

Political and Legal Principles of Sun Tzu's Strategy and the Influence of Modern China

Vitaliy A. Lizogub*

Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University,
Kharkiv, Ukraine

*e-mail: lizogubvitaliy74@gmail.com

Abstract

Although a state's foreign policy strategy is not an official source of law, it represents a system of views on the goals and forms of a state's actions in the international arena and serves as a direct basis for the formation of legal acts and international treaties, playing a significant role in shaping the state's international legal position at international conferences and in the work of international organizations. In today's world, conflicts and contradictions are resolved not only by military force, but also by other means: soft power and information, hybrid, indirect wars, etc. China tries to avoid direct military confrontation for as long as possible, choosing indirect methods of action, and tries to use other actors to achieve its goals. Therefore, the aim of the study is to examine the historical roots of China's foreign policy strategy, its original forms, and compare them with contemporary forms. For this purpose, historical-genetic and historical-comparative research methods are used. It is assumed that China's modern methods of influence and soft power directly reach the depths of the ancient history of the "Middle Kingdom" and have a genetic connection with the ancient art of war, the military strategy developed by Sun Tzu. Using the comparative method, the relevant instructions of the treatise are compared with the practices of modern China. It is concluded that, according to Sun Tzu's concept, it is necessary to conduct active diplomacy, destroy the enemy's alliances, and break their strategy. Sun Tzu constantly emphasizes that direct military confrontation should be avoided, replacing it with indirect actions. Based on the concepts of Sun Tzu's treatise, modern China creatively develops, refines, and effectively applies them in practice. China has created a powerful system of financial, political, and diplomatic influence in the world on business circles, analytical and political centers in virtually all countries of the world.

Keywords: Sun Tzu; China's strategy; geopolitics; indirect actions, soft power; intelligence.

Політико-правові принципи стратегії Сунь-Цзи та вплив сучасного Китаю

Віталій Анатолійович Лизогуб*

Національний юридичний університет імені Ярослава Мудрого,

Харків, Україна

**e-mail: lizogubvitaliy74@gmail.com*

Анотація

Хоча зовнішньополітична стратегія держави не є офіційним джерелом права, вона є системою поглядів на цілі та форми дій держави на міжнародній арені і слугує безпосередньою основою для формування правових актів і міжнародних договорів, відіграючи значну роль у формуванні міжнародно-правової позиції держави на міжнародних конференціях і в роботі міжнародних організацій. У сучасному світі конфлікти і суперечності вирішуються не тільки військовою силою, а й іншими засобами: м'яка сила та інформаційні, гібридні, непрямі війни тощо. Китай намагається якомога довше уникати прямої військової конfrontації, вибираючи непрямі методи дій, і намагається використовувати інших дійових осіб для реалізації своїх цілей. Тому мета дослідження полягає у вивченні історичних коренів зовнішньополітичної стратегії Китаю, її первісних форм та порівнянні їх із сучасними формами. Задля цього використовуються історико-генетичний та історико-порівняльний методи дослідження. Передбачається, що сучасні методи впливу і м'якої сили Китаю безпосередньо сягають глибин давньої історії «серединної імперії» і мають генетичний зв'язок із древнім мистецтвом війни, військовою стратегією, розробленою Сунь-Цзи. Використовуючи порівняльний метод, відповідні вказівки трактату порівнюються з практикою сучасного Китаю. Формується висновок, що згідно з концепцією Сунь-Цзи, необхідно вести активну дипломатію, руйнувати союзи противника і ламати його стратегію. Сунь-Цзи постійно наголошує, що слід уникати прямої військової конfrontації, замінюючи її непрямими діями. Грунтуючись на концепціях трактату Сунь-Цзи, сучасний Китай творчо розвиває, удосконалює та ефективно застосовує їх на практиці. Китай створив потужну систему фінансового, політичного і дипломатичного впливу у світі на ділові кола, аналітичні та політичні центри, практично у всіх країнах світу.

Ключові слова: Сунь-Цзи; стратегія Китаю; геополітика; непрямі дії; м'яка сила; розвідка.

Introduction

Undoubtedly, Sun Tzu's treatise "The Art of War" has long been under the scrutiny of researchers. Its study in the West began in the eighteenth century. Since then, a large number of scholarly works on the treatise have appeared.

The first translation of Sun Tzu into a non-Chinese language was a translation into Manchu, which appeared in the seventeenth century. In the following

eighteenth century, there were several attempts at translation into European languages. In 1772, the Jesuit Jean-Joseph Amiot translated the book into French, but it was not until 1910 that an authoritative version of the English translation appeared, which is still important today. This is the translation by Lionel Giles [1].

Today, the treatise has been translated into Ukrainian, Czech, German, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish, Armenian, Japanese, Vietnamese, and many other languages. However, modern translations are usually not based on the original, but on already published English translations.

The first brief translation into Slavonic titled "Instructions of the Chinese commander Sun Tzu to his subordinate generals" was made by Lieutenant Colonel Sreznevsky of the Kostroma Regiment from the French translation by Amiot and published in a "military collection" in 1860. The first modern Ukrainian translation is the work of Serhiy Lesniak [2].

The highest federal military educational institution of the US Army, the United States Military Academy, also known as West Point Academy (the oldest of the five military academies in the United States), has a special course dedicated to Sun Tzu's treatise.

Noteworthy is the work of G. Galiardi "Sun Tzu, the Art of War and the Art of Management", which is an analysis of the treatise from the standpoint of management, the art of management, the problem of leading people, decision-making and improving management methods [3].

These studies were mainly devoted to purely military-strategic, business or linguistic aspects.

The scientific novelty of the presented study is a comparative analysis of the Sun Tzu principles in the system of confrontation between world centers of power, comparing the ideas of the treatise with the theory and practice of China's modern strategy in the international arena, and establishing the principles and strategic methods in Sun Tzu's doctrine that China uses today. The focus is on the powerful, almost universal influence of the PRC, to which all states of the world are subjected to one degree or another due to the processes of globalization.

The aim and objectives of the study are to analyze in detail Sun Tzu's treatise "The Art of War", as well as to study the geostrategic and geopolitical aspects of this military doctrine.

Literature Review

The issue of strategy, including its foreign policy aspect, has long been of interest to politicians, military personnel, and scholars.

The book by world-renowned British military theorist Basil Liddell Hart, *Strategy of Indirect Action* (1954) [4], examines the issue of the so-called strategy of indirect action. Using examples of the most important wars from ancient times to the 20th century, the author argues that indirect action is the most effective way to wage war. In a special section, the author explains the theory and essence of strategy.

In 2004, a book was published by American political scientist, developer of a number of areas within neoliberalism, and leading expert on international affairs Joseph Nye Jr. (Joseph S. Nye, Jr.) entitled *Soft Power: the Means to Success in World Politics* [5], in which the author elaborates on the idea of a country's soft power in the process of global politics, describes its essence and content, and substantiates its role and significance in the era of the information society. It was Joseph Nye who introduced the term "soft power" into scientific circulation, transforming the idea of a country's political and cultural influence into a concept. Subsequently, this term attracted public attention and quickly entered political discourse, becoming widely used by world leaders, the ruling elite, scientists, experts, and journalists.

Joseph Nye formulated the idea of complex interdependence between countries, expressed in the interpenetration of their economies in the process of international trade, and began to develop the concept of influence based on intangible sources of power, such as culture, a common system of values, and public diplomacy.

In a comprehensive and insightful work, Australian scholar, executive director of the Australian Institute think tank, professor at Charles Sturt University in Canberra Clive Hamilton, and German researcher, master's degree in Asian studies from Columbia University, Dr. Marake Olberg, a master's degree in Chinese studies from Heidelberg University, "Hidden Hand: Exposing how the Chinese Communist Party is Reshaping the World" (2020) [6], as well as their other publications [7], reveal the systemic goals and methods of the CCP, its global network of influence, and the promotion of its ideology. How the PRC is quietly taking over the world) (2020) [6], as well as their other publications [7], reveal the systemic goals and methods of the CCP, its global network of influence and promotion of its interests, and propose the formation of a set of countermeasures aimed at countering China's expansion. It is stated that the Chinese Communist Party is trying to build a new world order based on Marxist ideology, under the supremacy of China, rather than on the principles of human rights and democracy. The ultimate goal is to destroy the collective West with its own openness and liberal values, turning them against itself. The authors

argue that China aims to build a new colonial system of its own in order to gain satisfaction for a "century of humiliation" by transforming weak countries into Chinese vassals.

The works of many Western and Chinese researchers and journalists, including Anna-Maria Brady [8], Nick Knight [9], Richard Baum [10], John Garno [11], Zhou Lianshu [12] and others highlight various aspects of the PRC's current cautious and far-sighted foreign policy practices and analyze its forms and methods.

Materials and Methods

The study is based on the use of historical-genetic and historical-comparative research methods. It is assumed that China's modern methods of influence and soft power go directly back to the depths of the ancient history of the "middle empire" and have a genetic connection with the ancient art of war, the military strategy developed by Sun Tzu. Using the comparative method, the relevant instructions of the treatise are compared with the practice of modern China. At the beginning of the study, a brief overview of the degree of research on the problem under study and the significance of Sun Tzu's treatise for the present is given. The central part of the study consists of four parts devoted to analyzing the foundations of the art of strategy. At this stage, the author uses a combination of methods to classify types of influence strategies. The first part discusses the strategy of finding "friends". The second part is devoted to the study of the strategy of making a split in the enemy's ranks. The third part analyzes the means of forming enemy plans and the strategy of presenting disinformation. The fourth chapter is devoted to intelligence and espionage.

Results and Discussion

The significance of the sun tzu treatism for the past

Of all the vast literature on the military art of ancient China, the so-called "Seven Books" stands out, in which a special place belongs to two treatises – "Sun Tzu" and "Wu Tzu". We focus on the first one. It was this work that laid the foundation for Chinese military science. It is the oldest and, at the same time, one of the most widely known studies of military theory in China, Korea, and Japan.

Sun Tzu's principles are quite applicable to the present. The field of practice where they are realized does not matter. Any form of activity can be considered as war in accordance with Heraclitus of Ephesus' formula "War is the father of all things" [13]. Sun Tzu's ideas are applicable to any field of activity where there is competition and organization is needed (international relations, management,

marketing, software development and sales, etc.) Most of his principles at all times easily allowed for transfer from the sphere of war to the sphere of diplomacy and politics. That is why Sun Tzu's book retains a fundamental value for the activity analysis of not only military leaders but also politicians, and not only in the distant past.

The fundamental idea of Sun Tzu's strategy is its dialectic and dynamism. Sun Tzu repeatedly pointed out that the principles of tactics are in a state of constant development, and whoever does not know this truth knows nothing about war [14].

The leitmotif of Sun Tzu's concept is the principles of the "strategy of indirect action", aptly named by the British military theorist Basil Liddell Hart in the mid-twentieth century (1954) [4] and "soft power", developed by Joseph Nye at the end of the same century [5].

Strategies for finding "Friends"

China continues to follow the principles laid down in the ancient treatise of Sun Tzu. A special place among them is the search for so-called "friends" and informants. Thus, China today has an extensive network of "friends", which is, among other things, a source of an extremely wide range of diverse and sometimes extremely important information in many areas. The methods of working with these friends have been confirmed in the framework set by the current leader of the country, Xi Jinping. In 2017, he instructed CPC cadres that their friends among foreigners outside the party are not their "personal resources" but should become "friends for the party" or "for the public good ... But personal friendship must be consistent with work for the public good. Principles, discipline, and rules must be followed" [6, p. 29].

The system of so-called "external friendship" developed by the CCP aims to apply the principles of separating (disuniting) enemies by focusing on contradictions and uniting all forces that can be friendly or useful around a common goal. In party terminology, friendship is "a means of psychologically neutralizing the opposition and making changes to the existing reality". "Friendship" is not just some kind of personal close personal connection, but a strategic relationship. In Chinese terms, foreign friends are people who are willing and able to promote China's national interests [8, p. 8].

A large part of the entire array of work with "friends of China" is carried out by a party organization called the United Front. Similar tasks are also handled by such institutions as the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Chinese Council for the Promotion of Peaceful National

Reunification, and the Chinese Association for International Friendly Contact [6, p. 30].

Sun Tzu's tradition was continued in both the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries. Thus, working with the "friends of China", the principles developed by Mao Zedong in his 1937 essay "On Contradictions" are applied. The Great helmsman (weidade doshou) formulated two types of contradictions – "contradictions within the people" (zhenmin neibu maodong) and "contradictions between the people and the enemies of the people" (di wo maodong) [9, p. 149].

The concept of the people and those labelled as their enemies manifests itself in various forms, both domestically and internationally. In his speech at the National Conference on Propaganda and Ideology in 2013. Xi Jinping outlined 3 zones on China's ideological field: red (the CCP's citadel), gray (the intermediate position) and black (critical public opinion, the "enemy" zone). It should be noted that within this field, the red, black and gray zones are intertwined [6, p. 30]. Xi Jinping pointed out the need for the party to hold the red zone firmly, move towards the gray zone to incorporate it into the red zone, and resist the black zone [15]. In its approach to international relations, the CCP distinguishes between foreigners who are already sympathetic to the party; hardline, irreconcilable opponents who are not inclined to change their position or compromise; and the "intermediate political state" which is the main target of the CCP's influence [6, p. 30].

Regarding disputes and dissent, the CPC also distinguishes 3 categories of disputes, each of which requires a special approach: academic issues, misunderstandings (defined as "problems of ideological understanding"), and political issues. Academic issues are those on which the party has not defined a clear position [12, pp. 21-23]. Thus, it allows for more open discussion and exchange of views on issues that Mao believes reflect different views among the masses. The second category, misunderstandings, are issues on which the CPC has a clear position on what is right, but on which the party does not observe persistence, negative intentions, or hatred from an individual or group of individuals who express a different position. In this case, the CCP persistently explains the correct position, trying to persuade the counterpart to accept it. In Mao's terminology, a misunderstanding is a conflict between people.

The third category, political issues, are those on which the CCP has formulated its position. However, "hostile forces" both outside and inside the country are attempting to discredit it by deliberately spreading lies. As soon as malice or intentionality is suspected, the person or group expressing the wrong position is labeled as an "enemy" and their claims must be firmly rejected. Under Xi Jinping,

party theorists have been turning more and more issues into a political category. The concept of intent serves as a criterion for classifying political acts. When groups claim that a protest was spontaneous, they do so in order to avoid being labeled as political and carried out by enemy forces or "black hands" (heishou). In the CCP's ideological field, such opponents stand in the way of inevitable historical progress, and for this reason they must be dealt with decisively and harshly. It is noteworthy that the distinction between "contradictions within the people" and "contradictions between the people and enemies" was officially reintroduced into the party charter under Xi Jinping [6, pp. 30-31].

The CCP's ideology classifies foreigners into five categories [10, pp. 152-153]. "Friends of the first category" are those who fully share all the ideas of the party. Their speeches are often quoted by the official media. A friend of the second category is a "well-wisher", someone who is trusted, but with caution. These are, for example, businessmen who are open to manipulation because they have a personal interest in appearing friendly. The third category, which also includes academics and journalists, is "those who really love China but know all the evils of Chinese communism". These people are outside the sphere of influence. The fourth category consists of 'those people who are favourably disposed towards China but do not accept Chinese communism'. They are classified as "enemies" and discredited whenever possible. The last category is for those who "either do not know or are not interested in China". They are potentially useful people, invited to a cultural event or just to the cinema, hoping that over time they will develop a positive attitude towards China. Potential friends of China receive invitations to conferences, receptions or cultural events where positive impressions are fostered, organised by seemingly neutral charitable or academic organisations. At such events, gifts are given to create a sense of obligation and reciprocity. This can be followed by a free trip to China, during which the site is intensively explored as part of a carefully designed programme of meetings and excursions. The host organisations are often front groups (cover structures) affiliated with the United Front Work Department (UFWD) or the Public Relations Department of the Political Work Department of the Central Military Commission (CMC), "state-owned companies can also perform these functions, and in the Xi Jinping era, private corporations can also perform these functions" [6, p. 37].

Strategy of division in the enemy's ranks

The first element of such a multicomponent phenomenon as war is morality. Sun Tzu calls it the Tao (way, path), although in the Chinese tradition it is one of the most ambiguous categories, understood not only in its concrete meaning but also

in its abstract sense. "The way is when the thoughts of the people are the same as the thoughts of the ruler, when the people are ready to die with him, ready to live with him, when they know neither fear nor doubt" [14, p. 36].

Another of the famous strategists of ancient China, Wu Tzu, specifying the position of his predecessor, makes internal agreement a necessary condition for every war, understanding it as harmony between the government and the population, the government and the people: "if a sovereign who knows the way wants to send his people to war, he first of all reaches agreement and only then undertakes a great enterprise" ("Wu-Tzu", chapters 1, 3) [14, p. 461]. In accordance with the maxim, "every kingdom divided against itself will become desolate; and every city or house divided against itself will not stand" (Matt. 12:25). Thus, it is possible to disrupt the enemy's plans by introducing disagreements and contradictions in his state (personnel).

Formatting enemy plans

It is also important not just to disrupt the enemy's strategy, but to "shape" it ourselves. In this regard, Beijing's diplomatic strategy is of some interest. The basis of its methodology is to determine the location of the centres of power in the country that becomes the object of influence, as well as the personal composition of elites in politics, think tanks, business, academia, media and cultural institutions. Information is collected on who they have connections with, who are their friends and family members. Priority is given to those with the most valuable business and personal connections in China itself. The selection of people with whom to get close is entrusted to special front groups associated with the United Front and the PLA [11].

The elite's power map in the United States is different from that of Germany, which in turn will not be similar to that of Canada and the United Kingdom. Target groups for influence will include former, current and future political leaders at every level of government – national, provincial or municipal. High-level officials who advise and influence political leaders are also of great interest.

The use of anyone with influence in the ears of political leaders, official and unofficial advisers, civil servants, party colleagues, donors, friends, spouses and other family members, business partners and military leaders are all covered by the rules of the game. Influence operations are made much easier when the target is financially incentivised, and business relationships thus contribute to China's influence in the United States itself. Think tanks, especially those headed by former political or business leaders, are attracted by donations and research cooperation [6, p. 48].

Sun Tzu proclaimed that the best warfare is to destroy the enemy's plans; the next is to destroy his alliances; the next is to destroy his armies. Accordingly, in order to do this, you need to know these plans. And, what is especially valuable, to influence their formation and, possibly, key decision-making.

It is necessary to understand Sun Tzu's instructions in an expanded sense, and it is important to pay attention to the fact that China has been building networks of influence in the United States for many years [16]. It has been working to gain influence in the US Congress since the 1970s. Through the activities of the CPC's International Relations Department and CPC-affiliated organizations such as the China Association for International Friendly Contact, China has acquired several influential friends [17].

Until recently, almost all players in Washington and beyond were convinced of China's "peaceful rise" and the importance of "constructive engagement". Following a soft approach to China, even the idea that China poses a strategic threat to the United States was ridiculed: "China is going to eat our lunch? Come on, boy" [18].

The CCP also flatters politicians at the highest political level by making business deals aimed at enriching them [19-21].

Strategy of "Concurrence" of disinformation

Perhaps the most famous maxim of Sun Tzu is: "War is the way of deception". The strategist goes on to explain: "Therefore, if you can do something, show your enemy that you cannot; if you use something, show him that you do not use it; even if you are close, show him that you are far away; even if you are far away, show him that you are close; lure him with benefits; put him in a state of disorder and take him; If he has everything, be on the alert; if he is strong, evade him; if he is angry, put him in a state of disorder; if he is humble, make him arrogant; if his strength is fresh, tire him; if he is friendly, separate him; attack him when he is not ready; speak when he does not expect" [22, pp. 8-11].

At the present stage, China continues to follow the guidelines of its ancient strategy. In particular, today disinformation can be easily "fed" through the influence on enemy think tanks, which are an ideal target for both short-term and long-term influence operations. Getting them on board is vital to the CCP's plans to "change the course of the debate without having to directly express its views" [23]. When an influential think tank works on topics related to China, the CCP takes a keen interest in it. In particular, many of the institutions that study China in the United States are sponsored by business elites close to the leadership of China. While some funding also comes directly from the Chinese

government and Chinese companies, contributions from "friends of China" such as Goldman Sachs and Tung Chee-Hwa make up the lion's share of their budgets. And although think tanks constantly declare their sovereignty, they, like corporate-sponsored political parties, cannot "bite the hand that feeds you". In this regard, Xi Jinping said: "we should not allow those who break the CCP's pot to eat the food prepared by the CCP" [24].

The CCP's International Relations Department pays special attention to interaction with think tanks. In particular, the Silk Road Association of Think Tanks has more than a hundred Chinese and foreign members [25].

Intelligence and spying

Among the core doctrines of The Art of War is the importance of intelligence in state-level strategic planning. Sun Tzu points out that "knowledge in advance cannot be obtained from gods and demons, nor can it be obtained by inference from similarities, nor can it be obtained by any kind of calculation. Knowledge of the enemy's position can only be obtained from people". At the same time, Sun Tzu believes that the lack of attention to the organization of espionage or the rejection of intelligence work is a huge miscalculation: "They defend themselves against each other for several years, but the victory is decided in one day. And in these circumstances, to spare titles, awards, money and not know the enemy's situation is the height of inhumanity. The one who regrets this is not a commander for people, not an assistant to his sovereign, not the master of victory" [22, pp. 121-122]. Who should be given these titles, awards, and money? Of course, to spies and all kinds of "friends".

It is worth noting that Sun Tzu was not only a world-famous commander, but also a foundational contributor to the early doctrine of intelligence strategy and tactics. Accordingly, in addition to all of the above, we can confidently position the treatise "The Art of War" as one of the leading manuals that regulates in detail the instructions for conducting the agent method of warfare. Sun Tzu, justifying the need for such intelligence activities, classified spies into five types: internal spies, reverse spies, local spies, spies of life, and spies of death.

"Domestic spies" were agents of a foreign state who were in the service of the enemy and collected information "inside" the enemy's organization. A "return spy" was a spy who infiltrated the enemy, was exposed by enemy counterintelligence, and then was recruited and used against the state that originally sent him. According to Sun Tzu, "local spies" were local residents of the enemy state who provided the necessary information about the location, number of troops, and possible strategic plans. Exclusively their own agents, who were sent to the enemy state for the purpose of conducting intelligence activities and who had

to bring the necessary data, were called "spies of life", and, accordingly, "spies of death" were agents sent to the enemy with such instructions, the fulfillment of which inevitably led to the death of such an agent (for example, reporting false information to the enemy, etc.) [22, pp. 121-122].

Despite the long time that has passed since the publication of this treatise, such a deep analytical classification of spy agents still exists today and is extremely relevant. Only the professional terms used to describe the relevant concepts have changed. For example, the first concept is called agents in the enemy's camp from among the citizens of the state; the second is double agents; the third is informants; the fourth is scouts and the fifth is saboteurs [26].

In today's world, China actively continues to use the principles stated in Sun Tzu's treatise on intelligence and the use of spies. For example, back in 1996, President Bill Clinton's re-election fund received a large donation from the Sino-Indonesian company Lippo, as well as additional donations from the Sino-Thai group Charoeun Popkhand and the Macau-based San Kin Yip company. Lippo was partially acquired by China Resources Group, a company owned by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation of China. These contributions totaled \$4.5 million. They were made through the mediation of a number of American Chinese affiliated with the CCP. It was later revealed that \$300,000 was provided by the daughter of General Liu Huaqing, vice chairman of China's Central Military Commission until 1997 [26; 27]. The broker-dealers were frequent guests at the White House, often accompanied by Chinese partners.

One of them arranged a meeting between Bill Clinton and Wang Jun, the head of Hong Kong-based CITIC and China Poly Group, with close ties to the PLA. A Hong Kong insider reported that "CITIC's management is known to have a large number of secret agents" from military intelligence in its ranks, and Poly Technologies (a subsidiary of Poly Group) has been called a "safe haven" for the Red Princes [28, pp. 204, 255-257]. In other words, Wang Jun was connected to Chinese intelligence when he met with the US President at the White House.

This scandal, known as "Chinagate", showed the ability of China's intelligence services to penetrate to the top of the power pyramid [7, pp. 163-165].

Beijing's espionage activities (stealing secrets and intellectual property) and its influence operations (shaping public opinion and behavior) are synchronized and often involve the same people and organizations. But while United Front operatives in the West are often identifiable, in part because they tend to publicly display their activities, intelligence operatives work in secret.

Beijing spares no effort or expense in both industrial espionage, to obtain commercial secrets, and state espionage, to obtain government and military secrets. FBI Assistant Director for Counterintelligence Bill Priestap noted at the end of 2018 that the bureau had reviewed "thousands" of complaints and investigations related to unconventional forms of espionage, mostly from China [29].

The US Department of Justice estimates that between 2011 and 2018, China was involved in 90 percent of economic espionage cases [30]. Industrial espionage has long been conducted by private companies, but China has taken a bold step by using its diplomatic and intelligence services to facilitate the theft of intellectual property [31, pp. 204-207]. The United Front apparatus and intelligence services are deeply infiltrating Chinese communities in other countries where they find potential cadres of spies, informants, and agents of influence. While traditional forms of espionage are based on special training, China's intelligence gathering program is widely based on the work of thousands of small amateur collectors, the so-called "decentralized micro-espionage" [32, pp. 186-187]. Professionals, businessmen, students and even tourists are encouraged to provide information to embassy and consular officials as part of the "thousand grains of sand" strategy. Information can be collected on technology, trade negotiations, pricing and business strategies, or reports on the activities of diaspora members. Most amateur activities are designed and managed by intelligence professionals [33, pp. 55-56]. Rather than wait for information to come to them, intelligence leaders target specific intellectual property, often working with factories and research laboratories in China, and then work to find people (often amateur spies) who can provide it [31, pp. 204-207], who sometimes even use "professional" methods such as encryption, covert communication, pseudonyms, and counter-surveillance techniques.

There are 2 main spy organizations in China: the Ministry of State Security and the Intelligence Bureau of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (formerly 2PLA – the Second Directorate of the PLA Department of the General Staff).

In general, the Ministry of State Security merges the functions of the CIA and the FBI, but it has a much broader competence and focuses on the political security of the CCP. The MGB is responsible for both domestic and foreign intelligence and security operations. It can order organizations and individuals, including those located in foreign countries, to engage in intelligence work. Most of this activity is carried out by regional and municipal services. Eighteen bureaus are distinguished in the structure of the MGB [33, pp. 55-56]. The 1st Bureau is responsible for agents who are under deep cover and have no ties to the

government, and the 2nd Bureau supervises agents "using diplomatic, journalistic or other cover affiliated with the Chinese government" [33, p. 55]. The 10th Bureau (External Security and Intelligence), in particular, guides student organizations that exist in foreign countries; the 11th Bureau, which includes the Chinese Institute of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR), a think tank, is engaged in the study of open sources and networking abroad; the 12th Bureau (Social Affairs) deals with "the MGB's contribution to the work of the united front"; and the 18th Bureau (US Operations) carries out covert espionage in the United States. The lion's share of operations against the United States is led by the Shanghai State Security Bureau [33, p. 239].

According to the FBI, published in 2005, the MGB has established about 3,000 front companies to disguise its activity in the United States [34, pp. 55-56].

The MGB system has a wide network of departments engaged in economic espionage, and it is deeply rooted in important financial and commercial organizations, especially in Shanghai and Hong Kong [28, pp. 204, 275].

Conclusions

1. The treatise "The Art of War" by the prominent Chinese commander and strategist Sun Tzu, despite the more than two thousand years that have passed since its conclusion, is still quite relevant today, and the main ideas inherent in this concept can be applied accurately and effectively today.
2. China creatively develops, elaborates and improves the principles of Sun Tzu's strategy at the present stage.
3. China has created a powerful system of financial, political and diplomatic influence in the world on business circles, analytical and political centers, and on the centers of decision-making of any more or less important decisions. Relying on its economic power, China uses highly effective financial blackmail to influence decisions made by democratically elected governments, exerting pressure on the bureaucracy, ordering positive publications in its favor in the media, expert assessments, and forcing a vast army of corporations to follow the CCP's orders. Their influence only becomes greater if Chinese corporations controlled by the Chinese government become owners of key infrastructure in the country.
4. Structures with ties to the CCP and its creatures corrupt politicians, and Beijing uses the influential business lobby to promote its interests.
5. China has created an extensive system of information gathering and intelligence (espionage) network in many countries around the world.

- 6) The CCP prefers covert actions disguised as positive, complementary activities.
7. Chinese living outside the country, especially in Europe and the United States, but also in other places, are the objects of increased attention from the competent authorities of the PRC.
8. The lack of adequate financial support for the education system creates a favorable environment for the penetration of agents of influence into universities in Western countries.
9. The CCP exploits the weaknesses of democratic systems to weaken them from within.
10. The CCP's interference and intervention program is well-designed, persistent and determined, and is based on powerful material resources and technology. The comprehensive campaign to destabilize the West's institutions and win over its elite is progressing much faster than Chinese party leaders had planned.
11. The CPC's theory and practice in the system of international relations is based not on an abstract Confucian model, but on a synthesis of the old and the new, on Maoist ideology and the principles of strategy laid down by Sun Tzu.
12. A cautious conclusion is that there is a tendency for these methods to become basic, possibly with the old purely military forms being displaced. Perhaps China sets itself the goal, and is able to realize it, of defeating its opponents only through indirect methods.

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Vitaliy A. Lizogub

Ph.D. in Law, Associate Professor

Associate Professor of the Department of Theory and History of Law

Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University

61024, 77, Hryhoria Skovorody Str., Kharkiv, Ukraine

e-mail: lizogubvitaliy74@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0002-7168-9859

Віталій Анатолійович Лизогуб

кандидат юридичних наук, доцент

доцент кафедри теорії та історії права

Національний юридичний університет імені Ярослава Мудрого

61024, вул. Григорія Сковороди, 77, Харків, Україна

e-mail: lizogubvitaliy74@gmail.com

ORCID 0000-0002-7168-9859

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