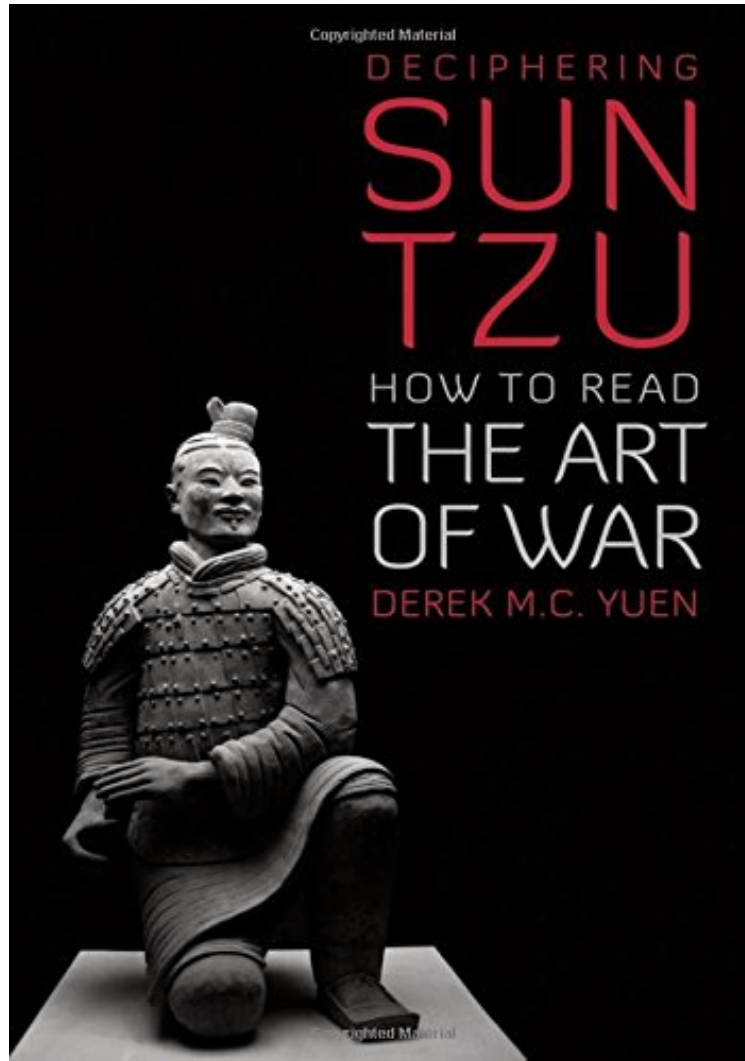


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## Deciphering Sun Tzu: How to Read The Art of War

*Derek M. C. Yuen*

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As the People's Republic's seemingly inexorable rise to economic and military power continues, never has the need for

a better grasp of Chinese strategic thought by the West been more acute. In *Deciphering Sun Tzu*, Derek Yuen seeks to reclaim for the reader the hidden contours and lost Chinese and Taoist contexts of Sun Tzu's renowned treatise *The Art of War*, a literary classic and arguably one of the most influential books ever written. He also explains its historical, philosophical, strategic, and cross-cultural significance. His comprehensive analysis of Sun Tzu, based on a close reading of the Chinese sources, also reconstructs the philosophy, Taoist methodology and worldview that effectively form the cornerstones of Chinese strategic thinking, which are arguably as relevant today as at any moment in history. Yuen's innovative reading and analysis of Sun Tzu within and from a Chinese context is a new way of approaching the strategic master's main concepts, which he compares with those of Clausewitz, Liddell-Hart and other Western strategists. *Deciphering Sun Tzu* offers illuminating analysis and contextualization of *The Art of War* in a manner that has long been sought by Western readers and opens new means of getting to grips with Chinese strategic thought.

"Taking the oldest and most enigmatic of military texts Derek Yuen boldly confronts questions of philosophy and strategic culture as no other contemporary interpreter of Sun Tzu has done before. In a quite extraordinary work of erudition he demonstrates both the continuing significance of *The Art of War* in Chinese thinking and why our continuing misreading of the text is proving so damaging to our understanding of Chinese thinking." -- Christopher Coker, Professor of International Relations, London School of Economics and Political Science, and author of *The Improbable War: China, the US and the Logic of Great Power Conflict* "Derek Yuen has produced a fascinating re-interpretation of Sun Tzu. He casts a wide philosophical-cultural net in his quest to capture the essence of this timeless Chinese classic of strategy." -- Andrew Scobell, Senior Political Scientist, RAND Corporation and author of *China's Use of Military Force: Beyond the Great Wall and the Long March* "Yuen puts Sun-tzu in context, identifying his debts to Chinese philosophy (particularly Taoism), providing historical background, guiding the reader through the key themes in his work, explaining common interpretations of it, and detailing its reception in the West... anyone who wishes to understand Sun-tzu should not ignore [this book]." -- *Foreign Affairs* "This book puts Sun-tzu in context, identifying his debts to Chinese philosophy (particularly Taoism), providing historical background, guiding the reader through the key themes in his work, explaining common interpretations of it, and detailing its reception in the West ... anyone who wishes to understand Sun-tzu should not ignore it" -- *Foreign Affairs* About the Author Derek M. C. Yuen has a PhD in Strategic Studies from the University of Reading. Based in Hong Kong, he has been working on the synthesis of Chinese and Western strategic thought and Taoist strategic thinking.