

中共反介入戰略與區域阻絕： 源自孫子兵法的教訓

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摘 要

對中共反介入與區域阻絕戰術下任何推論之前，宜先掌握其遂行此類戰略(術)的核心意圖，因為中共可藉此手段威嚇台灣，或阻拒美國，也可遂行其「圍點打援」戰法，耗弱美國。數千年的中國歷史對中共決策行為必然產深刻影響，《孫子兵法》為其中瑰寶，吾人若對此有所體會，或有裨益於掌握中共之真正目的。中國人深以其古老歷史與思維為榮，其因則在於此等古老智慧，確有啟發與帶領決策的功能。海峽兩岸深受同樣歷史文化薰陶的人民，倘若不能運用對此文化的理解，解讀並洞悉對手意圖，一旦無法及時因應中共反介入或區域阻絕的作為時，恐因認識不清而致使淪喪先機；除了國家安全遭受損害外，甚至還可能牽連美國這位台灣實質上最重要的盟友，而使台美雙雙付出重大代價。

關鍵詞：孫子、孫子兵法、反介入、區域阻絕、圍點打援

China's Anti-Access Strategy and Area Denial: Lessons to Be Learned from Sun Tzu's *the Art of War*

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Abstract

Before we can come to any conclusions about mainland China's anti-access and area denial tactics, we have to understand what genuine motivations they might have. As well as being a plan to reclaim Taiwan or keep the US away, it could also be a trap set up to provoke the Americans, via a doctrine officially known as "Surrounding One Target to Attack another". No matter what their intentions, we have to appreciate the fact that China has thousands of years of history which will no doubt have an effect on their decision making. The Chinese are proud of their history and philosophy and will tap into this wisdom for inspiration and guidance. As a result of the same history and philosophy, we people on the other side of the Taiwan Strait will no doubt understand that if we can not figure out the true intention of mainland China's anti-access and area denial tactics, sooner or later when surprises emerge, and the US, a strong ally of Taiwan, will pay the price.

Keywords : Sun Tzu, the Art of War, Anti-access, Area Denial, "Surrounding One Target to Attack Another"

Introduction

In order to protect itself against any possible foreign threats, a modern state must not only secure its own borders but make certain that global commons like the surrounding land, sea and air which are shared equally by the rest of the world, stays out of any kind of political or economic negotiations and become solely controlled by any one entity. These politically disinterested areas are vital to the wellbeing of world trade, and the safety of these routes is vital to the national security of any nation depends on having access to these routes for their own commerce (Murphy, 2010). There is a momentum building in the progress of China's military capabilities, a fact which is not lost upon its increasingly anxious neighbor the US., dealing with it will be not only for the sake of the US's own national security but also the sovereignty of their more easily intimidated neighbors like Taiwan, a country that the US is committed to protecting.

The PLA is in the process of installing missile silos which will give them strategic advantages in Guam where the US has military bases. These missiles will be backed up by a squadron of fighter jets which combined together will give them a powerful presence in the western Pacific theatre and be a strong deterrent to possible US counter attacks (U.S. Department of Defense, 2010). By establishing such an intimidating display of air superiority, as well as having submarines to give added assurance to the effectiveness of the air strikes, in theory the US will face a crippling attack of relentless air and sea campaigns well before they can even get close to putting a dent in the PRC's army (Negroponte, 2007). The obstacles that have to be surmounted are so great that it becomes not so much a question of 'how' it can be done as much as a scenario which is far more demoralizing, 'if' it can be done. This is a perfect illustration of what Sun Tzu believes to be the most advantageous and effective way to wage war, which is not to in the first place. In order for the US to effectively mitigate this formidable 'anti-access' strategy employed by the Chinese, they will have to invest so much time, effort and money that the cost benefit ratio, an option that the US Defense Department never seems to pay attention to, will be very much in favor abandoning such plans (Uchikura, 2010). The fact is China is gaining greater presence on the world stage by the day and from the way they look at it, the fate of Taiwan is in their hands. Regardless of how the US feels about China's attitude

toward Taiwan, they can not continue to treat China like a “sick man of East Asia” that will stop misbehaving just because they were told to do so.

So far the closest scenario there is to give nightmares is the anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM), an image that China is holding over the US like a Damocles sword which in reality may not be the case for pragmatic Americans will not take these threats without a response. Weapons and systems of the US forces to counter Chinese anti-access capabilities, and to even preempt their use, are presumably in development, in production, or likely already in use. But this article intends to focus on Sun Tzu’s lessons Taiwan should learn to deal with the Chinese game-changing anti-access capabilities, and therefore skip the part the US capability to balance the Chinese threat. The possible ramifications from having a successfully ASBM system are enormous. (Chase, Erickson & Yeaw, 2009; Erickson, 2010; Erickson & Yang, 2009a; Hooper & Albon, 2010). China could in theory have the entire world at their mercy if they can pull it off. Given these enormous stakes that both parties have in ASBM, how each side responds to the possible success or failure of calculation is a topic of major interest. China is implementing a string of tactical measures designed to allow them a greater degree of control over the security of US military operation bases, strategies such as increasing the use of cruise and ballistic missiles as well as ASBM. The Chinese are gaining ground literally over many strategic US military locations which put the US further and further away from being able to take control of China itself (Chase, Erickson & Yeaw, 2009). As China’s weaponry increases, the US will not be able to go on the offensive and as a result become hostage to their virtually impenetrable wall of missiles. This is a fearsome prospect for the US, for China is playing a defense which seems not to fail. Due to this prospect of potential invincibility, the respect which the US will have for their opposition is a reality that China should not take lightly regardless of the status of their super weapon. As much attention and vigilance the US is paying on the development of this weapon systems, China should do the same and understand for their own benefit, as fully as possible the destructive potential and psychological effects this weapon could have (Ericson, 2010). If China is able to capitalize on their anti-access strategy, the pride and arrogance which the US undoubtedly suffers from whether they want to admit it or not, will be cured in a heartbeat.

So saying, China is rapidly approaching the point of being able to deploy their weapons, like the punitive ASBM, aiming to achieve deterrence without going to war

as they claim. By being able to fight a war without being in harm's way, they would not fear the attacks of a foreign power like the US. The US would have to reckon with a potential enemy that could elude capture as long as the US is unable to reach their command center. Despite the frightening advantages such advanced weaponry could give, its purpose is not purely hostile. Part of the reason for having it, if it becomes reality, would be to protect the wellbeing of China's most strategically important territorial assets in case it ever becomes threatened. The US would think twice about stepping on the toes of their neighbor in the Far East if they knew the possible consequences in store for them. By the same token, the US also has diplomatic and trade interests which it wants to protect and if there is an undesignated military force threatening to infringe on this, China should expect no favors (Erickson & Yang, 2009b).

The timing of China's new tactics to aggressively increase the distance between themselves and the US seems to be more than a mere coincidence with their new ABSM capabilities which is emerging at the same time. Their aggression towards the US will seem like a bold advertisement for the faith they have in their new super weapon to wreak havoc on US's policy towards Taiwan. On the surface it seems that the Chinese have found their goose which lays the golden egg and are cashing in on it, on the other hand the Chinese might just be staying true to the military guru Sun Tzu whose teaching indicates that Taiwan may be the perfect pawn to use in this situation. Now it might be a little farfetched to say that Chinese are so rooted in tradition that they are risking Taiwan just for the sake of keeping it alive, but Sun Tzu could have applications in this situation as well. Taiwan may be an excellent candidate for being China's bargaining chip. The US will definitely be interested in its impending fate. From Taiwan's perspective, it will not hurt to brush up on Sun Tzu since he may have insight to manage the enormous stakes involved in this tug of war between the two colossi.

What does these anti-access tactics all mean to keen readers of Sun Tzu's *the Art of War* like us? It seems that not even the great Sun Tzu is immune to becoming obsolete. The technological state of warfare during his time was vastly underdeveloped compared to ours, for them state of the art meant bow and arrow. Under such constraints, warriors were dependent upon tactical aids found naturally in their environment to enhance their capabilities. For example, in chapter twelve about incendiary attack, Sun Tzu makes the observation that the winds will die down during

the night, therefore suggesting not the suitable time for attacks upon the enemy. When he talks about reconnaissance and gathering intelligence from chapter nine to eleven in his *Art of War*, his methods for taking into account the effects of different types of terrains are so elementary compared to ours that nobody in their right mind consider following his suggestions. Obviously we have technology today that can mitigate these types of issues, but in Sun Tzu's time the person who heeded this powerful advice got the upper hand since they did not have the benefit of any mechanical aids. Even in modern times, anyone that has spent a period of time out doors without technology can appreciate Sun Tzu's cleverness and ingenuity in chapter nine to use nature to his advantage, but unfortunately the world has moved on and we are obliged to ignore such advice for pragmatic reasons. Militarily speaking, nowadays we have at our disposal many miracles of modern technology, like unmanned aerial vehicles and the ballistic and cruise missiles are flying in a "Qian Xuesen trajectory" (Easton, 2009), targeting a high-speed carrier in a warzone, which gives modern generals a far more comprehensive understanding of their enemy and the status of their own troops in relation to their enemy's. If we criticize Sun Tzu we should also take a little pity on him and the relative crudeness of the tactics he employs because the simple fact is, the gulf between our times and his is so huge.

In so saying, we recognize the difficulties of applying Sun Tzu's teachings in the *Art of War* squarely and flatly in our modern world, for it is exactly like trying to win a war in Afghanistan in the 21st century by using ancient Greek phalanxes, no matter how well trained these hoplites might be. Understanding how Sun Tzu tackles the speedy unpredictability which characterized the security environment in his time surely helps us to understand ours. If it takes greater flexibility in the forces, the capable infrastructures and sensible responses to win the warfare in Sun Tzu's time, it surely takes that to win ours. In order to acquire greater flexibility in our thinking, we should learn from him to truly galvanize all our efforts to generate a more dynamic response for our security crisis.

From "Millet plus Rifle" to the Monolith of Space Odyssey

Five years ago, military researchers predicted "China is close to achieving a viable anti-access strategy that, as a minimum, would impede U.S. and Japanese military operations (Minnick, 2007)." Indeed, the Chinese are rapidly approaching a

state of technological sophistication which will enable them to launch offensive campaigns that will put them well out of the reach of foreign powers. They are creating a highly integrated network of coordinated weapons systems which will soon allow them to carry out combat at ranges well out of the reach the enemy. It is imperative for all foreign powers that could be possibly affected by the increase in their enemy's capabilities to not fall behind and keep up with their own weapons systems.

China is busy at work putting into motion plans to insulate themselves from any possible US military initiatives that may arise. They are installing ASBM systems, naval mines, anti-air and anti-ship missiles in areas where jurisdiction has been traditionally 'off-limits' to everyone since these are land, sea and air masses shared by all. However, the US has for a while been excusing themselves from this technicality and have become self-appointed guardians of the neutrality in these zones (Hoyler, 2010). But times are changing and as China emerges from the shadows of their powerful counterpart in the West, they now see this vacant area as a potential buffer which they can put between themselves in order to pursue their own agendas in Taiwan. It would take a heroic effort on the part of the US in order to mitigate the advantages these proposed measures would offer. The Americans would have to contend with a naval force that has all the varieties of modes of attack, including surface air missiles, attack choppers, patrol vessels, attack submarines just to name a few. Virtually all contingencies and possible countermeasures will be accounted for by the Chinese; there will be very little that the Americans can do to that fly below the radar, both literally and hypothetically speaking. Even the communication networks will be vulnerable to cyber attacks as well as possible anti-satellite missiles that can wipe out any life lines to central command.

From the primitive features of "millet plus rifle" in the 1930s to today's accomplished three-step development strategy in modernizing its national defense, it seems to have benefited through a Monolith of Space Odyssey for PLA to develop its military strength equipped with a "Chinese feature." There is no doubt that China's preeminence in the East Asia is in no small measure partly a result of the strength of their military. The US is the only presence on earth capable of defending itself against China should a hostile situation ever develop; however, the US has more than a healthy dose of respect for the power of their opposition especially when it comes to Taiwan. If China ever decides to cash in on their territorial ambitions in Taiwan, the

US would make their position as enforcer of Taiwan's safety known. But who knows what catastrophic consequences could result. China is no longer just a cute little kitten; their claws are sharper than ever (Williams, 2011). The stakes are getting higher in the diplomatic relations between China and the US as a result of China's implementation of its anti-access strategy. The US is losing its grip on Taiwan's security as China moves into position to become 'inaccessible' to the US with their ASBM and other sea and air based modes of attack situated well out of harm's way in politically neutral territories. The ability of the US to defend Taiwan is suffering due to the lack of a strong military presence in the Far East, which may ultimately cost them their objective if left unattended. However, there is naturally a conflict of interest as the US builds its presence in this region since China will resent the increased capabilities of the US to keep an eye on their relationship with Taiwan. To put it quite simply, as they pursue their separate agendas they have to be careful not to step on the other's toes. With giants of these colossal proportions we can expect a commensurate degree of drama (Tsai, 2008).

To Capitalize on the Situation with the Help of Sun Tzu

Not nearly enough can be said about the importance of Sun Tzu's masterpiece in facilitating the development warfare as a science from the time of the work's inception. It has inspired military generals and commanders to conduct war in a way that not only emphasizes having enough arms and men, but also with intense scrutiny and critical analysis for tactics and strategies which maximizes the potential of a country at war. *The Art of War* has even crossed over into the domain of government and politics. It has influenced decision makers to tailor their diplomatic style according to how they can fulfill their objectives in the realm of international politics. In more academic circles, countless military-oriented publications regularly cite Sun Tzu as source knowledge about the military arts (Sawyer, 2007). But what concerns more to modern readers is not to describe what has happened but to predict and prescribe the future, a time we should have invested our best preparation to secure our happiness and safety. In the case of China's anti-access tactics, for example, if the PLA generals are pursuing Sun Tzu's "winning without fighting" doctrine, what kind of help can we get from the same military guru to capitalize on the situations?

The Alignment of Stratagems and Diplomacy

It is very uncharitable for anyone who has not taken the time to peruse his claim to fame beyond its fearsome sounding title, to imply that Sun Tzu is a trigger happy thrill seeker. In fact he is one of the most sober and risk-adverse minds in the realm of national security. The greatest concern for Sun Tzu, and also the guiding principal which forms the foundation of *the Art of War*, is not winning a war; rather, it is “keeping a country safe and an army intact” (安國全軍)¹. If someone has taken the time to thoroughly examine his writings, he will see a person who is completely appalled by any presence of a cowboy mentality in war, since Sun Tzu writes “No ruler should engage a war simply out of anger; no general should fight a battle simply out of spite.” (主不可以怒而興師，將不可以愠而致戰。)² The reason why his name has endured for a millennium is because he has earned the respect of military service men who know better than anyone the premium on the sanctity of life. Sun Tzu understands that without taking every conceivable precaution, peril is right around the corner since war is the most risky undertaking that: “Warfare is of paramount importance to the State. It is imperative to examine geographical outlays and the Tao that separates survival and defeat in a war.” (兵者，國之大事也。死生之地，存亡之道，不可不察也)³ Huang Pu-ming(黃樸民), a Chinese scholar, argues that we should avoid criticizing Sun Tzu from a Confucius’ anti-war sentiments purely on the basis of its inherently violent nature, nor should we pursue an absent minded agenda of unreserved praise from a Legalists point of view, which is an “eye for an eye” style of justice, to do him justice we must be able to rid ourselves of any bias (Huang, 2004).

He claims that all of Sun Tzu’s efforts to not take any unnecessary risks are made in hopes of achieving the greatest type of victory that is possible, which is a “holistic victory” (全勝). In this kind of victory, even before the eventual victor was declared they already knew they were going to win since they could not afford to lose. Experience has taught him to take war very seriously because there is never a war which does not have far reaching implications for its participants: “the tactics of war

¹ See Sun Tzu’s *the Art of War*, Chapter 12.

² Ibid.

³ See Sun Tzu’s *the Art of War*, Chapter 1.

rely not on the enemy's not coming, but on our own readiness to fight it; not on his not attacking, but on our position being unassailable”. (無恃其不來，恃吾有以待也；無恃其不攻，恃吾有所不可攻也。) ⁴ So with regards to preparations made in anticipation of a war, according to Sun Tzu, you can never take for granted the strength of your enemy. You have to ensure you are unassailable and that their political leaders have lost their will because they know how formidable you are (Huang & Kao, 2005).

Huang reiterates that, despite his goals and ambitions, Sun Tzu is not purposefully trying to incite a physically violent engagement with the enemy; it is much more preferable and conducive to creating a lasting legacy to win through sensible stratagem and diplomacy than a head-first plunge into the besieging of a fortified city. One should always aim to find a path of least resistance which will spare you from having to butt heads with the full wrath of the enemy (Huang & Kao, 2005).

But it is the same scholar Huang who argues in the other paper that if push comes to shove because people are getting the wrong impression, it would be preferable to minimize the importance of “breaking the enemy’s resistance without fighting” for the sake of emphasizing the concept of “subdued victory” (戰勝). He claims now that Sun Tzu’s reputation would be in dire straits if thought that he was against war, which could not be further from the truth. Sun Tzu does advocate using tactics which minimize casualties, but that is not his primary objective (Yan, 2008).

Huang argues that we need to reevaluate this whole notion that because of one line that Sun Tzu wrote, he is eternally destined to be categorized as a proponent of an anti-war agenda under the guise of a full-blooded warrior. When he says “breaking the enemy’s resistance without fighting is truly excellent” (不戰而屈人之兵，善之善者也。) ⁵, according to Huang, it is very important for us not to take it out of the context that Sun Tzu wrote it. He urges us not to turn one individual idea into a monster which overshadows all the other sensible insights that he has made about war (Yan, 2008). In short, the ultimate goal is avoid making reckless or fruitless decisions and instead try to seize any opportunities you come across without unnecessary risks (Huang & Kao, 2005).

⁴ See Sun Tzu’s *the Art of War*, Chapter 8.

⁵ See Sun Tzu’s *the Art of War*, Chapter 3.

The Process to Conquer a Besieged City

Therefore we need to remind ourselves always that there is only one Sun Tzu, but the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait might differ on the meaning of his teachings. Indeed Sun Tzu helps to provide guidance to depict: if we want to get a soldier to fight like a warrior until the last second, there is no better motivation than to know we are not going home unless we win, according to Sun Tzu. A good general will use this fact to manipulate the feelings of his soldiers so that no matter the situation the best performance will always be expected. In this situation taking place over the Taiwan Strait, if Taiwan wants to secure victory, the generals, under the guidance of Sun Tzu's teachings, would have consider to lead their Taiwanese soldiers to fight in Mainland China for "one must not engage a war on the dispersive land, i.e. in his own home territory." (散地則無戰)⁶ Surely this is not the case in the real world in which we live. But for Taiwan to stand a chance, we have to find a way to let other countries defend themselves against their invaders. It is easier said than done obviously, but it is in our interest, according to Sun Tzu's teachings, to enhance the ties with the US to balance the Chinese power. Sun Tzu will also strongly see us to be have a very tight relationship with the great powers, for as a "qu-di" (衢地)⁷ like Taiwan, already militarily and economically important to the US and PRC, we should do the best we can to further strengthen our relationship so that when relations turn sour other countries might think twice before provoking a war. By the same token, Sun Tzu's clever manipulation strategies can also be applied to the anti-access strategy used by China. For her victory doesn't come because of might or power, it comes because the warfare have been properly addressed and dealt with away from her homeland. China may have found the legitimacy in their anti-access measures, but they should count on the US bringing significant air defense capabilities to bear upon the situation and the Chinese must be aware of these tactics. So as we can see, anti-access may seem like a very clever idea which came directly out of advancements in modern technologies, yet its effectiveness is very much dependent on having an appreciation for the possible contingencies which may arise from its use, which is

⁶ See Sun Tzu's *the Art of War*, Chapter 11.

⁷ Sun Tzu's *the Art of War*, chapter 11.

what Sun Tzu is teaching us in chapter eight:

Take the disadvantageous factors into consideration when the whole setting is advantageously going, the mission will be accomplished; Take the advantageous factors into consideration when the whole setting is disadvantageously going, the troubles will be resolved.

(是故智者之慮，必雜于利害。雜于利，而務可信也；雜于害，而患可解也。) ⁸

By the same token, there is a big uphill struggle when it comes to PRC's reunification agenda so there probably will not be any overnight success stories, much to their dismay. With China desperately in pursuit of them, fortunately for Taiwan there are factors in our favor. We have experience fighting communists, for example, so at least we will not be complete novices to their tactics. In addition to that, Taiwan is a vital economic bridge, at the center of the central area of the First Island Chain in western Pacific Ocean which connects trade between China, the US and the surrounding pacific region, like a "zheng-di" (爭地) ⁹ described in Sun Tzu's *Art of War*. Even though China seeks to claim Taiwan for itself, the US will not quietly stand by because it is just as important for them for Taiwan to be a free agent in trade matters. According to Sun Tzu, this is the perfect situation for Taiwan because neither will easily give it up; it is protected by its own strategic importance to both sides. Taiwan can avoid a direct head on confrontation with China, according to Sun Tzu's teaching on zheng-di, if it can position itself with the US and force the PLA to have to go through their ally in order to get to them (爭地，吾將趨其後) . ¹⁰ For Sun Tzu, this is the most effective way for Taiwan to protect its own interests.

Sun Tzu dispensed advice to readers in his military treaties in the last two thousand and five years. People believe what they believe by quoting his words for their own purposes. We need to figure out the gap between what we infer and what Sun Tzu implies. China is stepping up military confrontations against the US. Anti-access and Area Denial are reminders of tensions of the flash point of Taiwan Strait, over which China claims sovereignty and which it has targeted with hundreds of missiles. In this case, when Sun Tzu says that "third rate generals win through a field operation and mediocre generals win by besieging the city" (其次伐兵，其下攻

⁸ Sun Tzu's *the Art of War*, chapter 8.

⁹ Sun Tzu's *the Art of War*, chapter 11.

¹⁰ Sun Tzu's *the Art of War*, chapter 11.

城)¹¹, it is a reference to the fact that virtually all the capitals during his time were heavily fortified cities. Every detail in their construction, from the locations chosen to how heavily armed they were, were done with the aim of discouraging any hostile combatants. Faced with this formidable reality, Sun Tzu had no choice but to address what must be done in order to circumvent these imposing obstacles, leading to conjure theories like “not to win through conquering the besieged city”. The US military engaged in a strategic plan to create a missile defense shield which completely surrounded Washington D.C. during the Cold War. This shows perfectly the kind of obstacles which Sun Tzu as a general faced with impressive fortifications, which in this case are substituted only with something more technologically advanced (Liu, 2004).

Unlike how Sun Tzu’s wisdom made us aware of the futility of physical violence, this is the kind of warfare that Sun Tzu gave up on long before. But Chinese scholars like Huang still follow his suggestions and resort to violence and wrecking havoc on the Taiwan Strait, and therefore regress rather than progress the wisdom of Sun Tzu. Taiwan might longer not be an unsinkable aircraft carrier anymore, but the keen students of Sun Tzu must learn from the military guru before they should take any further steps to acquire their Holy Grail.

There is a new precedent being set for how the US deals with China’s ever increasing aggression towards Taiwan. The US’s attitude towards defending Taiwan if China has always been very clear but the Chinese are committed to strengthening their anti-access and area denial policies. As a result, the US is being backed into a corner and they must confront the dangers and risks involved in maintaining their stance towards Taiwan. The Chinese know that a direct head to head military confrontation will likely end in defeat for them, but if the US is forced to play defense from all corners of the globe, this is a much more daunting prospect for them logistically speaking. In the days of the Cold War areas of strategic concern were more clearly defined and the US was able to make their presence felt in where it counted. Unfortunately, there is no such luck with the Chinese because their anti-access strategy is just far too comprehensive and difficult to manage without the presence of a worldwide standing military, which is not at all feasible. And to add even further insult to injury, it’s not a sure bet that the US will be able to

¹¹ See Sun Tzu’s *the Art of War*, Chapter 3.

successfully undertake the necessary diplomatic initiatives to establish a global presence. The ABSM is part of a plan to make China virtually inaccessible to the US without first paying the steep penalty of climbing an imposing wall of anti-access countermeasures.

Taiwan: A Pawn to Throw Away or the Gauntlet to Take Up?

Sun Tzu teaches us that fighting alone will not get us a victory; we have to position ourselves with allies and let them share some of the burden.¹² One of the greatest take home lesson that Sun Tzu teaches is not about fighting but about winning without unnecessary drama and risk. Fighting is an ugly affair, we have to send soldiers to the battlefield and suffer casualties all without a guarantee that victory will come. If we have the right connections, it becomes much easier to facilitate victory through diplomatic channels and talk our way to making the enemy surrender rather than trading blows. In this style of warfare, we worry about not forming the most advantageous partnerships rather than worrying about total annihilation. All these points to a fact that knowing one's own position and the position of a set of possible choices would ideally, by finding the closest alternative, make it easier to derive decisions consistent with one's convictions in the chaotic and anarchic international milieu. This worked at the time when Sun Tzu fought his wars; it will still work now and in the future for us to fight ours.

Reading between the lines in the treatise of Sun Tzu we might have the impression that sometimes in order to be successful it is in our interest to look at the big picture. The way we looks at it, if we get a direct hit on a target our success is limited only to that specific target. However if we can wound instead of kill outright, the other soldiers will be forced to come to the aid of their fallen comrade and while they are busy saving them, we can pick them off like sitting ducks. In the context of the two colossus super powers squaring off right now, are the Chinese using

¹² Sun Tzu despises generals who have nothing but tunnel vision. He reiterates the importance of knowledge of the intentions of both his enemies and allies: “Do not enter into alliance with other rulers unless you are acquainted with their designs.”（不知諸侯之謀者，不能預交。）“When your men are exhausted and your State impoverished, others will take advantage of your fatigue.”（夫鈍兵挫銳，屈力殫貨，則諸侯乘其弊而起。）“When soldiers are confused and worried, foreign rulers are sure to come in and bring troubles. This is so called by disordering the army he invites the defeat by the enemy.”（三軍既惑且疑，則諸侯之難至矣，是謂亂軍引勝。）

anti-access as a means to thwart the Americans and taking the focus away from their most strategically important bases? With their forces stretched to capacity, the Chinese will use that opportunity to lash out at the Americans in their vulnerable state. Despite how intimidating China's anti-access countermeasures are, it all might be a hustle just to make the US fear the commons near Taiwan so they can keep them at arm's length. There is no doubt that the current situation for Taiwan is very tenuous, but China's anti-access tactic could be a brilliant illustration of the importance of deception in warfare.

Sun Tzu advocates injecting an element of uncertainty as a tactic against the adversary, so by pushing the Taiwan agenda into broad daylight the Chinese could very well be trying to trap the US into becoming a sitting duck for them. On the surface, it seems that China is trying to put into motion a very strong defense game in order to counteract a possible attack by the US. The only goal they seem to be interested in keeping the US's hands off Taiwan should they decide to reclaim it. If it looks like China is getting too cozy with Taiwan, the US could be provoked into action at which point they could use their DF 31s against their aircraft carriers. On the other hand, it could be just a deterrent to make the US think twice before making a move. No matter what, whether the target is China or Taiwan itself is not clear for the US which gives them for contingencies to have to confront. In order to lift the fog of war, all participants should have a candid look at where their military is and where it is going with the understanding of the true intention of their enemy. Because of Sun Tzu we know how to size up our enemy and to determine the fate of our outcome based on men, training, their morale, etc. But for Taiwan this style of military assessment doesn't help very much. If Taiwan wants to be the creator of their own destiny, she must contend with two of the most overwhelming military forces in the world.

Sun Tzu had no clue about ABSM, all he knew were the logistics of land based campaigns involving horses and men. Applying these teachings from Sun Tzu's treatise as the premier authority on war has passed. Warfare in the modern age has too many variables to allow for simple straight forward conclusion about undertakings of this magnitude. It is true that we have to be careful with how we use our men and not just rely on numbers, but try that with China and see if we can survive to tell the story. In the current state of world affairs, in some ways Taiwan seems to be a pawn that is being passed between the United States and China.

Neither one wants to admit that they want outright control, however there is definitively an absence of complacency and nobody for sure is going to give up without a fight. Ideally from their perspective, Beijing would like to see Taiwan voluntarily surrender, even though they may still lack full official control over the island. However there is no denying that China has been harboring deeply rooted ambitions to rein over Taiwan, but that will have to wait. For now, they have to be content with just having enough intimidation to scare the US into thinking twice before they lift a finger in defense of Taiwan (Murawiec, 2011).

Conclusion

Despite the technical difficulty of creating an effective missile system, there is another possible solution which is not as sophisticated but will undeniably work (Rourke, 2008). If they throw enough of missiles some of it is bound to stick eventually. Should the mood ever strike them, China could easily overwhelm Taiwan's weapon systems by simply giving it more than it could handle. Even with the latest hardware, there is no system sophisticated enough to stop an onslaught of massive proportions that a country like China is capable of (Rourke, 2011). All these are beyond Sun Tzu's control, and problems can occur anytime to this military guru were he living in Taiwan now.

But from Sun Tzu we do acquire the first lesson that a country must have enemies in order to survive. Enemies exist not only to be a hostile force threatening the safety of another, but they serve also a kind military "quality control". As a persistent threat, even so overwhelmingly, they force another country to always be vigilant and to always try to stay a step ahead of their foe. It sounds perverse, but it is helpful to have an enemy like PLA which can keep us on our toes, otherwise we become a victim to our own complacency when in reality we can not afford to be indifferent to the dangers surrounding us. What would happen if a democratic Taiwan determines not to surrender? In this respect, the second lesson we learn from Sun Tzu is he is under equipped and teaches one only how to fight and win battles, not how to stay a survivor afterwards and forever.

It seems like a daunting challenge the situation Taiwan is in now, but actually having an enemy like China could have advantages. If China considers Taiwan can be small but concentrated forces, then they know Taiwan can not be disciplined and they

may think twice because it could be an ugly affair.¹³ We should learn our third lesson from Sun Tzu that an enemy is not just a hostile force, they are also a powerful incentive to maintain as big an edge as possible at all times. If Taiwan forgets the art of taking side and the importance of remaining in the democratic camp, it will be easily abandoned by all when push comes to shove. Taiwan certainly will not be doing itself any favors by becoming enemies with such a powerful force like China, but in this difficult scenario she will be motivated to maintain a tight relationship with the US so when situations get rough they will be ready. There is no easy victory but always contingencies. If we can find a way to mitigate them we have less to fear.

13 “Therefore, a small force, when concentrated, can become formidable and have the capability to capture the larger force.” (小敵之堅，大敵之擒也。)

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