versa. Both of these considerations clearly suggest

the central role of operational hybridity as Sun Tzu actively encourages to simultaneously employ and to converge and blur orthodox and unorthodox means into each other.

Notably, Sun Tzu's dialectic of the unorthodox and the orthodox should not simply be equated with Western categorisations of conventional and non-conventional warfare because the classification as *ch'i* and *cheng* essentially depends on the expectation of the adversary. Nevertheless, in a Western context, both approaches might very well concur with these categorisations. For example, when Russia annexed Crimea, the West would have considered a conventional invasion *cheng*, while the 'little green men' were arguably *ch'i* forces. In Hoffman's case of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War, irregular warfare would have been *cheng* for the Israeli forces while the conventional defence they encountered was *ch'i*.

Strategic hybridity, the simultaneous use of military and non-military means in an ambiguous and deniable manner, can equally be found in Sun Tzu's strategic thought. The importance of military and non-military means finds its equivalent in Sun Tzu's *ho/luan* dialectic of harmony and chaos. While Sun Tzu sees causing chaos on the adversary's side as pivotal, his concern of maintaining harmony leads him to adopt a grand-strategic perspective on war. While by no means belittling the role of military action, he emphasises that such actions should always be preceded and accompanied by non-military means like diplomacy, economic pressure or deception. Such thinking can also be deduced from the *ch'i/cheng* dialectic, when understood on a strategic level, describing the interrelated use of non-military (*cheng*) and military (*ch'i*) means. Hence, the combination of 'military and non-military as well as covert and overt means', as NATO (2018) defines hybrid warfare, and the resulting blurring between war and peace would by no means have surprised Sun Tzu. Rather, it is an integral part of his strategic thought and he would warn of the 'militarization of war' more common in the West (Yuen 2014, 109).

The second aspect of strategic hybridity, ambiguity and deniability, finds its correspondence in the *hsing/wu hsing* dialectic of form and formlessness. On the one hand, the idea of formlessness, of one's dispositions equating 'that of water' (Sun Tzu 2007, 99), closely resembles the idea of strategic ambiguity where one purposefully cloaks one's intentions and plans to create advantageous situations (Eisenberg 1984; Sawyer 2007, 59). On the other hand, Sun

Tzu emphasises the element of deception in the pursuit of formlessness, stating that ‘[w]arfare is a way of deception’ (Sun Tzu 2007, 78). Again, covering both military and non-military means, deceptive measures should conceal one’s intention, and divert the adversary’s attention, something which could very well entail measures to ensure deniability. Deceptive manoeuvres, secretive plans and disinformation campaigns are all viable tools in the strategic thinking of Sun Tzu, not least in light of the importance he attributes to intelligence. Moreover, as the discussion of emptiness (*hsu*) and chaos (*luan*) has shown, one might not only target military and physical positions but also the adversary’s moral, the legitimacy of its leadership, and the stability and order of its polity and society to create exploitable weaknesses. Interestingly, similar concerns have recently been voiced in the debate on hybrid warfare in the context of resilience (Thiele 2016).

Looking beyond the empirical manifestations of hybridity in Sun Tzu’s strategic thinking, there is an epistemological point to make as well. Arguably, the relational Taoist philosophy renders the assumptions underlying Sun Tzu’s strategic thinking quite different from Western thought. Indeed, the four paradox dialectics are ‘fundamental Chinese philosophical concepts’, and thus, at the heart of Chinese strategic thought as well (O’Dowd and Waldron 1991, 33). As noted above, rather than resolving the contradiction of two opposite poles in a synthesis as Western (Hegelian) dialectics would, Taoist dialectics acknowledge the idea of a dialectical monism (Yuen 2014, 13). Consequently, hybridity might be as challenging and unexpected to Western strategic thought precisely because it falls short of offering a synthesis in a Hegelian sense. Rather, it constitutes a form of dialectical monism: two apparently contradicting approaches to war co-existing, converging and forming a larger whole without ever consciously resolving their contradiction. In a way then, hybridity, it could be argued, is a fundamental building block of Taoist philosophical thought which manifests itself not least in the strategic thinking of Sun Tzu.

In conclusion, we have seen that hybridity not only features prominently in the strategic thought of Sun Tzu but more importantly, is actively sought and recommended as the most elaborate and auspicious way of war. Hence, the relevance of hybridity seems to be nothing new but more than two thousand years old. Interestingly, the underlying philosophical



assumptions of Sun Tzu's strategic thinking seem to have facilitated the emphasis on hybridity. Given the diametral difference of Taoist philosophy to Western thought, however, this might indeed explain the different positioning of hybridity within Western and Chinese strategic thinking and the difficulty the West has to grasp the concept. Thus, having ascertained the role of hybridity within Sun Tzu's strategic thinking, we turn to Mao Tse-Tung.

## 6 Mao Tse-Tung's War of Resistance

In the midst of the Chinese Civil War and the Japanese invasion of China, one member of the Chinese Communist Party made a hitherto largely neglected way of war, insurgency, prominent by outlining a clear and concise military strategy that promised victory for those hopelessly inferior to their adversaries. Thereafter, Mao Tse-Tung's strategic thinking has frequently been reduced to tactical considerations on guerrilla warfare, not least because his most famous treatise in the West has been *On Guerrilla Warfare*, translated by Samuel Griffith (Singh 2013, 558; Mao 1961). However, this falls short of the breadth of Mao's thinking which does by no means limit itself to purely military and tactical considerations (Marks 2009, 17).

The following section will show that hybridity forms an essential element in Mao Tse-Tung's strategic thinking. Operational hybridity is an important part of Mao's three-staged protracted war where mobile warfare and guerrilla warfare are simultaneously employed in varying constellations. Strategic hybridity prominently features in Mao's understanding of war and politics which he considered being part of a continuum. The army should at no point limit itself to military tasks but employ non-military means as well, be it political mobilisation, political warfare or international diplomacy. Moreover, Mao emphasised the need to deceive one's adversary to create ambiguity and thus, offset one's inferiority.

To fully understand Mao's strategic thinking, we first need to explore the particular historical and military context he lived in. In 1927, China's nationalist Kuomintang government launched a communist purge, killing thousands of members of the Chinese Communist Party and ousting the survivors (Griffith 1961, 15). This forced the communists to regroup in the countryside of Jiangxi, giving up their plans of urban revolution by the proletariat and seeking to instigate a rural peasant insurgency instead (Singh 2013, 559). Over the next years, the

Kuomintang conducted several encirclement campaigns against communist bases, the last of which almost led to the communists' total destruction and forced them to retreat to the Northern Chinese hinterland in what became known as the 'Long March' in 1935 (Laqueur 2004, 247; Girling 1969, 81). During these years, Mao Tse-Tung, until then a lower party official, managed to consolidate his position as military leader of the communist insurgency. The situation again fundamentally changed when Japan invaded Northern China in 1937, soon controlling most cities and communication lines while China's vast countryside remained relatively free (Singh 2013, 559). The common enemy led communists and the Kuomintang to collaborate from 1938 onwards in what they called a 'united front' which collapsed in 1941. After Japan's defeat in 1945, the communists managed to rush into abandoned Manchuria and seize the relinquished Japanese weaponry to face the Kuomintang (Record 2007, 42). In 1949, they expelled the Kuomintang to Taiwan, securing final victory in a decades-long war and founding the People's Republic of China.

Notably, Mao's writings, and with them the development of his strategic thinking, span across several decades from his early adolescence to his senior years as Chinese head of state. However, it was in the midst of the Chinese Civil War, specifically in the late 1930s, when Mao laid out the fundamental elements of his 'War of Resistance', universalising his strategic experiences and considerations in a clear framework of 'revolutionary war' (Katzenbach and Hanrahan 1955, 322). After emerging victoriously from the decades-long Chinese Civil War, Mao's strategic thinking quickly gained fame as China set out to disseminate, re-publish and translate Mao's writings (Johnson 1973). Fellow revolutionaries saw in Mao's strategic thinking a blueprint or at least an inspiration for their own struggle, most notably the Vietnamese during the first and second Indochina War, while Western observers modelled their counter-insurgency strategies based on Mao's insights (Girling 1969; Katzenbach and Hanrahan 1955; Laqueur 2004).

Scholars have recently questioned the relevance of Mao's strategic thinking. Some have argued that structural circumstances significantly facilitated the strategy's success, most notably the Japanese invasion, which had weakened Mao's primary adversary, the Kuomintang (Marks 2007, 9; Joes 2004, 200; Record 2007, 40). Others have more fundamentally questioned

the validity of Mao's strategic thought, arguing that the communists' actual strategy did not conform with many of Mao's strategic aspirations (Grice 2019; Porch 2011). While these objections hold valuable insights into the practical implementation of Mao's strategic thought, they hardly discredit his strategic thinking and its influence on both his and subsequent insurgencies. As Rich (2018, 1067) aptly puts it, '[i]s our view of Clausewitz's military thought centrally shaped by what he did or did not achieve in Russia after Napoleon's invasion in 1812?'

Hence, the following analysis will largely draw on Mao's military writings from the late 1930s, specifically *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*, *Problems of Strategy in Guerrilla War against Japan* and *On Protracted War*. Notably, Mao's most important works were originally designed as lectures and should 'be read as a morale builder for the hard-pressed Chinese forces' (Johnson 1968, 440). Moreover, it is contested whether some texts have actually been written by Mao himself (Schram 1963, 63). In his writings, Mao 'used a simple language sprinkled with images, summed up in short phrases which are easy to remember and therefore to apply ... His exposition of theory, always related to concrete fact, is rarely thorough and systematic' (Guillermaz 1977, 142).

### 6.1 Mao Tse-Tung's Strategic Thinking

During the Chinese Civil War, Mao encountered two central problems that prompted his strategic thinking, both of which he considered in *On Protracted War*. First, Mao fully acknowledged his own military inferiority and the superiority of his adversaries. Nevertheless, Mao believed that the adversary could be defeated and warned against those 'subjugationists' unwilling to resist (Mao 1966, 199). Second, and as a consequence of the former, Mao held that quick victory was utterly unrealistic. Instead, one should follow a set of political, strategic and tactical considerations Mao labelled 'War of Resistance' which he believed would not only guarantee survival but also prepare his insurgency for an eventual counter-offensive (Tsou and Halperin 1965, 84).

As Katzenbach (1962, 12) argues, military doctrine commonly knows three tangible components, weapons, supplies and personpower, and three intangible ones, space, time and will. While Western doctrine usually seeks to optimise the former three, Mao took a different

approach (Katzenbach 1962, 13). Given his notorious weakness in both weaponry and supplies, he emphasised personpower instead and sought to utilise the intangible components of strategy. Hence, Mao's central endeavour was to retreat in space and trade it for the organisation of 'time made available to secure the right or "correct" political will' (Rich 2018, 1067). This in turn would ensure survival until parity between the two belligerents was achieved. Hence, Mao's theory was essentially 'a theory of substitution: substitution of propaganda for guns, subversion for air power, men for machines, space for mechanization, political for industrial mobilization' (Katzenbach and Hanrahan 1955, 327). This, in turn, necessitated that his War of Resistance needed to be protracted.

Before transgressing into the more detailed account of Mao's prescriptions, it is necessary to discuss his understanding of war and politics. Explaining the relation between the two, Mao cited Clausewitz, who he had allegedly read in Chinese translation: 'War is the continuation of politics' (Mao 1966, 226; Marks and Rich 2017, 410). However, Mao went beyond Clausewitz when adopting a more dialectical notion of war and politics. Arguing that '[p]olitics is war without bloodshed while war is politics with bloodshed', he acknowledged that rather than just being a continuation of politics, war and politics form two contradictory aspects that necessarily coexist and interrelate at all times (Mao 1966, 227; Tsou and Halperin 1965, 91).

Seeing military and political affairs forming a continuum induced Mao with a holistic, almost grand-strategic, view on war and means of warfare (Adie 1972, 1). Considering the establishment of a communist counter-state as the overriding political goal, his strategic analysis consisted essentially of two parts, military and political means, since '[w]herever there is war, there is a war situation *as a whole* [emphasis by author]' (Mao 1966, 81; Marks and Rich 2017, 410). Any strategic endeavour necessarily needed to advance along multiple lines, only one of them being military means (Marks 2009, 17). In that sense, as Shy and Collier (1986, 839) remark, Mao 'diverged markedly from traditional Western military thought, with its fairly rigid distinctions between war and peace, and between political and military affairs'. Notably, Mao considered military means the most decisive element of struggle as early as 1927 when he stated that 'political power grows out of the barrel of a gun' (Mao 1966, 274; Schram 1994, 128). But although he argued that it would be armed struggle and the organisational form of

the army which would decide on victory, he rigidly opposed a 'purely military viewpoint' (Mao 1966, 98). The army should at no point limit itself to military operations but advance along non-military lines as well. As Powell (1968, 248) noted, Mao's strategic thinking 'consists of closely coordinated political, economic and psychological policies, as well as military strategy, tactics and techniques; that is, the doctrine combines "armed struggle" with "other forms of struggle"'.

Turning to armed struggle and military means first, Mao pursued two fundamental military goals by the employment of violence. First, he sought 'to preserve one's own strength and destroy that of the enemy' (Mao 1966, 155). By destruction, Mao did not mean the physical destruction of the adversary but rather depriving it of its power to resist. Second, he sought to carve out space by violent means necessary for the 'other struggle', non-military means to mobilise the people and establish a counter-state (Marks and Rich 2017, 411). Mao sought to achieve this in a so-called protracted war which would unfold in three stages, strategic defensive, strategic stalemate and strategic offensive, marked by a gradual escalation culminating in conventional defeat of the adversary. Mao neatly summed up its basic premise in the sixteen-character Chinese slogan: 'the enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue' (Mao 1965a, 124).

The first stage of Mao's protracted war, strategic defensive, would be marked by a steady advance of one's opponent. Oneself should retreat to avoid decisive battle against a superior adversary. Regarding operational postures, Mao held that 'the form of fighting we should adopt [during the first stage] is primarily mobile warfare, supplemented by guerrilla and positional warfare' (Mao 1966, 211). For Mao, mobile and positional warfare were conducted by regular units under centralised command, the former being a kind of highly mobile manoeuvre warfare, the latter indicating battle for territory. Guerrilla warfare, however, should be employed by loosely connected, locally active forces which were integrated into the overall strategic endeavour but enjoyed operational autonomy (Singh 2013, 566–67). However, 'Mao placed little emphasis on military actions against government forces in this stage', focusing instead on non-military means, political organisation and mobilisation (Moriarty 2010, 479).

The shift to the second stage, strategic stalemate, should occur when the adversary halts its advance and seeks to consolidate its gains. Mao held that during this stage ‘our form of fighting will be primarily guerrilla warfare, supplemented by mobile warfare’, thus reversing the balance between mobile and guerrilla warfare (Mao 1966, 212). Both local guerrilla forces and the regular army should now engage in guerrilla warfare, in what Mao described as ‘the most trying period’ (Mao 1966, 214). They would work together in infiltrating occupied territories of the adversary to exhaust its material and personpower on the one hand and arouse the people on the other (Singh 2013, 570). The ultimate objective of this phase would still not be a military one but rather the undermining of the adversary’s legitimacy and the mobilisation of the population.

The third stage, strategic offensive, would be launched when one had gained military superiority over the adversary by ways of mobilisation during the former stages. Then, Mao argued, the ‘primary form of fighting will still be mobile warfare, but positional warfare will rise to importance ... guerrilla warfare will again provide strategic support by supplementing mobile and positional warfare, but it will not be the primary form as in the second stage’ (Mao 1966, 214). One would launch a conventional counter-offensive to annihilate one’s adversary and establish a new state. Hence, this stage was indeed primarily military-focused although ‘[i]n addition to these large-scale conventional attacks, political and propaganda efforts are designed to deliver the final blow to the crippled ruling regime’ (Moriarty 2010, 480).

Two relations in Mao’s protracted war need closer scrutiny. The first relation is that between the regular army and the guerrilla forces. Mao elaborated on their coordination on all levels of strategy arguing that an ‘understanding of this relation is very important for effectiveness in defeating the enemy’ (Mao 1966, 165). Strategically, guerrilla warfare should always be coordinated with regular warfare, the former exhausting and dispersing the adversary, the latter delivering the final blow (Katzenbach and Hanrahan 1955, 329). Moreover, guerrilla forces should be slowly turned into regular units, thus forming a kind of entry point for Mao’s army (Mao 1966, 246). On an operational and tactical level, Mao emphasised the synergetic effects of the coordinated employment of both regular and guerrilla forces (Mao 1966, 166).

Moreover, Mao emphasised that a carefully balanced mix between the two forms of warfare is crucial, repeatedly criticising those tending towards only one of them. On the one hand, he criticised ‘flightism’, where people ‘only retreat, never advance’, relying solely on guerrilla warfare. Without escalating to conventional warfare, Mao held, an adversary could not be defeated and resistance was thus pointless (Mao 1966, 245). On the other hand, he was equally critical of ‘recklessness’, where people ‘only advance, never retreat’, underestimating the adversary and thus, conventionalising their forces before the circumstances allow for the strategic offensive. Mao considered this short-sighted as it would create unrepairable losses for nothing more than a few gains in territory (Mao 1966, 245; Handel 2001, 37).

The second relation worth scrutinising is that between strategy and tactics. Mao repeatedly made the point that one should take one’s adversary seriously on a tactical level, likening them to ‘iron tigers’, but should not overestimate them on a strategic level, where they are ‘paper tigers’ (Guillermaz 1977, 134). Consequently, Mao argues that tactically, one should ‘pit ten against one’, but strategically, one could afford to ‘pit one against ten’ (Schram 1988, 55). This translates into Mao’s call to wage a protracted war that is strategically defensive but tactically offensive, that seeks to disperse forces to evade decisive engagements on a strategic level while concentrating forces tactically to fight quick decisive battles and score tactical victories (Womack 2001, 115; Mao 1966, 157). These local tactical victories would consequently add up to contribute to the overall war on a strategic level and allow to advance further through the stages (Mao 1966, 254).

As has become apparent, throughout the three stages of protracted war, Mao envisioned a varying mix of military and non-military means, with only the last stage being primarily military. Indeed, Mao remarked that to ‘wish for victory and yet neglect political mobilization is like wishing to “go south by driving the chariot north”’ (Mao 1966, 228). For Mao, non-military means would not only act as a force-multiplier but ‘if used properly, could make violence itself secondary’ (Marks and Rich 2017, 411). As the revolution’s instrumental arm, it was the army which was to implement such non-military action. ‘His troops were indoctrinated to be more than just fighters, and they were urged not to rely on a few political workers to put into effect the propagation of ideology’ (Mackinlay 2009, 19). Rather, the army should fulfil

societal functions by serving as moral and organisational societal centre, it should fulfil economic functions by participating in agriculture, industry and transport, and it should fulfil political functions by mobilising and influencing the population (Guillermaz 1977, 138–39). Within Mao's War of Resistance, he envisioned three non-military functions for the army, mobilisation and organisation of the population; the disintegration of the adversary; and international diplomacy (Marks 2007, 2009; Ucko and Marks 2018).

First, political mobilisation and organisation was arguably the most important non-military function performed by the army as Mao noted that 'the richest source of power to wage war lies in the masses of the people' (Mao 1966, 260). The army would be dependent on the people for support, both in terms of sustenance and recruits. Popular mobilisation would enlarge the movement and establish shadow-governance structures which could consequently be utilised when taking over the state (O'Neill 2005, 60). Moreover, a mobilised and sympathising population would provide intelligence, another crucial asset for success in Mao's strategic thinking (Johnson 1968, 437). Mao likened this relationship to fish, who need the sea to survive (Schram 1988, 47).

To achieve these synergetic effects between army and population, Mao proposed three mechanisms. The first mechanism was the 'mass line', Mao's version of popular participation, where the army would inquire about grievances and aspirations of the people, connect them to the party's ideology and overall strategy, and then propagate the adapted solutions to the people (Marks 2007, 7; Johnson 1968, 438). However, as Schram (1994, 129) emphasises, this process was not meant to implement what the masses wanted but rather to make them believe that what the communists did was what they had wanted all along.

A second mechanism of mobilisation was the 'united front', a narrative of internal unity against a common enemy in the form of an outside power or an inside power collaborating with outsiders (Marks and Rich 2017, 411). Mao understood that by appealing to nationalism, a far greater share of the population could be mobilised than if he would have limited himself to purely communist demands (Marks 2007, 11). Mao emphasised the need to 'built up a united front' early on because '[i]n the second stage, we will have to call upon the whole country resolutely to maintain a united government, we will have to oppose splits and



systematically improve fighting techniques, reform the armed forces, mobilize the entire people and prepare for the counter-offensive' (Mao 1966, 213).

A last mechanism was fighting itself as Mao stated that the 'Red Army fights not merely for the sake of fighting but to conduct propaganda among the masses, organize them, arm them, and help them to establish revolutionary political power. Without these objectives, fighting loses its meaning' (Mao 1965a, 106). This, in turn, prompted Mao to demand that both army and guerrilla forces should only engage in battle if tactical victory was certain since every victory would arouse people and assist in mobilisation efforts, every defeat would cause disillusionment (Shy and Collier 1986, 840).

The second non-military function of the army was political warfare whereby Mao meant to '*disintegrate the enemy, dissolve his old loyalties, destroy his organisations, demoralize, confuse and reduce him to general ineffectiveness*' (Fuller 1958, 142). Propaganda would serve to undermine the adversary's troop's moral, good treatment of prisoners of war would encourage defection and the engagement in half-earnest diplomacy and negotiations would undermine the adversary's will to fight (Marks 2007, 8; Tsou and Halperin 1965, 91; Mao 1966, 302). Most importantly, however, one should attempt to transfer 'the uncertainties of war to the enemy while securing the greatest possible certainty for ourselves' (Mao 1966, 240). Indeed, Mao stated, borrowing from Sun Tzu, that '[t]here can never be too much deception in war' (Mao 1966, 239). Here, Mao returned to the function of the population as a provider of intelligence and sought to turn this feature against his adversary. 'When the mass support is sufficiently good to block the leakage of news, it is often possible by various ruses to succeed in leading the enemy into a morass of wrong judgements and actions so that he loses his superiority and the initiative' (Mao 1966, 239).

As a third non-military function, Mao believed that one should try to get international support either to put further pressure on one's adversary or to receive aid by outside donors. This would become especially prevalent in the third stage of the protracted war because 'China's strength alone will not be sufficient, and we shall also have to rely on the support of international forces' (Mao 1966, 214). Notably, however, this demand stood somewhat in contrast to Mao's calls for self-reliance in later writings, in which he favoured reliance on the

population over dependence on external donors (Mao 1965b, 191). However, the engagement in international diplomacy as a non-military means got more pronounced in subsequent adaptations of Mao's strategic thinking, for example in the communist insurgency in Vietnam (Marks 2007, 8; Chinh 1963, 147).

## 6.2 Mao Tse-Tung's Hybrid Warfare

Having described the historical context of Mao Tse-Tung's writings and outlined his strategic thinking, we can now proceed to examine the role of hybridity within his strategic thought.

Operational hybridity, the convergence on conventional and non-conventional means on an operational level, is clearly apparent in Mao's strategic thinking, particularly in his discussion of the three-phased protracted war and the interplay between mobile warfare and positional warfare, two conventional forms of war, as well as guerrilla warfare, a non-conventional form. What renders this an instance of operational hybridity, is, first, Mao's acknowledgment that the specifics of each strategic stage would necessitate alternating the emphasis on the specific kinds of warfare. Hence, in each stage, mobile, positional and guerrilla warfare would be simultaneously employed by varying degrees. Indeed, he always opposed those who opted for a singular approach, the 'reckless' and 'flightists', limiting themselves to conventional or non-conventional means only (Mao 1966, 245).

Second, Mao explicitly emphasised the need to coordinate mobile warfare and guerrilla warfare on all levels of strategy to make best use of their individual strengths and maximise their synergies (Mao 1966, 166). On a strategic level, guerrilla warfare should not only assist mobile warfare by ways of military support but also form the entry point for new recruits which should then be gradually transformed into regular units and change their tactics from guerrilla warfare to conventional mobile warfare accordingly (O'Neill 2005, 62). On the operational and tactical level, Mao made explicit that both guerrilla and regular forces should be employed simultaneously to assist each other and amplify their effectiveness (Mao 1966, 246).

As such, Mao considered conventional and non-conventional forms of warfare part of a continuum, having synergetic rather than contradictory effects when used side by side (Mansoor 2012b, 5). Hence, operational hybridity indeed forms a cornerstone of Mao's strategic thinking given the central position of the three stages in Mao's War of Resistance.

Strategic hybridity, the simultaneous use of military and non-military means in ways to ensure ambiguity and deniability, can be seen in Mao's thought as well. The simultaneous use of military and non-military means becomes apparent in Mao's dialectical view on war and politics. Mao thought little of a separation of tasks between the military and the civilian. Indeed, the coexistence and convergence of military and non-military means was a cornerstone of Mao's strategic thought, apparent in his emphasis to analyse every 'war situation as a whole' and to 'oppose the purely military viewpoint' (Mao 1966, 81, 98). As such, the army should at all times engage in both military and non-military tasks, as one without the other would forfeit victory. One should 'link the political mobilization for the war with developments in the war and with the life of the soldiers and the people, and make it a continuous movement' (Mao 1966, 229). Thus, as outlined above, in Mao's strategic thought the army had four interrelated functions, only one of them being violence, the others being political mobilisation, political warfare and international diplomacy. We also see this coexistence of military and non-military means in Mao's vision of the three-staged protracted war as each stage is marked by a specific mix of the two elements, the first and second stage being primarily political, the third mainly military.

Hence, as Guillermez (1977, 127) notes, 'Mao is above all a strategist in the sense of general strategy, which transcends purely military action and incorporates ... all those factors involved in the conduct of a war, and above all, the political economic, social and moral factors'.

The second aspect of strategic hybridity, ambiguity and deniability, is not as clearly discernible in Mao's strategic thinking. Certainly, we find elements of it in Mao's discussion of intelligence and political warfare. Citing Sun Tzu's dictum 'Know the enemy and know yourself', Mao argues that the creation of misconceptions among the adversary is a primary means to achieve superiority (Mao 1966, 238). Denying intelligence to make 'the enemy blind and deaf by sealing his eyes and ears' is essential to gain momentum and the element of surprise (Mao 1966, 240). These deceptions are to be achieved by propaganda, disinformation and feints, but most importantly by 'prevent[ing] the leakage of news' by mobilising the whole people against the adversary (Mao 1966, 240). Notably, Mao envisions these measures to be taken on the operational and tactical level, however, given his view of the relationship between

tactics and strategy, it is the repeated ambiguity and deception on the tactical level that ensures strategic superiority in the long run. Moreover, like for Sun Tzu, the disintegration of the adversary, non-violently attacking its polity, undermining its legitimacy and encouraging defections plays a prominent role in the strategic thinking of Mao, very much mirrored in the current discourse on resilience against hybrid threats (Thiele 2016). Hence, while (tactical) ambiguity plays a vital role for Mao, the element of deniability does not feature as prominently in Mao's strategic thinking which is hardly surprising given his emphasis on propaganda and visibility in order to mobilise the population and get their support.

Hence, hybridity is a crucial element of Mao's strategic thought although, regarding strategic hybridity, deniability does not find as much attention. Nevertheless, the simultaneous use of military and non-military means, and thus the defiance of the Western 'militarisation of war', but also the simultaneous use of mobile and guerrilla warfare to achieve synergetic effects certainly form the cornerstone on which Mao's War of Resistance is built upon. He did not believe in any barriers between war and peace, the military and the political, conventional and non-conventional means. In a way, hybridity for Mao was not only a common but also the ideal way of war. It was his conviction that to advance from a position of inferiority to superiority, it would need the coordinated employment of all available means along the lines of hybridity.

## 7 Conclusion

In a keynote in 2015, NATO's General Secretary Jens Stoltenberg noted that 'hybrid warfare is nothing new. It is as old as the Trojan horse' (Stoltenberg 2015). Arguably, this was a step in an important direction. After all, it acknowledged that the phenomenon of hybridity was in fact anything but a 'new' kind of warfare, something most of the concept's earlier proponents had claimed. However, despite this realisation and plenty of scholarly criticism, NATO continues to use the concept of hybrid warfare as a lens to analyse and react to current security challenges.

Adding to the criticism on the concept of hybrid warfare to challenge its novelty and utility as a category of warfare, this thesis went beyond previous studies which have examined the

phenomenon of hybridity in military history, examining the role of hybrid warfare in the strategic thinking of military strategists instead. Moreover, it has gone beyond a Eurocentric and state-centric paradigm to incorporate non-Western voices that have so far been largely neglected in the debate on hybrid warfare. Hence, the thesis has analysed the military writings of two Chinese strategic minds who arguably count among the most influential strategists of all times, Sun Tzu and Mao Tse-Tung.

The thesis has contributed to our understanding of hybrid warfare in two ways. First, it has argued that the concept of hybrid warfare is surrounded by an ‘unbearable vagueness’ as one article coined it (Cusumano and Corbe 2018, 4). To make this vagueness somewhat more bearable and contribute to conceptual clarity in the debate about hybrid warfare, the thesis has proposed to discard the value-laden label of hybrid warfare and trade it for the more neutral term of hybridity. Moreover, it offered a framework that separates the phenomenon of hybrid warfare into two distinct strategic concepts, residing on different levels of abstraction and levels of strategy. First, operational hybridity describes the convergence of conventional and non-conventional military means on an operational and tactical level and second, strategic hybridity describes the simultaneous use of military and non-military means while trying to create ambiguity and deniability.

Second, the thesis has shown that hybridity is an inherent feature of war and strategy, prevalent in Chinese strategic thought and particularly prominent in the strategic thinking of both Sun Tzu and Mao Tse-Tung. Regarding operational hybridity, both thinkers acknowledge the advantages and benefits of deploying conventional and non-conventional forces simultaneously on an operational level. For Sun Tzu, this manifests itself in his discussion of the orthodox and unorthodox when understood on a tactical and operational level. Indeed, to achieve strategic domination, the dialectical concept calls for the simultaneous use of unorthodox and orthodox forces or forms of warfare although these should not be conflated with Western categories of conventional and non-conventional warfare. For Mao, operational hybridity becomes apparent in his careful delineation of the alternating balance between mobile warfare and guerrilla warfare within his three-phased protracted war. It is this interplay between

conventional and non-conventional means of warfare that would create synergies and maximise the use of each individually, allowing to face and defeat a superior adversary.

Even more important for the strategic thinking of both strategists is strategic hybridity. The necessity to go beyond a narrow focus on military means is taken for granted by both Sun Tzu and Mao who adopt a more grand-strategic approach in their thinking that sees military means as only one of many tools available to wage war, with violence not necessarily being the most effective. This stance is not surprising given its deep roots within Chinese strategic thought.

For Sun Tzu, strategic hybridity becomes apparent in his notion of harmony which seeks to limit chaos by minimising violence, causing him to emphasise the utility of non-military approaches and to consider military force only a last resort. The dialectical notion of the orthodox and unorthodox, understood on a strategic level, points towards a similar stance as non-military means are generally seen as orthodox ways of statecraft, military means as unorthodox, which should necessarily be employed side by side. For Mao, his understanding of war and politics assumes the interrelation and coexistence of military and non-military means at all times which is why each of his three stages of protracted war is marked by a different mix of political and military efforts. Consequently, then, Mao called for the army to fulfil functions in both domains, not limiting itself to fighting but always including political, economic and informational tasks. The fact that of the army's four envisioned functions, only one involves violence, further illustrates the importance Mao attributed to non-military means.

The element of ambiguity and deniability plays an important part in Sun Tzu's strategic thinking as he repeatedly emphasised that formlessness, becoming strategically ambiguous and undiscernible for the enemy through means of deception, would guarantee superiority. Ideally, war should never be won in a decision by numbers but by outwitting the adversary. Mao sought ambiguity by controlling the flow of intelligence to deceive the enemy and gain tactical advantages that ensure strategic superiority in the long run. However, deniability features not as prominently in Mao's thought, arguably because visibility and explicitness are necessary requirements for his strategic endeavour of political mobilisation.

Certainly, Mao's prescriptions are far more tangible and concrete than those of Sun Tzu which is owed both to their time of origin and their intended usage. Nevertheless, both strategic thoughts show similar patterns with regards to hybridity and war and strategy at large. This comes as no surprise as both Sun Tzu and Mao's thinking builds on the core assumptions of Chinese strategic thought, most importantly the interlinkage between the military and politics. Moreover, as noted above, Taoist dialectics which have deeply influenced Chinese strategic thought, also play an important role. Prominent in Sun Tzu's thought and, although to a far lesser degree, also in that of Mao, the idea of dialectical monism allows the notion of hybridity to emerge much more naturally than the Western philosophical tradition of Hegelian dialectics ever would. Hence, the two case studies imply that hybridity plays a prominent role in Chinese strategic thought, thus clearly differing from the Western tradition of strategic thinking.

Future research should build on the ideas presented here. This thesis was a first attempt to examine the role of 'hybrid warfare' or hybridity in the strategic thinking of non-Western, non-state strategists. Two avenues of further investigation are thus discernible. First, we should continue to explore the role of hybridity within strategy and strategic thinking around the world. It is necessary to assess the phenomenon's prominence within the strategic thinking of strategists other than the Chinese thinkers Sun Tzu and Mao to further substantiate the claim that hybridity is inherent to war and strategy. Moreover, we should put the concept's re-discovery in context with the emergence and partial demise of European norms of warfare to better understand the novelty and threat that is frequently attributed to hybridity. This would challenge the often-stated assumption that many Western concepts and categorisations of war and strategy enjoy universal applicability and open up the floor to debate on how and if we can adapt them to make them more global and inclusive. Indeed, engaging more intensively with long-neglected strategic traditions of the non-West, not least Chinese strategic thought, would significantly broaden our understanding of war and strategy and allow us to consider and investigate the cultural, geographical and historical differences and commonalities of different traditions of strategic thought.

Second, the here presented framework of operational and strategic hybridity as a conceptual clarification of a much-debated phenomenon should be further refined and tested on a variety of Western and non-Western cases of strategic thinking. The departure from concepts like hybrid warfare and hybrid threats, which are unnecessarily loaded with moral judgement, might fruitfully stimulate the debate and make more objective research possible. This would allow to discard an unnecessarily vague concept and replace it by two more clearly outlined concepts which are by their definition inherit to war and strategy. As such, the challenges current defence planners face can still be acknowledged but put in perspective and tackled on a more sustainable level.

The famous military historian Michael Howard once noted that peace was in fact a relatively recent human invention, becoming widely known only during the European Enlightenment (Howard 2000). The same applies to norms of warfare, for example the separation of conventional and non-conventional kinds of warfare or the separation of political and military means (Tenenbaum 2015, 98). As such, it should come as no surprise to see those norms being broken, subverted and turned on their heads by actors whose strategic thinking is influenced by non-Western strategic traditions. After all, they defy only what is essentially a European invention. These Western concepts might be able to temporarily mantle but never change the nature of war and strategy, which is inherently hybrid.

If NATO continues to use the concept of hybrid warfare, it does not use a concept that is wrong in and of itself. However, as hybridity is an inherent feature of war and strategy, any concept that seeks to elevate it and put it out of context creates an unnecessary category that obscures more than it explains. Certainly, the demise of many European norms of war poses a difficult task to NATO which has to adapt to an unprecedented situation for the institution. However, to prepare for these security challenges it needs a clear and unbiased approach to war and strategy rather than the portrayal of any deviations from Western norms as some kind of novel and malign strategy.



## 8 References

- Adie, W. A. 1972. *Chinese strategic thinking under Mao Tse-tung*. Canberra: Australian National University Press.
- Almäng, Jan. 2019. "War, vagueness and hybrid war." *Defence Studies*, 1-16.
- Ames, Roger T. 1994. *The art of rulership: A study of ancient Chinese political thought*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Angstrom, Jan. 2017. "Escalation, Emulation, and the Failure of Hybrid Warfare in Afghanistan." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 40 (10): 838-856.
- Angstrom, Jan, and J. J. Widen. 2015. *Contemporary military theory: The dynamics of war*. Oxfordshire, England: Routledge.
- Aoi, Chiyuki, Madoka Futamura, and Alessio Patalano. 2018. "Introduction 'hybrid warfare in Asia: its meaning and shape'." *The Pacific Review* 31 (6): 693-713.
- Bartles, Charles K. 2016. "Getting Gerasimov Right." *Military Review* (January-February): 30-38.
- Beckett, Ian F. 2001. *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies: Guerrillas and their Opponents since 1750*. London: Routledge.
- Black, J. 2004. *Rethinking Military History*. New York: Routledge.
- Black, Jeremy. 2016. "Colin S. Gray, Strategy and Defence Planning: Meeting the Challenge of Uncertainty." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 39 (5-6): 922-24.
- Bull, Hedley. 1968. "Strategic Studies and Its Critics." *World Politics* 20 (04): 593-605.
- Caliskan, Murat. 2019. "Hybrid warfare through the lens of strategic theory." *Defense and Security Analysis* 35 (1): 40-58.
- Chinh, Truong. 1963. *Primer for revolt: the Communist take-over in Viet-Nam*. New York: Praeger.
- Chivvis, Christopher S. 2017. "Understanding Russian "Hybrid Warfare": And What Can Be Done About It." [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/testimonies/CT400/CT468/RAND/\\_CT468.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/testimonies/CT400/CT468/RAND/_CT468.pdf).
- Cleary, Thomas F. 1988. "Translator's Introduction." In *The Art of War*, edited by Thomas F. Cleary, xi-lxv. Boulder: Shambhala.
- Coker, Christopher. 2003. "What would Sun Tzu say about the war on terrorism?" *The RUSI Journal* 148 (1): 16-20.

- Cusumano, Eugenio, and Marian Corbe, eds. 2018. *A Civil-Military Response to Hybrid Threats*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cusumano, Eugenio, and Marian Corbe. 2018. "Introduction." In Cusumano and Corbe 2018, 1-14.
- Duyvesteyn, Isabelle. 2013. *Strategic Illiteracy: The Art of Strategic Thinking in Modern Military Operations*. Leiden: University Leiden. Accessed May 14, 2019. <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/handle/1887/20944>.
- Echevarria II, Antulio J. 2016. *Operating in the Gray Zone: An Alternative Paradigm for U.S. Military Strategy*. Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College Press. <https://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=1318>.
- Eckstein, Harry. 2000. "Case Study and Theory in Political Science." In *Case study method: A comprehensive introduction*, edited by Martyn Hammersley, Peter Foster, and Roger Gomm, 119-64. London: SAGE.
- Eisenberg, Eric M. 1984. "Ambiguity as strategy in organizational communication." *Communication Monographs* 51 (3): 227-42.
- Fairbank, John K. 1974. "Introduction: Varieties of the Chinese Military Experience." In *Chinese Ways in Warfare*, edited by Jr. F. A. Kierman and John K. Fairbank, 1-26. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Fleming, Brian P. 2011. "Hybrid Threat Concept: Contemporary War, Military Planning and the Advent of Unrestricted Operational Art." <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a545789.pdf>.
- Freedman, Lawrence. 2013. *Strategy: A History*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Fridman, Ofer. 2017. "Hybrid Warfare or Gibrinaya Voyna?" *The RUSI Journal* 162 (1): 42-49.
- Fuller, Francis F. 1958. "Mao Tse-Tung: Military Thinker." *Military Affairs* 22: 139.
- Galeotti, Mark. 2014. "The 'Gerasimov Doctrine' and Russian Non-Linear War." Accessed April 15, 2019. <https://inmoscowshadows.wordpress.com/2014/07/06/the-gerasimov-doctrine-and-russian-non-linear-war/>.
- Galeotti, Mark. 2016. "Hybrid, ambiguous, and non-linear? How new is Russia's 'new way of war'?" *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 27 (2): 282-301.
- Galeotti, Mark. 2018. "The mythical 'Gerasimov Doctrine' and the language of threat." *Critical Studies on Security*, 1-5.

- Gawthorpe, Andrew. 2018. "Civil-Military Responses to Hybrid Threats in East Asia." In Cusumano and Corbe 2018, 281–302.
- Gerring, John. 1999. "What Makes a Concept Good? A Criterial Framework for Understanding Concept Formation in the Social Sciences." *Polity* 31 (3): 357–393.
- Girling, J. L. S. 1969. *People's war: The conditions and the consequences in China and in South East Asia*. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.
- Graff, David A. 2007. "The Dao of Deception: Unorthodox Warfare in Historic and Modern China (review)." *The Journal of Military History* 71 (3): 910–12.
- Gray, Colin S. 2010. *The Strategy Bridge: Theory for Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gray, Colin S. 2012. *Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?* Carlisle: U.S. Army War College.
- Gray, Colin S. 2013. *Perspectives on Strategy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Grice, Francis. 2019. *The Myth of Mao Zedong and Modern Insurgency*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Griffith, Samuel B. 1961. "Introduction." In *On Guerrilla Warfare*, edited by Tse-tung Mao, 3–36. New York: Praeger.
- Griffith, Samuel B. 1971. "Introduction." In Griffith 1971, 1–45.
- Griffith, Samuel B., ed. 1971. *The Art of War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Guillermaz, Jacques. 1977. "The Soldier." In *Mao Tse-Tung in the Scales of History: A Preliminary Assessment*, edited by Dick Wilson, 117–43. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Handel, Michael I. 2001. *Masters of war: Classical strategic thought*. London: Routledge.
- Hoffman, Frank G. 2007. *Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars*. Arlington: Potomac Institute.
- Hoffman, Frank G. 2014. *On Not-So-New Warfare: Political Warfare vs Hybrid Threats*. Accessed April 16, 2019. <https://warontherocks.com/2014/07/on-not-so-new-warfare-political-warfare-vs-hybrid-threats/>.
- Howard, Michael E. 2000. *The Invention of Peace: Reflections on War and International Order*. New Haven, Conn. Yale University Press.
- Ivanhoe, Philip J., ed. 2011. *Master Sun's Art of War*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co, Inc.

- Jacobs, Andreas, and Guillaume Lasconjarias. 2015. *NATO's Hybrid Flanks - Handling Unconventional Warfare in the South and the East*. Rome: NATO Defense College.
- Joes, Anthony J. 2004. *Resisting rebellion: The history and politics of counterinsurgency*. Lexington Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky.
- Johnson, Chalmers. 1968. "The Third Generation of Guerrilla Warfare." *Asian Survey* 8 (6): 435–47.
- Johnson, Chalmers. 1973. *Autopsy on people's war*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Johnson, Robert. 2018. "Hybrid War and Its Countermeasures: A Critique of the Literature." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 29 (1): 141-163.
- Kaldor, Mary. 1999. *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Kane, Thomas M. 2007. *Ancient China on Postmodern War: Enduring Ideas from the Chinese Strategic Tradition*. London: Routledge.
- Katzenbach, Edward L. 1962. "Time, Space and Will: The Politico-Military Views of Mao Tse-Tung." In *The Guerrilla and How to Fight Him*, edited by Thomas N. Greene, 11–21. New York: Praeger.
- Katzenbach, Edward L., and Gene Z. Hanrahan. 1955. "The Revolutionary Strategy of Mao Tse-Tung." *Political Science Quarterly* 70 (3): 321–40.
- Kofman, Michael, and Matthew Rojansky. 2015. "A Closer look at Russia's "Hybrid Warfare"." *Wilson Center Kennan Cable* (7). <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/190090/5-KENNAN%20CABLE-ROJANSKY%20KOFMAN.pdf>. Accessed April 16, 2019.
- Lanoszka, Alexander. 2016. "Russian hybrid warfare and extended deterrence in eastern Europe." *International Affairs* 92 (1): 175–95.
- Lao Tzu. 1982. *Tao Te Ching*. Chinese classics. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.
- Laqueur, Walter. 2004. *Guerrilla warfare: A historical and critical study*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publication.
- Lasconjarias, Guillaume, and Jeffrey A. Larsen. 2015a. "Introduction: A New Way of Warfare." In Lasconjarias and Larsen 2015b, 1–14.
- Lasconjarias, Guillaume, and Jeffrey A. Larsen, eds. 2015b. *NATO's Response to Hybrid Threats*. Rome: NATO Defense College.
- Lau, D. C. 1965. "Some notes on the Sun Tzu." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 28 (2): 319–35.

- Levy, Jack S. 2008. "Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 25 (1): 1–18.
- Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review* 65 (3): 682–93.
- Lord, Carnes. 2000. "A note on Sun Tzu." *Comparative Strategy* 19 (4): 301–7.
- Luttwak, Edward. 2001. *Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Lykke, Arthur F. 1989. "Defining Military Strategy." *Military Review* 69 (5): 2–15.
- Macdonald, Christopher, ed. 2017. *The Science of War: Sun Tzu's Art of War re-translated and re-considered*. Hong Kong: Earnshaw Books Ltd.
- Mackinlay, John. 2009. *The Insurgent Archipelago: From Mao to Bin Laden*. London: Hurst.
- Mair, Peter. 2008. "Concepts and concept formation." In *Approaches and methodologies in the social sciences: A pluralist perspective*, edited by Donatella Della Porta and Michael Keating, 177–97. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mair, Victor H., ed. 2007. *The Art of War*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Mansoor, Peter R., ed. 2012a. *Hybrid Warfare: Fighting Complex Opponents from the Ancient World to the Present*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mansoor, Peter R. 2012b. "Introduction: Hybrid Warfare in History." In *Hybrid Warfare: Fighting Complex Opponents from the Ancient World to the Present*, edited by Peter R. Mansoor, 1–17. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mao, Tse-tung. 1961. *On guerrilla warfare*. New York: Praeger Publishers.
- Mao, Tse-tung. 1965a. *Selected works of Mao Tse-tung: Volume I*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Mao, Tse-tung. 1965b. *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung: Volume III*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Mao, Tse-tung. 1966. *Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-Tung*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.
- Marks, Thomas A. 2007. *Maoist People's War in Post-Vietnam Asia*. Bangkok: White Lotus Press.
- Marks, Thomas A. 2009. "Mao Tse-tung and the Search for 21st Century Counterinsurgency." *CTC Sentinel* 2 (10): 17–20.
- Marks, Thomas A., and Paul B. Rich. 2017. "Back to the future – people's war in the 21st century." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 28 (3): 409–25.

- Mattis, James, and Frank G. Hoffman. 2005. "Future Warfare: The Rise of Hybrid Wars." Accessed May 16, 2019. <https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2005/november/future-warfare-rise-hybrid-wars>.
- Moriarty, J. T. 2010. "The vanguard's dilemma: understanding and exploiting insurgent strategies." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 21 (3): 476–97.
- Münkler, Herfried. 2005. *The new wars*. Cambridge: Polity.
- NATO. 2010. "BI-SC Input To a New NATO Capstone Concept for the Military Contribution to Countering Hybrid Threats." [http://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/events/2010/20100826\\_bi-sc\\_cht.pdf](http://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/events/2010/20100826_bi-sc_cht.pdf). Accessed May 15, 2019.
- NATO. 2017. *AJP-01 Allied Joint Doctrine*. Brussels: NATO Standardisation Office.
- NATO. 2018. "NATO's response to hybrid threats." Accessed June 13, 2019. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_156338.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_156338.htm).
- Nemeth, William J. 2002. "Future war and Chechnya : a case for hybrid warfare." <https://calhoun.nps.edu/handle/10945/5865>.
- Newman, Edward. 2014. *Understanding Civil Wars: Continuity and Change in Intra-State Conflict*. London: Routledge.
- O'Dowd, Edward, and Arthur Waldron. 1991. "Sun Tzu for strategists." *Comparative Strategy* 10 (1): 25–36.
- O'Neill, Bard E. 2005. *Insurgency & Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse*. Washington, D.C: Potomac Books.
- Ong, Weichong. 2018. "The rise of hybrid actors in the Asia-Pacific." *The Pacific Review* 31 (6): 740–761.
- Parker, Geoffrey, ed. 2005. *The Cambridge History of Warfare*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Patalano, Alessio. 2018. "When strategy is 'hybrid' and not 'grey': reviewing Chinese military and constabulary coercion at sea." *The Pacific Review* 31 (6): 811–39.
- Porch, Douglas. 2011. "The dangerous myths and dubious promise of COIN." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22 (2): 239–57.
- Powell, Ralph L. 1968. "Maoist Military Doctrines." *Asian Survey* 8 (4): 239–62.
- Record, Jeffrey. 2007. *Beating Goliath: Why Insurgencies Win*. Dulles: Potomac Books Inc.

- Reichborn-Kjennerud, Erik, and Patrick Cullen. 2016. "What is Hybrid Warfare?" *Norwegian Institute of International Affairs Policy Brief* (1). <https://www.nupi.no/en/Publications/CRISin-Pub/What-is-Hybrid-Warfare>. Accessed July 04, 2019.
- Renz, Bettina. 2016. "Russia and 'hybrid warfare'." *Contemporary Politics* 22 (3): 283-300.
- Renz, Bettina, and Hanna Smith, eds. 2016. *Russia and Hybrid Warfare: Going beyond the label*. Helsinki: Kikumora Publications.
- Rich, Paul B. 2018. "Are Mao Zedong and Maoist thought irrelevant in the understanding of insurgencies?" *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 29 (5-6): 1065-78.
- Rid, Thomas. 2012. "Cyber War Will Not Take Place." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 35 (1): 5-32.
- Rinelli, Sebastian, and Isabelle Duyvesteyn. 2018. "The Missing Link: Civil-Military Cooperation and Hybrid Wars." In Cusumano and Corbe 2018, 17-40.
- Rudolfson, Ida. 2017. "State Capacity, Inequality and Inter-Group Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa: 1989-2011." *Civil Wars* 19 (2): 118-45.
- Sager, Fritz, and Christian Rosser. 2015. "Historical Methods." In *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, edited by Mark Bevir and R. A. W. Rhodes, 199-210. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.
- Sartori, Giovanni. 1970. "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics." *American Political Science Review* 64 (04): 1033-53.
- Sawyer, Ralph d. 1993. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*. History and warfare. Boulder: Westview Press. <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/enhancements/fy0830/92039146-b.html>.
- Sawyer, Ralph d. 2007. *The Tao of Deception: Unorthodox Warfare in Historic and Modern China*. New York: Basic Books.
- Sawyer, Ralph d. 2012. "Military Writings." In *A Military History of China*, edited by David A. Graff and Robin Higham, 108-126. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Scheipers, Sibylle. 2016. "Winning Wars without Battles: Hybrid Warfare and Other 'Indirect' Approaches in the History of Strategic Thought." In *Russia and Hybrid Warfare: Going beyond the label*, edited by Bettina Renz and Hanna Smith, 47-51. Helsinki: Kikumora Publications.
- Schram, Stuart R. 1963. *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-Tung*. New York: Praeger.
- Schram, Stuart R. 1988. *The Thought of Mao Tse-Tung*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Schram, Stuart R. 1994. "Mao Zedong a Hundred Years on: The Legacy of a Ruler." *The China Quarterly* 137: 125.
- Shy, John, and Thomas W. Collier. 1986. "Revolutionary War." In *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, edited by Peter Paret, 815–62. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Singh, Prashant K. 2013. "Rereading Mao's Military Thinking." *Strategic Analysis* 37 (5): 558–80.
- Stoltenberg, Jens. 2015. "Keynote speech by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the opening of the NATO Transformation Seminar." Accessed May 15, 2019. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions\\_118435.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_118435.htm).
- Strachan, Hew. 2013. *The Direction of War: Contemporary Strategy in Historical Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sullivan, John F. 2018. "Reviewing a New Sun Tzu Translation: Is There Any Blood Left in This Old Stone?" Accessed May 26, 2019. <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2018/7/5/reviewing-a-new-sun-tzu-translation-is-there-any-blood-left-in-this-old-stone>.
- Sun Tzu. 1971. "The Art of War." In Griffith 1971, 63–149.
- Sun Tzu. 2007. "The Art of War." In *The Art of War*, edited by Victor H. Mair, 76–131. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Sun Tzu. 2011. "The Art of War." In *Master Sun's Art of War*, edited by Philip J. Ivanhoe, 4–94. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co, Inc.
- Tenenbaum, Élie. 2015. "Hybrid Warfare in the Strategic Spectrum: An Historical Assessment." In Lasconjarias and Larsen 2015b, 95–112.
- Thiele, Ralph D. 2016. *Building Resilience Readiness against Hybrid Threats: A Cooperative European Union / NATO Perspective*. ISPSW Strategy Series Issue 44. Berlin: Institut für Strategie- Politik- Sicherheits- und Wirtschaftsberatung. Accessed May 29, 2019. <http://www.css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/resources/docs/ISPSW-Building%20Resilience%20Readiness%20against%20Hybrid%20Threats.pdf>.
- Thomas, Timothy L. 2007. "The Chinese Military's Strategic Mind-Set." *Military Review* November-December: 47–55.
- Tsou, Tang, and Morton H. Halperin. 1965. "Mao Tse-tung's Revolutionary Strategy and Peking's International Behavior." *American Political Science Review* 59 (1): 80–99.



- Ucko, David H., and Thomas A. Marks. 2018. "Violence in context: Mapping the strategies and operational art of irregular warfare." *Contemporary Security Policy* 39 (2): 206-233.
- van Creveld, Martin. 2015. *A history of strategy: From Sun Tzu to William S. Lind*. Kouvola, Finland: Castalia House.
- van Creveld, Martin L. 1991. *The Transformation of War*. New York: Free Press.
- van Derven, Hans J. 2000. "Introduction." In *Warfare in Chinese History*, edited by Hans J. van Derven, 1–32. Leiden: Brill.
- van Puyvelde, Damien. 2015. "Hybrid war – does it even exist?" *NATO Review*.  
<https://www.nato.int/DOCU/review/2015/Also-in-2015/hybrid-modern-future-warfare-russia-ukraine/EN/index.htm>.
- Veljovski, Gjorgji, Nenad Taneski, and Metodija Dojchinovski. 2017. "The danger of "hybrid warfare" from a sophisticated adversary: the Russian "hybridity" in the Ukrainian conflict." *Defense & Security Analysis* 33 (4): 292–307.
- Walker, Robert G. 1998. "SPEC FI: The United States Marine Corps and Special Operations." Accessed April 16, 2019. <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a359694.pdf>.
- Wey, Adam L. K. 2014. "Principles of Special Operations: Learning from Sun Tzu and Frontinus." *Comparative Strategy* 33 (2): 131–44.
- Whiteside, Craig. 2016. "The Islamic State and the Return of Revolutionary Warfare." *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 27 (5): 743–76.
- Womack, Brantly. 2001. "Mao before Maoism." *The China Journal* 46: 95–117.
- Yuen, Derek M. C. 2008. "Deciphering Sun Tzu." *Comparative Strategy* 27 (2): 183–200.
- Yuen, Derek M. C. 2014. *Deciphering Sun Tzu: How to read 'The art of war'*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Zhang, Tiejun. 2002. "Chinese Strategic Culture: Traditional and Present Features." *Comparative Strategy* 21 (2): 73–90.