

Abstract

My thesis explores the relation between the Russian military strategy in Ukraine and *The Art of War*. This is done by answering my research question: How do Russia's successes and failures in Ukraine relate to Sun Tzu's guide for fighting wars? And two sub-questions: 1. Have there been cases of Russian strategy adapting from initial failures? 2. How does Russian strategy in Ukraine differ from official doctrine? My research provides a literature review concerned with how Sun Tzu's concepts relate to modern warfare and provides a summary of *The Art of War*. Furthermore, my research relates specific empirical cases from the case study being the Russo-Ukrainian war in the selected time-period from the 24th of February 2022 to the 31st of March 2024, to Sun Tzu's core concepts such as foreknowledge, speed, preparation, the "Five Constant Factors", and the "Five Essentials for Victory". My empirical findings demonstrated that the Russian strategy in Ukraine relates negatively to Sun Tzu's guide for fighting wars, proving to cause significant issues for the Russian forces in Ukraine. Moreover, my research demonstrates that Russian forces are slowly learning and adapting from the initial failures. As a result, the Russian strategy is becoming more in line with some of Sun Tzu's concepts. But generally, still contradicting *The Art of War*. Lastly, while exploring the relation between the Russian strategy and Sun Tzu's concepts, I also identified discrepancies with official Russian doctrine.