

## **Sun Tzu in Modern Warfare: A Context of Sri Lanka**

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**S.R.Sandya Nishanthi Gunasekara<sup>14</sup>**

Abstract

Sun Tzu (770 – 476 BC) was a war commander committed to raise the strength of King Helü of the Wu State in ancient China. His work, Art of War (Sun Tzu Ping Fa), has been commended by many modern military and strategic thinkers for its durable and timeless advices on wining warfare employing simple but carefully judged war tactics. Ethically questionable rigid tactics have also been suggested by Tzu in the midst of carefully chosen military agenda. The environment prevailed during King Helu, similar to modern times, would further provide great opportunities for the military strategists and thinkers, including Sun Tzu himself, to put their military thoughts and theories of war in practice.

Only few suggested tactics and military strategies extracted from Sun Tzu’s The Art of War (The study is based on Giles translation of The Art of War- 1910) have been employed for this research on Sri Lankan governments’ victorious war effort against LTTE. The study inquires if the core values of contemporary warfare remain unchanged from those of ancient China, of which had proved effective and valuable during the time of Sun Tzu and will they also contribute to modern warfare as well. The study prefers Sri Lanka as a case study. The study analyses strategies employed in war against LTTE and if they reflect Sun Tzu’s vision in winning war.

The research will basically depend on war strategies employed by the Sri Lankan government and its army to overcome and surmount difficulties it faced in the battlefield with the LTTE. The war efforts are calculated with respect to the famous thirteen chapters in The Art of War. In this respect, the study will conduct structured interviews with officers in command in Sri Lankan security forces: army, navy and air force.

***Key Words: Sun Tzu, Art of War, military strategies, modern warfare, war***

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<sup>14</sup> Senior Lecturer, Department of Economics, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, sandya@kln.ac.lk