Changing Contexts
of
Chinese Military Strategy and Doctrine

Prashant Kumar Singh

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Contents

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Abbreviations

A2/AD:	Anti-Access/Area Denial
AAM:	Air-to-Air Missiles
AD:	Air Defence
ADIZ:	Air Defence Identification Zone
AEWC:	Airborne Early Warning & Control
AIFV:	Armoured Infantry Fighting Vehicle
AJ:	Anti-Jamming
APC:	Armoured Personnel Carrier
ASCEL:	Active Strategic Counterattacks on Exterior Lines
ASEAN:	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATGM:	Anti-Tank Guided Missile
C4ISR:	Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
CAGA:	Combined Arms Group Armies
CC:	Central Committee
CMC:	Central Military Commission
CPC:	Communist Party of China
DOD:	Department of Defence
ECM:	Enterprise Content Management
EFSA:	Elite Forces and Sharp Arms
EMP:	Electromagnetic Pulse
EW:	Electronic Warfare
EWS:	Early Warning Systems
FND:	Flexible National Defence
GPD:	General Political Department
GPS:	Global Positioning System
GSD:	General Staff Department
ISR:	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance

IT:	Information Technology
IW:	Informationised War
KMT:	Kuomintang
LAN:	Local-Area Networks
LRBM:	Long-range Ballistic Missiles
MAC:	Military Area Command
MBT:	Main Battle Tank
MOD:	Minister of Defence
MOD:	Ministry of Defence
MOOTW:	Military Operations Other Than War
MSG:	Military Strategic Guidelines
NATO:	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NPC:	National People's Congress
PBSC:	Politburo Standing Committee
PCA:	Permanent Court of Arbitration
PLA:	People's Liberation Army
PLAA:	People's Liberation Army Army
PLAAF:	People's Liberation Army Air Force
PLAAN:	People's Liberation Army Navy
PMS:	Preparation for Military Struggle
RMA:	Revolution in Military Affairs
SACCS:	Strategic Automated Command and Control System
SAM:	Surface-to-Air Missile
SCO:	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
SP:	Self-Propelled
T&EO:	Training and Evaluation Outline
UAS:	Unmanned Aerial Systems
UK:	United Kingdom
US:	United States
USAF:	US Air Force
USSR:	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WZC:	War Zone Campaign

Preface

The study of Chinese military strategy in its various dimensions and facets is a continuous process. In May 2015, China's State Council Information Office released China's Defence White Paper (2014), titled 'China's Military Strategy'. This is the first White Paper issued during President Xi Jinping's tenure. As its reading in the relevant section of the monograph would reveal, it exhibits some points of departure in China's military strategy. The White Paper provides cues for future developments in China's military and strategic affairs. It was released in the beginning of the third year of President Xi's tenure. In the normal course, President Xi should remain in the post for ten years that is, two terms of five years each. Thus, the release of the White Paper also gives an opportunity to look back at the evolution of China's military strategy that Xi Jinping has inherited. The purpose of this revisit is to identify the context under which China's military strategy has evolved and to understand the possible evolution of China's military strategy in the future.

This monograph argues that China's military strategy has been evolving through the interplay between Communist Party of China (CPC) and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) or Party-Military relations as well as the Chinese leadership's assessment of the international balance of power. In addition, the role of geography, technology, and the combat experiences of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and other militaries are taken into account.

The interplay between the Party and military decides the role of the military in Chinese politics and the ruling ideology. However, the Party-Military relations model in China should not be compared with the Civil-Military relations model in liberal democracies. In China, the military is not a department attached to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) or only a part of the MoD. It is, rather, a part of the political structure or, more precisely, the Party leadership. Historically, the Party and the PLA have had a 'symbiotic' relationship, with overlapping leaderships. At

present, there is a high degree of separation between the two. However, the PLA continues to retain its political character and institutional links through representation in the Central Committee of the Party and through two Central Military Commissions (CMCs)—the State's and the Party's. China's President, who also doubles as the Party General Secretary, is also the Chairperson of the two CMCs. This signifies the continued legacy of the People's War doctrine that institutionalised the link between society, the Party and the military.

It should be noted that the term PLA includes the Army, the Air Force and the Navy, and means the military in general. In the PLA studies, the unqualified use of the term 'Army' implies military. To point out the separate services of the Army, Air Force and Navy, PLA Army (PLAA), PLA Air Force (PLAAF) and PLA Navy (PLAN) are used.

The study argues that Chinese military strategy has evolved through its emphasis on 'preparation for military struggle' (PMS) which has a 'basic point' for the reference for the preparation. China's Military Strategy Defence White Paper (2014) as well as Peng Guangqian and Yao Youzhi's (eds.) *The Science of Military Strategy* (a widely referred book) both refer to 'winning local wars under high-tech conditions' as the 'basic point' of China's PMS. The PMS and the 'basic point' are about visualizing war or battlefield conditions, and finding a broad response to them. The 'basic point' approximately refers to the term 'military doctrine' as used in Western scholarship. In this monograph, 'military doctrine' is not defined as a campaign or operational manual but as 'generalised principles of war', which visualise battlefield conditions. These principles are more concerned about nature and type of warfare. In 2004, the 'basic point' was changed to 'winning local wars under informationised conditions'.

This monograph is an attempt to provide peers, military professionals, and students of military studies a lucid and comprehensive account of the evolution of China's military strategy and doctrine. For this purpose, existing scholarship on the subject as well as public documents such as China's biennial National Defence White Papers, and the Party Congress Reports are used.

1. Introduction

China's military strategy and doctrine has transformed from a defensive to one of limited offence. Now, the People Liberation Army (PLA) has global aspirations, resulting in more changes in its military strategy and doctrine.

In the early years, intense factional politics within the Communist Party of China (CPC) during 1950s and 1960s shaped Chinese military strategy and doctrine or 'preparation for military struggle'. In the factional politics of the country, Maoist radicalism accorded primacy to the ideological training and politicisation of the PLA over its professionalism. But, as Deng Xiaoping's moderate politics asserted itself in the 1970s—particularly after Mao Zedong's death—the demand for professionalising the PLA also became louder. The mid-1970s to early 1990s saw bargaining between radicalism and moderation. The bargaining was reflected in the military strategic and doctrinal changes during this period. The period was marked by the gradual freeing of military strategy and doctrine from the Maoist legacy. From the 1990s onwards, China's military strategy and 'preparation for military struggle' saw a greater focus on professionalism and technology. As China began to have market economy and a firmly entrenched moderate leadership, the PLA gradually withdrew from political affairs.

Besides, in the period after 1990s Chinese politics underwent a quiet revolution. Jiang Zemin introduced a new chapter in the history of Chinese nationalism with a stress on 'a century of humiliation'. The discourse has continued to intensify and capture the popular imagination in China. The discourse of 'a century of humiliation' has transformed into President Xi Jinping's Chinese Dream of the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation. China's enhanced military power is part of this dream. Contemporary Chinese nationalism inspires China's present defence modernisation. China's military power is a reference point in Chinese nationalism. Despite substantial Party-Military disentanglement at professional levels, the PLA is still not a politically neutral military.

Therefore, Xi Jinping's powerful intervention in the PLA by way of anti-corruption drive, has made imperative a re-look at Party-Military relations and their implications for China's military strategy and doctrine.

The second aspect discussed at length in this monograph is China's threat assessment emanating from the international balance of power, as perceived by the leadership. It investigates the interplay between the dominant ideological patterns of the leadership and changes in the international power structure that have shaped China's threat perception and assessment. In the 1950s and 1960s, China perceived a huge security threat from the US, given US intervention in the Korean War (1950-53), its support to the KMT government on Taiwan, and its intervention in Vietnam. Also, the fact that the People's Republic of China (PRC) had declared its ideological distaste for the US even *before* the Korean War cannot be ignored — a point elaborated later. From the late 1960s till the mid-1980s, China perceived a security threat from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The latter's military deployment on China's border regions became a military threat from the late 1960s. This was preceded by a longstanding ideological divide, which began with Mao's disapproval of Nikita Khrushchev's De-Stalinisation and Peaceful Co-existence policies.

The period, during which USSR was perceived as a threat, was followed by some years in which no specific source of threat was identified. Then, the US reappeared as a potential threat in the 1990s; the factors that shaped this were its support to Taiwan during the Taiwan Strait Missile Crisis in 1995-96, and the promotion of democracy and human rights by the US internationally.

In the latest 2014 Chinese Defence White Paper, the clear identification of the US as the principal threat to national security corresponds with the changed and volatile security scenario in the East China Sea and the South China Sea, as well as the US position on Chinese territorial claims in the two seas. At present, the threat seems to come more from the context of maritime territorial disputes and the US-Japan security alliance. However, there is also the larger context of Chinese expectations for 'a new type of major power relations' in which China looks for a greater role in international affairs at par with the US, and the US expectations of China complying with established norms of

international engagement, particularly in the context of the Asia-Pacific. The US's Asia Rebalancing and China's One Belt, One Road, can be seen as two rival ideological-political projects.

The monograph discusses the Chinese conception of military strategy and military strategic guidelines. This aims at providing a view of how military strategy is understood and crafted in China. It also aims at understanding what is described as 'military doctrine' in Western scholarship vis-à-vis Chinese military thinking. As mentioned above, the overall 'preparation for military struggle' and its 'basic point' comes very close to being a military doctrine as understood in terms of 'generalised principles of war'. Chapter 2 also draws insights from Western academic interpretations as well as the official understanding of strategy and doctrine, and their evolution. This chapter identifies the military strategy of active defence as the basic orientation of China's military strategy, which has roots in Mao Zedong's military thoughts.

Chapter 3 explains how the Chinese Civil War and the Japanese invasion shaped Mao's military strategy of Active Defence. It also underlines Mao's Three Stage Warfare as a proximate to contemporary 'preparation for military struggle' (PMS) and 'the basic point'. Subsequently, the monograph discusses how after the founding of the PRC, Mao's military thoughts became the focal point around which factional politics within the Party worked in the late 1950s and 1960s.

Chapter 4 discusses how factional politics shaped China's military strategy. The chapter also highlights the challenges to Maoist military strategy from the changing political scenario and threat perception in China, and the changes these challenges brought about in China's military strategy and doctrine.

Chapter 5 throws light on how the China-vietnam war (1979) and the Falklands War (1982) shaped the evolution of China's military strategy and doctrine.

Chapter 6 underscores the prominent role of Deng Xiaoping's leadership and how his worldview brought changes in China's military strategy and doctrine.

In Chapter 7, the monograph points out that the Jiang Zemin era witnessed significant developments in military strategy in terms of

professionalism and technology in military affairs. This chapter also underlines how the leadership's professional attitude contributed to changing the visualization of war and battlefield conditions.

Chapter 8 evaluates how the PLA is restructuring its training in the changing strategic and doctrinal milieu.

Chapter 9 discusses the changing pattern of the PLA's military capabilities according to the changes in strategy and doctrine.

Chapter 10 takes stock of China's military strategy and the PMS under Xi Jinping in the light of China's latest Defence White Paper (2014).

In addition to the two main factors of Party-Military relations and threat assessment, the monograph also discusses geography, technology, and learning from combat experiences in shaping China's military strategy. The monograph also provides indications into China's military capabilities and training in the context of Chinese military strategy and doctrine. The monograph ends with the future trends in China's military strategy and doctrine.

2. The Study of Chinese Military Strategy: Exploring Concepts

For a reading of the evolution and the latest trends in Chinese military strategy and doctrine, the Reports of the National Peoples' Congress (NPC) and of the Party Congress, China's Defence White Papers, and China's Military Strategic Guidelines (MSG) are the most important reference documents. Portions relating to national security in the two public reports are helpful in this regard. The Defence White Papers and MSGs focus exclusively on defence and military affairs. While the generally biennial White Papers are public documents, the MSGs are internal documents. The information and details contained in White Papers help to understand the evolution; the MSGs in comparison, are more analytical and have greater strategic value. Scholars such as M. Taylor Fravel and David M. Finkelstein treat the MSG as the primary and authoritative document regarding China's military strategy and its evolution.

This monograph uses the MSG as the main reference point for revisiting Chinese military strategy and doctrine; it also makes good use of National Defence White Papers to understand its evolution. The internal MSGs and the public White Papers present a consistent picture of the evolution of Chinese military strategy and doctrine. The White Papers are important since the MSGs are internal documents, which are available after a period whereas the White Papers have been regularly available to the public since 1998. During this period, only one MSG has been issued, and that was in 2004. Recently, it has been speculated whether the latest White Paper, *China's Military Strategy,* can be considered as the latest MSG—to be discussed separately. However, as the MSG has been mentioned as the primary and authoritative document on Chinese military strategy, a brief introduction to it is required.

China's Military Strategic Guidelines (MSG) and Military Doctrine

China's Military Strategic Guidelines (MSG) is the document that records the evolution in China's military strategy and doctrine. There have been

eight MSGs issued in China by latest count. However, all of them are not equally important. The 1956, 1980 and 1993 MSGs are identified as radical departures, with the ones in 1980 and 1993 having produced new military doctrines in China. Others are the 1960, 1964 and 1977 MSGs. Access to them has been restricted even within the PLA. They have always come to light either because of a later official release or a late, chance discovery in official publications.[1] Here, it should be clear that an MSG should be treated only as a formal ratification of new military guidelines, making it a good reference point and a good cut-off date to discuss doctrinal changes. It should not be treated as the first source or place where new guidelines appear. China's biennial defence White Papers, Party Congress Reports, the National People's Congress (NPC's) Reports, and other official and semi-official writings can be more immediately informative about impending or likely new changes in the guidelines. The importance of these other sources also increases since new MSGs are hardly officially released immediately. Normally, the chairman of the CMC of the Communist Party of China (CPC) issues and delivers the MSG through speeches. Incidentally, the chairman of the CMC is also the Party General-Secretary and China's President. Initially, his speeches only contain 'core concepts' which later develop into 'strategic guiding thoughts' or 'strategic guiding ideology' for the PLA, and become formal MSG. The subsequent organisational tasks—such as planning, acquisitions, and resource allocations—are carried out in the light of these concepts.

Terminological Explanation of the MSG

The military conceptual understanding of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in the People's Republic of China (PRC) has its own terminological order. In this monograph, military terms in the Chinese

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[1]   M. Taylor Fravel, 'Major Strategic Change in China: A Review of the 1956, 1980 and 1993 Military Strategic Guidelines', Paper presented at 2013 International Conference on PLA Affairs by CAPS-NDU-RAND, Taipei, November 14-15, 2013, p.2 (unpublished). The author thanks Professor Fravel for most generously sharing the updated version of the paper.

context have been used as they have been received in English translation. In China, 'Military Thoughts' refer to Chairman Mao Zedong's philosophical and political analyses of war and warfare work as a supreme ideological reference point. The hierarchy goes down to ground-level Campaign Regulations and Combat Regulations. Unlike the US, China does not have separate terms for 'strategy', 'national security strategy', 'national defence strategy', and 'national military strategy'—to be discussed separately. Instead, all these terms are used interchangeably and clubbed together in the one term, 'military strategy', which manifests itself in official 'Military Strategic Guidelines' (MSG), thus becoming probably the most important term in Chinese military thinking. The MSG, apparently the most comprehensive and important document on military strategy in China, is a unified politico-military document, and not a campaign or operational manual. China being a centralised Party-state, the terminology used in the MSG is not politically neutral. Considering its importance and considering that China's military doctrine comes wrapped in it, the MSG needs to be discussed at some length.[2]

'Strategic Guidelines' provides a format for 'national-level directives, policies, or principles' across policy domains such as foreign policy, national defence, finance, and environment. 'Strategic Guidelines' enjoys the status of the 'general line' or 'general policies' articulated by the top Party leadership in China. It guides detailed planning and execution by functional-level officials in the concerned policy domain.[3] The strategic

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[2] M. Taylor Fravel, 'The Evolution of China's Military Strategy: Comparing the 1987 and 1999 Editions of *Zhanluxue*', in James Mulvenon and David M. Finkelstein, *China's Revolution in Doctrinal Affairs: Emerging Trends in the Operational Art of the Chinese People's Liberation Army*, CNA Corporation, Alexandria, USA, 2005, pp. 82-85.

[3] David M. Finkelstein, 'China's National Military Strategy: An Overview of the 'Military Strategic Guidelines', in Roy Kamphausen and Andrew Scobell (eds.) *Right Sizing the People's Liberation Army: Exploring the Contours of China's Military*, Strategic Studies Institute (SSI), Carlisle, PA., USA, September 2007, p. 81 at http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0c54e3b3-1e9c-be1e-2c24-a6a8c7060233&lng=en&id=48426 (Accessed January 1, 2013).

guidelines for military are MSG. MSG is similar to 'national military strategy' of other countries. A standard 'national military strategy' in general is an 'authoritative guidance' or 'a set of policy decisions'. It determines 'actual planning or action' and guides 'how the military element of national power should support larger national objectives' for a defined time-period: 'near-term, mid-term, or long-term'. 'National military strategy', declared or undeclared, provides an express or implicit analytical rationale behind the strategy. It contains threat perceptions, likely contingencies, capabilities-based assessments, larger strategic assessments, and domestic factors shaping the strategy. On the whole, it presents an 'ends, ways, and means' chain. The ends stand for objectives or 'what must be accomplished'; the 'ways' stand for 'strategic concepts and courses of action' to achieve 'the objectives'; and the 'means' stand for resources. Resources are defined very broadly as material, non-material, and organisational infrastructure.[4] Thus, the MSG in China are 'fundamental military policies', 'overall principles' or 'guiding principles' for conducting military affairs issued by the Party.

Contents and Structure of the MSG

The contents of MSG comprise larger ideological and political expositions of the Party, an analysis of the existing international political scenario, and the Party's threat assessment regarding the existing international environment. It underlines the inter-connected nature of international and domestic security, which defines military objectives in the MSG. It visualises 'the most likely type of war', taking into account the capability and contingency-based assessments, which the PLA may have to face. Finally, the MSG provides a blueprint for force-structure, training, and other relevant military aspects.[5]

The MSG can be categorised into two overarching themes: the nature of future warfare and how to prepare for it.[6] The two themes consist of sub-themes which are as follows:

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[4] David M. Finkelstein, no. 3, pp. 79-80.

[5] Ibid., pp. 81-85.

[6] Ibid., pp. 85-86.

Strategic Assessment

Strategic Assessment covers major portions of the MSG, except for ideological and political expositions. Analytical assessments of the international, political, and security environment falls within the ambit of Strategic Assessment. The assessment analyses likely, existing or potential, challenges to international peace and their impact on China's security. The assessment also covers contemporary and future warfare.

The relation between the MSG and the Active Defence Strategy

In addition to providing strategic assessment, the MSG has an important ideological task of re-affirming Maoist principles of Active Defence Strategy. As previously mentioned, Active Defence is a military strategy, which holds China to have strategic restraint. At present, the MSG reaffirms this commitment in the light of capability acquisitions, doctrinal development and training, and increasing budgets.

The Strategic Missions/Strategic Objectives

As for Strategic Missions/Strategic objectives, their description is normally general—for instance, defending 'sovereignty and maintain[ing] internal stability.'

Military Combat Preparations

Finally, the sub-theme of Military Combat Preparations analyses contemporary warfare, and visualises the most probable future war scenario in terms of weapons and other technological capabilities.

The Main Strategic Direction

Military combat preparations are given a clear strategic direction under the sub-theme, Main Strategic Direction. Main Strategic Direction strives to identify the most likely enemy or a specific operational scenario in a particular geographical direction or theatres of war.

The 'Focus for Army Building'

The MSG also provides a 'contingency-based assessment'. This assessment underlines a worst-case security scenario to meet the challenge

posed by the enemy identified under Main Strategic Direction, and make preparations accordingly during peacetime.[7]

Finally, the 'basic point' of the PMS in Chinese military strategy or Chinese military doctrine could be located in the MSG in the amalgamation of Military Combat Preparations, Main Strategic Direction and Focus for Army Building. It comes very close to representing the 'ways' in the 'ends, ways, and means' chain, and does not appear very different from the Department of Defense (hereafter DoD) dictionary's definition of doctrine. The DoD states that 'doctrine' is a set of 'fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof, guide their actions in support of national objectives.' It should be noted that the 'ends, ways, and means' are not constant and are ever-changing. A reading of changes in military doctrine helps to understand the changes taking place in civil-military relations in China and in the Chinese perception of the international balance of power. One can also understand the larger changes and shifts in official Chinese military thinking, keeping the MSG in mind.

The MSG and the Chinese Conception of Strategy

The MSG flows from the top political level of military affairs in China. Mao's Strategic Defence or Active Defence remains MSG's normative template. Although, the MSG explains Chinese military strategy in a broad ideological and political framework, it essentially deals with assessments of likely military threats for the country and how to deal with them. It identifies a 'basic point' such as Limited War under High Technological Conditions, which in turn defines the nature of the PMS.

This structure of the MSG is consistent with the Chinese conception of strategy. In their edited volume, *The Science of Military Strategy*, Peng Guangqian and Yao Youzhi maintain that strategic study is a scientific exercise under military science which performs the functions given below:

> 'Study laws of war, laws of conduct of wars and laws of strategic evolution' Prediction of a war and the likely type of war on the

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[7] David M. Finkelstein, no.3, pp. 86-95.

basis of the study of historical and present strategic scenarios, making strategic decisions, and offering strategic guidance to deal with a likely war exigency.[8]

Peng and Yao underline that strategy comes from a political context. They explain that 'strategy is a political choice', reflecting 'to a large extent the ideological background and national political relationship.' They point out that the German blitzkrieg strategy during the Second World War flowed from Nazi aggression and expansionism, as well as Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) from the Cold War politics between the US and the USSR. They underline that a need for strategy comes from the existence of antagonists—'classes, states, nations and political groups'.[9]

However, at present, since the principal actor is the State in international politics, it is the State that prepares strategy. Peng and Yao introduce it as a comprehensive and multi-level framework of analysis, capable of strategic predictions, to resolve contradictions with the antagonist. They underline that the objective of military strategy is to 'prevent' and 'constrain' war, and 'win victory in war.' According to them, a military strategy, focused on these objectives, is defined by some seeking answers to some basic questions: Who formulates military strategy? What is the nature of military strategy? What is its aim? What means does it want to employ? All these are most aptly encapsulated in one question: Who takes what means to what extent to what purpose? In the contemporary period after 1949, the Chinese State remains the principal actor to formulate military strategy.[10]

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[8] Peng Guangqian and Yao Youzhi's (eds.) *The Science of Military Strategy*, a comprehensive work on war and military strategy available in English, is widely held as an authoritative work on the Chinese conception of war and military strategy. The Chinese version of the book was published in 2001 by Military Science Publishing House of the Academy of Military Science of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, Beijing. Its English version was published in 2005 by Military Science Publishing House. The book was translated by a team of the translators associated with the publishing house.

[9] Ibid., p. 27.

[10] Ibid., p. 12.

Peng and Yao essentially endorse Mao's views on military strategy. They uphold Mao's Strategic Defence or Active Defence as the fundamental orientation of China's military strategy. They argue that the classification of strategy has always had two broad categories: offensive and defensive. Besides, as strategy is essentially about war, Peng and Yao view that non-war military situations can only contribute to 'overall war situations.' Therefore, bringing considerations, not directly related to military and war, would not serve the purpose of the study of strategy. Besides, they underscore that 'overall military struggle' is a part of operational and combat studies, which is a sub-set of study of 'overall war situations', which is actually the study of strategy. They also clarifies that both war planning ('preparation') and its execution ('performance') are part of the scope of strategy. In early 2000, this entire understanding of Peng and Yao described Chinese military strategy as cited below.

> Strategy (or military strategy) in China's new periods is taking the national comprehensive power as its foundation, the thought of active defence as its guidance; and winning local war under high-tech conditions as its basic point to construct and exercise military strength; and carrying out the overall and whole-course operation and guidance of war preparation and war for the purpose of protecting national sovereignty and security.[11]

The aforementioned attributes of the MSG more or less reflect Peng and Yao's description of military strategy. Their understanding of military strategy essentially carries forward the Maoist tradition of military strategy (which will be discussed in a later chapter). They classify military strategy as follows:

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[11] Peng Guangqian and Yao Youzhi, no. 8, pp. 12.

Basis and Types of Strategy

Basis	Types			
Nature and Form	Offensive	Defensive		
Time	Quick Decision	Protraction		
Space	Ground	Air	Sea	Outer Space
Means	Nuclear	Conventional	High-tech Conventional	
Application Pattern	War-Fighting	Deterrence		
Scale	General War	Local War		

Source: The Table is Author's adaptation of determinants and restricting factors as underlined by Peng Guangqian and Yao Youzhi (eds.) *The Science of Military Strategy*, Military Science Publishing House, Beijing, 2005, pp. 15-19.

The classification accepts offensive and defensive as the two overarching forms of military strategy. Peng and Yao also come up with various other types of strategy as per specific conditions, as shown in the table above. This monograph studies how China's MSGs have expanded to cover the sub-types of strategy, showing the evolution in China's military strategy and doctrine.

The Study of Military Doctrine: Applications for Chinese Military Strategy and Doctrine

This section of the monograph explores the views of non-Chinese authorities to help build an understanding of the Chinese military strategy and doctrine.

Miljan Komatina has identified the difficulties in defining military doctrine. Komatina points out that 'military dictionaries have, in general, failed to develop a definition of military doctrine appropriate for a changing world in which all military matters – in their political, strategic

or tactical aspects – tend to constitute a unity of action and concept'.[12] Barry R. Posen, who has provided the foundational text on military doctrine, has also pointed out the difficulty in defining the same.[13] Academic writings on military doctrine define it by way of explaining it, and focus on distinguishing it apart from larger security strategy.

Posen explicates that 'a military doctrine is a component of a nation's national security policy or grand strategy' that 'explicitly deals with military means'. According to him, the answers to two important questions make up grand strategy and constitute military doctrine. These are: *what* means shall be employed? And, *how* shall they be employed? Here, 'means' stands for military means which covers combat as well as non-combat means.[14] Similarly, I. B. Holley also points out a wide range of activities such as 'guiding personnel actions, the acquisition process, logistical operations, purchasing, and other support tasks' that go beyond 'tactical applications'[15] Miljan Komatina identifies four areas covered by a military doctrine. These are listed below.

1. The long-term evaluation of the international system; its evaluation and the character of State interaction; views on the nature of conflict in the international community; the identification of long-term political goals; the relationship between goals and means; the character of the socio-political system;

2. Basic considerations with regard to war, its origins, scope, typology and relationship to policy; war-aims; preparation for war; evaluation of its inevitability, 'win ability', duration, effects;

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[12] Miljan Komatina, 'Military Doctrine: How to Define It', *Disarmament*, 15(4), 1992, pp. 85-86.

[13] Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, And Germany Between the World Wars*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London,1984, p. 245.

[14] Ibid., p.13.

[15] I. B. Holley Jr., *Technology and Military Doctrine: Essays on a Challenging Relationship*, Air University Press, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, August 2004, pp. 1-3 at *www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA427735* (Accessed March 3, 2013).

3.   Evaluation of the general security environment, potential threats and dangers; perceptions at different phases of the balance of military power; geopolitics, economic development and security policies deriving from them;

4.   Ways and means of waging war; use of armed forces, their structure, deployment, equipment, weapons development, combat readiness, training control of combat decisions, battle concepts, etc.[16]

Although scholars underline a wide range of military activities that a military doctrine covers, the core function of a military doctrine is to explicitly or implicitly, envisage the most probable and comprehensive battlefield scenario or type of warfare, backed by the larger international and domestic political, social, economic, technological and other relevant logics that military may have to confront, or would like to have information about. A military doctrine offers a set of guidelines prescribing how to fight a war as visualised in the doctrine. Its ultimate objective is to maximise advantage in the battle-field. By simulating the battlefield scenario, a military doctrine identifies the potential adversary, visualises the nature of threat, makes a comparative assessment of strengths and weaknesses, evaluates the adversary's strategy and capabilities, and explores the responses for them.[17] The allied activities (as mentioned by Holley) and reform of the organisational structure and the revision of training programmes are all geared up in the direction of fighting the most probable type of war with maximum effect. The entire thinking and processes are inter-connected, and proceed in the backdrop of a certain type of war-visualisation.

Many scholars who have analysed Chinese military doctrine have primarily dealt with how the Chinese visualise a war scenario and how they prepare for it. In his discussion on People's War under Modern Conditions, Ellis Joffe maintains, 'The function of a military doctrine is to provide guidelines for the conduct of a war that the armed forces

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[16]   Miljan Komatina, no.12, pp. 87-88.

[17]   Barry R. Posen, no. 13, pp. 13-14.

are most likely to wage'.[18] Similarly, explaining the Chinese military doctrine, Paul H.B. Godwin argues, 'military doctrine provides guidance for war preparations (*Zhanbei*) within the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP's) military line (*junshi luxian*), by defining the nature of war, and the probable form and origin of future war.'[19] Extrapolating Nan Li's exposition on the Chinese limited war doctrine to the general doctrinal characteristics, a military doctrine discusses 'what type of war is more likely to occur and why', 'what are the distinctive features of this war in nature, objective and scope?', 'what are the manifested characteristics of war', and 'what constitutes the operational rationale' of a particular type of war?'[20]

Finally, a military doctrine engages with the issue of national defence with a real or simulated sense of vulnerability, and seeks answers for the adversary's real, perceived or surprise strengths. It reflects the nation's overall strategic orientation (offensive, defensive or deterrence), and accordingly guides to build suitable defence capabilities. A military doctrine may be formally documented or may be the theme in military writings, speeches, statements and actions. It can be extrapolated even from a study of incidents. In a similar vein, a military doctrine may, at times, not be stating actual military conditions but may simply be a declaration of ambition.[21]

The Purpose of Doctrinal Study

The study of military doctrine serves many purposes from the strategic, political and professional points of view. From the strategic point of view, military doctrine enjoys a certain 'communicative value'. Reading

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[18] Ellis Joffe, 'People's War under Modern Conditions: A Doctrine for Modern War', *The China Quarterly*, 112, December 1987, p. 571.

[19] Paul H.B. Godwin, 'Changing Concepts of Doctrine, Strategy and Operations in the Chinese People's Liberation Army 1978-87', *The China Quarterly*, 112, December 1987, p. 573.

[20] Nan Li, 'The PLA's Evolving Warfighting Doctrine, Strategy and Tactics, 1985-95: A Chinese Perspective', *The China Quarterly*, 146, June 1996, p. 445.

[21] The author has extrapolated these views from his perusal of various secondary sources on military doctrine, referred to in this monograph.

the strategic intentions of a country is always a speculative exercise. The study of military doctrine helps to overcome this problem as it can assist in the understanding of national interest, security perceptions, threat assessment, and plans of political and military leaders with a fair degree of reliability. Thus, the military doctrine of a country, read alongside its actual military activities, can throw light on a nation's strategic intentions, thus making military doctrine 'an indicator of the intentions and capabilities of the armed forces'.[22]

Posen argues that since military doctrines 'affect the probability and intensity of arms race and of wars', their study can help understand whether a particular State's behaviour will contribute to stability or instability in the international system. According to Posen, the study of a military doctrine of a State can also give clues about how the State in question will perform in a military conflict. Further, as he explains, if a military doctrine is disconnected from political and strategic scenarios, it becomes outdated as it does not appreciate how changing 'political circumstances, adversary capabilities, or available military technology' may be a guarantee for defeat.[23]

The study of military doctrine also underscores the state of civil-military relations, as these are an important factor in shaping the formulation of a military doctrine. In this context, while civil-military relations denote the relationship between the political government and the armed forces, they also involve a complex bargaining process in which there are many stakeholders other than the military and politicians—good examples are scientists and military-technology entrepreneurs.[24] The choices made in a military doctrine indicate actual technological and financial conditions of the country in which its military plans are made.[25]

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[22] Nan Li, no. 20, p. 443.

[23] Barry R. Posen, no. 13, pp. 15-16.

[24] Ka Po Ng, *Interpreting China's Military Power: Doctrine Makes Readiness*, Frank Cass, New York, 2005, p. 22.

[25] Ibid.

Military Doctrine and Military Education and Training

Military doctrine has close links with military education. It determines the contents of professional military education for officers. Peacetime military training is carried out in the light of the military doctrine. It helps officers to acquire 'professional proficiency' and provides a broad military context for mastering 'specific activities to standard'.[26] Holley explains that a doctrine provides,

> …common bases of thought and common ways of handling problems, tactical or otherwise, which may arise. In the absence of communication with superiors, subordinates who are guided by doctrine in shaping a course of action will have a greater probability of conforming to the larger operation than if they were to act without knowledge of the doctrinal guidelines.[27]

Holley feels that doctrinal guidance offers suggestions to decision-makers and policymakers 'about how to proceed in a given situation on the basis of a body of past experience in similar contexts distilled down to concise and readily accessible doctrinal statements.'[28] More precisely, at an operational level, by visualising the most probable war scenario, a military doctrine provides 'a common baseline' to prepare and launch military operations. Doctrinal understanding about 'how we fight' will guide 'how we will fight this particular campaign'.[29] On a broader note, a military doctrine provides a common language that defines the sense of purpose for the military.[30] Finally, military doctrine provides directions for the desirable force structure and capability acquisitions as per the need of the most probable war scenario.

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[26] David M. Finkelstein, 'Commentary on Doctrine', in C. Mulvenon and Andrew N.D. Yang (eds.) *Seeking Truth from Facts: A Retrospective on Chinese Military Studies in the Post-Mao Era,* RAND, Santa Monica, CA., 2001, p. 120.

[27] I. B. Holley Jr., no. 15, p. 2.

[28] Ibid., p. 2.

[29] David M. Finkelstein, no. 26, p. 120.

[30] Ka Po Ng, no. 24, p. 23.

What Brings Changes to a Military Doctrine?

A military doctrine is not static, but is always evolving. Scholars have written about the causes of doctrinal changes. Barry R. Posen and Elizabeth Kier[31] offer two most widely cited frameworks to analyse changes in military doctrine.

Posen investigates military doctrine from both an organisational as well as a larger strategic perspective. He explains how these two different perspectives will produce different military doctrines. He probes how these two perspectives will present different results in the defensive, offensive and deterrent-based doctrines. He argues that military organisations are generally driven more by concerns about 'reducing operational uncertainty' and denying an adversary his best operational conditions. Military organisations worry that doctrinal changes may increase uncertainty in their military operations. Moreover, status quo tendencies within military organisations, vested interests of the organisations' leaderships in existing doctrines and generational gaps, make military organisations averse to doctrinal innovations. Therefore, their natural propensity is to uphold the offensive doctrine, which they think is the best way of reducing operational uncertainty and holding an advantage over the enemy. Besides, an offensive doctrine serves their extra-professional interests, such as increasing their 'size and wealth'. Posen points out that military organisations lack appreciation of larger national and international political and strategic scenarios, and oppose 'political criteria' in their doctrine which they feel can change the priorities set by them for applying strict 'instrumental military logic'. Emphasising the psychological indifference in military organisations towards civilian governments, he maintains that this indifference, along with the civilians' lack of understanding of specialised military matters, and the tendency of military organisations to deliberately hold back 'important military information', bring about civil-military disintegration.

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[31] Elizabeth Kier, *Imagining War: French and British Military Doctrine between the Wars*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey,1997.

Incidentally, specialisation creates disintegration among various military services and inter-service rivalry, leading to negative strategic prioritisation. In addition, as Posen argues, pro status-quo attitude of military organisations does not allow them to appreciate new technologies. They are more likely to change the requirements of technologies to suit their doctrine rather than change their doctrine, although practical combat experience or the reading of others' military conflicts may sometimes make them appreciate new technologies early. Similarly, they also tend to interpret geography selectively as per their convenience. Finally, left alone, military organisations will create such doctrinal stagnation that it will eventually be broken either by military disaster or by civilian intervention. However, this reading does not explain the phenomenon of any military's fight for increasing budgets for new technologies and a technological overhaul.

Posen explains that organisation theory explains military organisations' *status quo-ist* behaviour, and it does not offer nuances of military doctrine. He finds the 'balance of power' theory better on this count. He argues that expansionist states want to keep 'high collateral damage' away from their territory. They may prefer an offensive doctrine. States which are 'suffering erosion' but are still relatively a superior power usually follow the preventive doctrine. States which are strategically, geographically, and diplomatically encircled or isolated may prefer offensive doctrines. Similarly, States that want the best utilisation of their 'scarce military assets' by concentrating them, will prefer offensive doctrines.

Preference for preventive war is a crucial element in offensive doctrine. Likewise, small states, and states that are unable to sustain either offensive or defensive doctrine because of the lack of capabilities will opt for deterrent doctrines. Posen argues that a deterrence-based doctrine tells us more about a nation's will power than the military. As for the defensive doctrine, unlike expansionist states, status quo states choose defensive doctrines as they are not keen on preventive wars, and prefer making the best use of geography and technology. Posen argues that coalition warfare could choose a defensive doctrine as coalition partners share 'the risks, costs, and benefits of war'. However, sometimes a single coalition partner's particular choice of either the offensive or the defensive doctrine becomes the coalition's choice, as other partners may like to 'conform' for the sake of a coalition.

The condition of civil-military integration and doctrinal innovations should be far better where the 'balance of power' perspective dominates, Posen argues. Political leadership that pursues aggressive international policies is likely to show interest in military affairs. The political leadership of a State that faces serious security threats is likely to demonstrate even more appreciation of military affairs. When the States are recuperating from the consequences of military defeats, and when war seems too costly to political leadership, civilian leadership is more likely to intervene in military matters. Mutual appreciation and close integration between politicians and soldiers should be even far greater in encircled and isolated States. In such scenarios, military leadership is actively guided by political leadership for directions. Besides, political intervention, guided by overall political considerations, makes military doctrines more innovative.

Elizabeth Kier strongly disagrees with Posen's analysis. For Posen, civilian leaders play a role in assessing grand strategy and changing the military doctrine accordingly. However, Kier highlights domestic politics and the military's organisational culture as determining factors that shape military doctrines. Kier argues that control over military power has remained an important issue in State-creation and State-functioning all along, and civilian leadership has been more concerned about its primacy in the 'distribution of power within the State' than larger international strategic concerns. She argues that it is not the larger international strategic concerns of politicians but their views and apprehensions about the military's role in domestic politics, its relations with societal and political institutions, and its political potential that influence military doctrine. She argues that although each State's own historical experiences contribute to setting the context, one can generalise that when the nature of polity is conflictual, civilian governments' domestic political concerns about creating favourable power distribution for them dominate the context; and when the nature of polity is consensual, larger international security and strategic environments may guide their decisions about military affairs.

In Kier's views, the second context that shapes military doctrines is the military's organisational culture. She clarifies that military's organisational culture should not be confused with the military mind. For her, the military mind denotes behavioural and attitudinal traits that military

men share universally, whereas military's organisational culture is 'the collection of ideas and beliefs about armed force both its conduct and its relationship to the wider society.' Military's organisational culture that differs from context to context deals with some fundamental questions, such as 'is war a question of courage and morale or has the steel and firepower of the modern age fundamentally altered its nature?' or whether today's officer is the 'business manager or the warrior and heroic leader'. Kier reminds us that the military's organisational culture is not about primordial notions and feelings but, instead, about modern and contemporary political and social issues and themes. Training and education help militaries develop their largely own autonomous culture shaping military doctrine.

Kier's prognosis is that when polity is consensual, civil-military relations are relatively stable: the civilian leadership remains primarily engaged with international security scenarios, and military organisational culture takes the lead in doctrinal developments. On the other hand, when civilians remain concerned about the military's role in domestic politics, options for doctrinal development are restricted. She is of the view that the interaction between the civilians and the military—rather than either civilian decisions or the military's organisational culture—plays a decisive role in changing military doctrine. She says, 'political decisions set constraints, but rarely do they determine outcomes'[32]; and that the organisational culture that executes the change will always respond to some changes 'in the external environment of the organisation—primarily the domestic political environment.'[33]

Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff's edited volume *The Sources of Military Change: Culture, Politics and Technology* provides perspectives on doctrinal changes. However, it does not exclusively focus on military doctrine because, as the two editors argue, 'not all militaries have a doctrinal tradition'. They maintain that 'in different national contexts, doctrine has a different meaning, function, and relative importance'. The volume studies major military changes. It defines 'change in the goals, actual

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[32] Elizabeth Kier, no. 31, p. 32.

[33] Ibid.

strategies, and/or structure of a military organisation' as military changes. The book identifies cultural norms, politics and strategy, and new technology as the three major frameworks to analyse a major military change. Farrell and Terriff also define 'norms':

> Norms are inter-subjective beliefs about the social and natural world that define actors, their situations, and the possibilities of action. Norms are inter-subjective in that they are beliefs rooted in, and reproduced through social practice ... Norms constitute actors and meaningful action by situating both in social roles and in social environments. In addition, norms regulate action by defining what is appropriate and what is effective. In short, norms make meaningful action possible by telling military actors who they are and what they can do in given situations. In this way, cultural norms define the purpose and possibilities of military change.[34]

Military cultural change, planned as well as unplanned, brings about a major change in the military. Planned changes are cultivated to create a new self-image in terms of identity and 'appropriate behaviour'. This process is slow and long-drawn. It is shaped by political and military leaders who truly believe in the new self-image they want to create for the military. The emergence of the US's powerful navy was the result of the advocacy of decades. The creation of the US Marine Corps in the inter-War period was an example of a carefully tended self-image of an elite fighting force. On the other hand, external shocks sometimes change military culture abruptly, as the defeat in World War II made Japan and Germany adopt an anti-militarist course. These processes—planned and unplanned—can also overlap as they did when the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour expedited 'the campaign to dislodge the pre-World War II battleship bias in US Navy culture.'[35]

Farrell and Terriff argue that sometimes domestic political developments in certain countries too can occasion certain new

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[34]   Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff, *The Sources of Military Change: Culture, Politics, Technology*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, Colorado, 2002, p. 7.

[35]   Ibid., p. 9.

international strategic developments, compelling militaries to change[36]. They argue that revolutionary changes in France in the late eighteenth century, in Russia in the early twentieth century, and in China and Iran in the second half of the twentieth century— in which social mobilisations upheld the 'struggle against status quo powers'—occasioned a completely changed assessment of strategic environment for the status quo states of those times. On the other hand, they also cite an American example, when Americans could analyse their own military's shortcomings in the Vietnam War only after political and social changes 'that opened up military strategically and politically' represented by Ronald Reagan's election.[37]

The book presents a complex picture of the relationship between technology and military change. The major features in this complex relationship are technology-determinism and the sociology of technology. In technology-determinism, the most conventional and common sense view, a military's pursuit of new and more effective technology is a natural course. Either new technology itself will attract a military's attention and bring about change, or scientist-entrepreneurs will introduce it and ensure changes in the military. This view is at the root of the arms race. However, sociologists have challenged this technological Darwinism. New technology is not selected 'through a process of natural selection whereby weak designs are supplanted' but by 'social networks that include military, political, and business elites develop around rival designs, each functioning to mobilise resources and build consensus for its own preferences.'[38] This social network works against technological Darwinism. Technologies like nuclear power and biotechnology face popular social resistance too. Militaries can reject new but 'fantastical' technologies, though there are instances when militaries in its 'techno-enthusiasm' demand 'fantastical' technology. For example, the US Air Force (USAF) demanded a nuclear-powered bomber in the 1950s, which was not possible in the technological context

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[36] Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff, no.34, p. 11.

[37] Ibid., p. 9.

[38] Ibid., p. 13.

of the 1950s.[39] Thus, the book presents a very complex picture of relations between technology and military change.

Insights for Revisiting the Evolution of Chinese Military Strategy

The above discussion essentially defines military doctrine as 'generalised principles of war' dealing with the visualisation of war or battlefield conditions. The 'basic point' in the Chinese MSG also visualises the nature and type of the likely war, which becomes the focal point of the 'preparation for military struggle'. The 'basic point' has been shaped by Party-Military relations, which amount to civil-military relations in the Chinese context. The leadership's perception and assessment about external threats, technology and combat experience are all ingredients in the military doctrine. Since China has a centralised Party-Army system, its military doctrine or 'basic point' implies a more direct connection between Party-Military relations, and military strategy and doctrine. This centralised system also gives relatively more opportunity for the political leadership to show interest in the strategic assessment of the international situation which, in turn, contributes to military strategy and doctrine. Thus, changes in Chinese military strategy and doctrine have carried the bearings of the personality and the thinking of supreme leaders like Mao, Deng or Jiang Zemin. In democracies where the military is ideology-and-politics-neutral, such a strong personal influence of the top political leadership is less likely.[40]

In China, the study of military doctrine is also a good pointer for assessing military readiness. The PLA lacks actual combat experience as it has not carried out any military operation since the 1979 Vietnam War. It relies heavily on military training to compensate for this deficiency. The military doctrine can help explain the strategic purpose of China's weapon acquisitions, examine training and finally assess its combat readiness.[41]

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[39] Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff, no. 34, p. 14.

[40] David M. Finkelstein, no. 26, p. 121.

[41] Ibid.

As for the evolution, the factors such as civil-military relations, understanding about technology and geography that Posen, Kier, as well as Farrell and Terriff point out, are also useful for understanding the evolution of Chinese military strategy and doctrine. Ka Po Ng summarises doctrinal changes in China's military affairs into three broad categories of China's historical experience and its evolving national interest and institutions.[42] Peng and Yao in *The Science of Military Strategy* provide a comprehensive account of determinants and restricting factors that have influenced China's military strategy and 'basic points'.

Determinants and Restricting Factors of the MSG

Determinants	Restricting Factors
National Interest	Physical Condition
International and Domestic Politics	Political Element
War Strength and War Potential	Economic Element
Geo-strategic Relationship	Progress of Science and Technology
Tradition of Strategic Culture	Geographic Element
International Law	Military Force
	Cultural Tradition

Source: The Table is Author's adaptation of determinants and restricting factors as underlined by Peng Guangqian and Yao Youzhi (eds.) *The Science of Military Strategy*, Military Science Publishing House, Beijing, For Determinants, pp. 39-85; for Restricting Factors, pp. 29-31.

Thus, Peng and Yao's views have similarity with almost all the contexts and perspectives enumerated in the aforementioned Western scholarship. Those contexts and perspectives are applicable to Chinese military strategy and doctrine in varying degrees, with some modification by the Chinese context. China's geography, the ideological evolution of the CPC, the changing notion of national interest in China, and the

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42   Ka Po Ng, no. 24, p. 23-30.

Party-Military relations have influenced Chinese military strategy and doctrine. Similarly, the balance of power, external threats as perceived and propagated by the Chinese leadership, discourse on technology, Chinese military's combat experiences (their own as well as that of others), as well as the changing self-perception of the army from being revolutionary to nationalist/professional—too have contributed to changes in China's military strategy and doctrine. Thus, terminological difference apart, the factors and the contexts that shape military strategy and doctrine in China are more or less the same as they are in the rest. However, out of these various contexts, the interplay of Party-Army relations and external threat assessment has had a decisive influence on Chinese military strategy and doctrine — to be discussed in subsequent chapters.

Terminological Difficulties in the Study of Military Doctrine

There is a problem of the terminological approximation of Chinese terms with Western ones. In fact, the use of important military terms— such as strategy, security strategy, defence strategy and doctrine—have been fairly subjective. Therefore, a fair understanding of their exclusive meanings will help provide a revisit to the evolution of Chinese military and strategy. This section draws attention to the US Department of Defense dictionary's definitions of the military terms. The definitions are instructive, as they provide clear and mutually exclusive meanings. Moreover, they set a standard terminology for other Western and international militaries in the Western tradition. With the help of these terms, the intended audience of this monograph, which is primarily English-speaking, would be able to comprehend the different terminological templates used in China relatively easily.

The DoD dictionary provides corresponding operational-organisational levels for the terms strategy, security strategy, defence strategy, military strategy and doctrine. In this hierarchy, the term 'doctrine' corresponds with the armed-forces level. However, it should not be taken for a campaign or operational plan. 'Doctrine' stands for 'fundamental principles'. On the one hand, these 'fundamental principles' are different from strategy; on the other, they are different from ground-level campaigns and operation plans.

The DoD dictionary defines 'strategy' as 'a prudent idea or set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power in a synchronised and integrated fashion to achieve theatre, national, and/or multinational objectives.' It defines 'national security strategy' (also termed as 'grand strategy') as a 'document approved by the President of the United States for developing, applying, and coordinating the instruments of national power to achieve objectives that contribute to national security.' The dictionary sees a difference between 'national security strategy' and 'national defense strategy'; it defines the latter as 'a document approved by the Secretary of Defense for applying the Armed Forces of the United States in coordination with DoD agencies and other instruments of national power, to achieve national security strategy objectives.' Further, 'military strategy' is different from 'defense strategy'; 'national military strategy' is 'a document approved by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) for distributing and applying military power to attain national security strategy and national defense strategy objectives.' About military doctrine, the dictionary states that 'doctrine' is a set of 'fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application.'

In DoD definitions as well as in the graphs displayed on their basis (p.42), the various terms discussed—from strategy to doctrine—come down from broader to narrower focus, with corresponding organisational levels for their operationalisation. 'Strategy' conveys generality and a broad framework, whereas its various prefixed variations communicate formal and specialised application by the relevant organisational levels. The descending terms identify with descending corresponding official and operational levels. With the descending official levels, the operationalisation of the terms also gets limited to the corresponding levels only. However, like the organisational hierarchy observed in DoD definitions, the terms mentioned are complementary, are a part of a whole, and are united by purpose. Another way of understanding these terminological definitions is that they flow from general political levels down to operational levels.

It should be noted that in the academic expositions, military doctrine passes as a set of principles for fighting war; but in the DoD, an explicit mention of war is not found in the definition of doctrine. However,

'fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof, guide their actions in support of national objectives' can imply only war-related—wartime or peacetime—actions. Thus, reading the academic expositions discussed earlier alongside the DoD definitions, a military doctrine appears as an official theorisation about war, or principles about war.[43] It must be noted that a military doctrine is different from a campaign and operational plan. A campaign is a 'series of related major operations aimed at achieving strategic and operational objectives within a given time and space'. Thus, a campaign plan is 'a joint operation plan for a series of related major operations aimed at achieving strategic or operational objectives within a given time and space.' Similarly, an operation is 'a sequence of tactical actions with a common purpose or unifying theme', and an operation plan is 'any plan for the conduct of military operations prepared in response to actual and potential contingencies'. However, one can argue that campaigns and operations are not bereft of strategic contexts. The principles prescribed in military doctrine bind various levels of strategy with ground-level plans of campaign, operations, and tactical actions. *The fundamental principles* appear to be the link between generalities of strategy and the practicalities of ground level plans.

I. B. Holley underlines the difference between larger national strategy for security and doctrine.

> At its highest level, grand strategy is virtually synonymous with national policy and embraces all the means used by a nation to carry out its policies—diplomatic, economic, social, or military. Military strategy involves the selection of objectives and courses of action, the choice of targets, and the selection of forces to be

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[43] The Joint Education and Doctrine Division, J-7, Joint Staff of the US DoD publishes the DoD of military terms. The dictionary is available at http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/dod_dictionary/ (Accessed July 27, 2014).

   The information available at the dictionary website, the definitions available in *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* were as latest entries as on November 8, 2010, as amended through October 15, 2013. In this monograph, the DoD stands for the US Department of Defense only.

employed. Military strategy is concerned with the ends sought and the means to attain those ends. Doctrine, by contrast, has nothing to say about the ends sought, as these can be ephemeral, reflecting the ebb and flow of policy. Doctrine is, however, related to means. If strategy is concerned with what is to be done, doctrine involves how it is to be carried out.[44]

As for other militaries in the Western camp, Ka Po Ng mentions that the Royal Australian Air Force's *The Air Power Manual* defines doctrine as 'fundamental principles by which military forces guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in its application', a replication that clearly speaks of the acceptability of US definitions amongst its allies. Separately, Ng mentions alternative understanding of military terms in the erstwhile USSR. He underlines how the Soviet military doctrine analyses the nature of modern wars and the armed forces and combines material and technological factors with politics, thus presenting an integrated and comprehensive military doctrine. The Soviet doctrine contained two components: the socio-political and the military-technical. As it considered war 'as a part of a global struggle between two rival socio-economic systems'[45], it focused on a socio-political analysis of the threats to the Soviet Union more prominently. Komatina describes the Soviet conceptions of military doctrine as follows:

> The Soviet concept of doctrine united the political (relationship between war and policy, nature of war, 'correlation of forces'), and the military aspects (character and function of armed forces, principles of military construction, combat readiness, deterrence and war-fighting capabilities, pre-emption, targeting etc.), but separated both aspects from the strict definition of mode of warfare. Soviet analysts described Soviet doctrine as 'scientific' because it was based on ideological principles as well as on conventional military science; they considered it as 'progressive' and 'peaceful' because its aim was to defend the USSR and other

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[44]   I. B. Holley Jr., no.15, pp. 2-13.

[45]   Ka Po Ng, no. 24, p. 17.

socialist States against aggression emanating, in their opinion, from the Western world. Military doctrine as such was always given the highest priority and it exerted considerable influence on the political goals of the Soviet State both in war and in preparing for war. While political aspects of the doctrine were considered constant, its military aspects (limited to means and methods of waging war) were susceptible to change. Soviet military doctrine was also largely deduced from the Soviet and Russian tradition, and was 'reactive' to the real (or assumed) strength or weakness of the Western block. In its purely military dimensions, Soviet doctrine gave preference in general to offensive warfare, emphasising surprise, speed and coordination of all forces, arms and services. In cases where war was judged imminent, fear of attack made consideration of pre-emptive strikes acceptable.[46]

Thus, China's military strategy is similar to the USSR's military doctrine. And, its 'basic point' corresponds to military doctrine in Western scholarship. Secondly, the focus of US terminology is on mutual exclusivity whereas the Chinese emphasize simplification and generality. The Chinese do not follow as specialised terminology corresponding to various organisational-level terms as the US does, as seen in the DOD definitions.

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[46] Miljan Komatina, no.12, p. 90.

Military Doctrine Connecting Different Levels of Strategy and War Planning

National Security Strategy

National Defence Strategy

National Military Strategy

Military Doctrine

Campaign Plan

Operation Plan

Tactical Action

Military Doctrine Connecting Different Levels of Strategy and War Planning
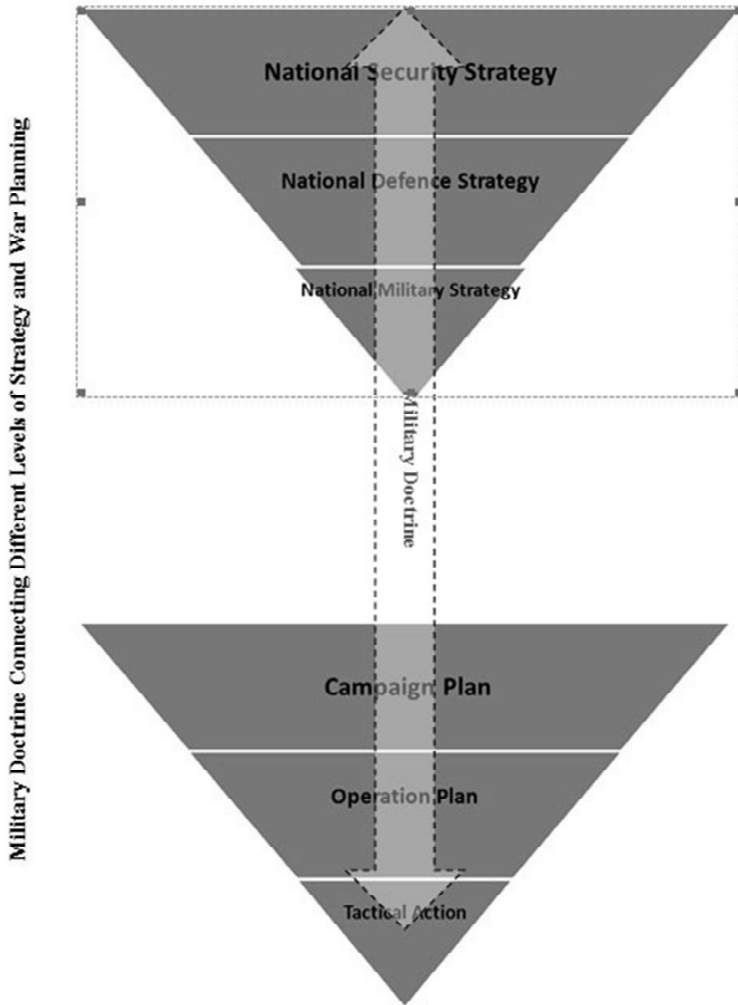
Graphics: Systems Support Cell, IDSA, New Delhi.

3. People's War and Three Stage Warfare: Mao's Strategy and Doctrine

Chairman Mao Zedong's idea of People's War, which came from his thoughts on military affairs, continues to be an important analytical category in Chinese military thinking. Thus, it is necessary to assess the influence of his views regarding war, and their impact on Chinese modern warfare. Civil war between the CCP and the Kuomintang (KMT) and the invasion of China by Japan in the mid-1920s onwards shaped Mao's thoughts. His views on military affairs summarised in People's War and Active Defence comprise his philosophy about war and peace, his political analysis of the Sino-Japanese war and China's civil war, and his views on conduct of warfare. His views remained the predominant intellectual conditioning of the Chinese military for about three decades after the communist victory in China in 1949. They were a reference point in communist factional politics in the late 1950s and 1960s, and culminated in the Cultural Revolution.

The Historical and Normative Setting of Mao's Views

The disintegration of China after the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911-12, the Japanese invasion and occupation of China, and the emergence of the Communist Party followed by a civil-war between the CPC and the KMT, resonated in the background of Mao's military thoughts. After around forty years of intimidation of China, Japan annexed Manchuria from China in 1931.[47] It launched an all-out invasion

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[47] This author has discussed Mao's military thinking and its historical backdrop in his 'Rereading Mao's Military Thinking', *Strategic Analysis* 37(5), September-October 2013, pp. 558-580.

The discussion on Mao's military thinking and its historical setting has appeared in this article.

Japan annexed Taiwan in 1895 from China, and made it its first colony. It waged war against Russia in 1904-05 from the Chinese territory of Manchuria, showing scant regard for China's sovereignty. Later, it demanded sovereign concessions in Manchuria and Shandong in its '21 demands' to China in 1915 when China had weakened and disintegrated after the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911-12.

of China in July 1937, and by the fall of Wuhan (the then wartime capital of China) in October 1938, Japan had occupied almost the entire North and Central China as well as large parts of South China. During the occupation, the cities and the main line of communications came under the firm grip of the Japanese, though the countryside remained relatively free. After October 1938, the war became protracted, and there was no significant change in the ground positions of the invaders and the defenders.[48]

The civil war between the communists and the KMT took place simultaneously with the Japanese actions.[49] This was responsible for the formation of the military views of Mao, who led the communists' Long March to survive the KMT onslaught, and was the Chairman of the Communist Party during many of these years. During the civil war, the communists survived five 'extermination' or 'encirclement and suppression' campaigns by the KMT government between 1930 and 1934. While their guerrilla warfare, as prescribed by Mao, successfully

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[48] During the entire course of war, the Japanese demonstrated superior firepower and military skills. In this war, the Chinese people were subjected to inhuman atrocities; cities were bombarded indiscriminately, and around 300,000 Chinese were claimed to have been butchered in Nanjing alone, and an approximate 100 million Chinese were displaced from their homes. This barbarity left the ordinary Chinese people hostile towards Japan, and also fuelled international outrage.

[49] The KMT government launched the northern campaign (1926-28) to subdue the warlords in North China to integrate and unify China which the communist party, formed in 1921, also joined as the communists had joined the KMT on the common anti-imperialism and anti-warlordism plank in 1923. However, the KMT and the CPC had competing ideological visions. Although the KMT was a nationalist party and practiced some semblance of democracy, it was severely constrained by capitalist and decadent feudal classes; the CPC had a radical social and economic agenda, was representing poor (especially peasants), and was vying political power. The anti-warlord and anti-imperialism unity between them broke down in April 1927 which witnessed the murder of thousands of communists in Shanghai by the nationalist army as well as criminals. In reaction, the communists undertook a failed bid of revolutionary violence in urban areas; but they were compelled to retreat in the rural hinterland of China where they raised the Red Army to fight the KMT.

repulsed the first four, the abandoning of guerrilla warfare tactics and the adoption of positional warfare, against the prescription of Mao, almost ensured their extermination in the fifth. In order to survive the fifth extermination campaign, under Mao's leadership, they undertook the historic and heroic Long March, in which 86,000 communists travelled around 6,000 miles. They started from Jiangxi in the South in October 1934 and reached Shaanxi in the north in October 1935. Less than 10,000 communists made it to Shaanxi, after surviving the attacks by the nationalists, the armies of the warlords, and exhaustion. After October 1935, the communists remained in North China till the resumption of civil war in July 1946.[50] In the end, the communists won the civil war by mobilising the rural masses behind them, and by exploiting political contradictions within the KMT rank and file.

In this historical setting, Mao's military views present an integrated understanding about society, politics, the communist party, and military affairs.[51] Mao did not consider war per se as a moral vice. In his view, wars are political actions undertaken to break the entrenched status quo and to carry society forward. According to him, just wars are a means of getting rid of unjust wars that perpetuate unjust status quo situations. For him, China's war of resistance against the Japanese

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[50] Under public and political pressure as well as the pressure from within the nationalist army, the KMT leader Chiang Kai-shek proposed a united front with the communists against the Japanese under his overall leadership in 1937, to which the communists agreed. This was the second united front. It broke down after New Fourth Army incident in 1941 in which nationalist troops killed 3,000 communist troops in Southern Anhui. After this, the two sides observed a kind of truce till the resumption of civil war in July 1946.

[51] This section draws on Stephen R. MacKinnon, 'The Sino-Japanese Conflict, 1931–1945', in David A. Graff and Robin Higham (eds.) *A Military History of China*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 2002, pp. 211–227; William Wei, 'Political Power Grows Out of the Barrel of a Gun: Mao and the Red Army', in David A. Graff and Robin Higham (eds.), Ibid., pp. 229–248; Edgar O'Balance, *The Red Army of China*, Faber and Faber, London, 1962. See also Mao Zedong, 'The Chinese Communist Party and China's Revolutionary War' (Chapter II), and 'The Laws of War are Developmental' in 'How to Study War' (Chapter I), *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*, 1936, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* at http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works (Accessed June 6, 2013).

invasion and the civil war were examples of just wars. He upheld strategic defence by which he meant that one should never be an aggressor or initiator of war. He underscored a symbiotic relationship between the society, the Party, and the communist army. The army was to execute the Party programme for society. The society and the army followed the Party leadership. Mao insisted that the political clarity of the Party and political determination of the masses have primacy over technological and financial resources in winning wars.

Mao Zedong's Views on War and Strategy

Strategy, as a scientific enquiry, comes from Mao Zedong's understanding of war and strategy. Mao Zedong advocated that despite unpredictability on a tactical level, considerable predictability exists on a strategic level in a war. Following the element of predictability, the study of strategy and war can be undertaken as a scientific and methodical exercise. The terms 'strategy' and 'strategic' denote overall, broad, and macro level of war. Any war-related analysis on this level is a strategic study. According to Mao, any analysis of war contains three levels: strategic, campaign, and tactical. He maintains that the strategic understanding of war should dictate the course of a military campaign and the nature of the tactics employed. He argues that having a correct strategic view of war and its correct implementation is the key to winning it. Although strategy is synonymous with military strategy, strategic level analysis is not narrowly focussed on purely military conduct of war. The analysis is rather comprehensive, and consists of two equally important parts: the political and the military. Political analysis examines overall socio-political, economic, and military strength of the belligerents and the international scenario in which the war is fought. Military analysis crafts a war strategy consistent with political analysis. Thus, Mao's strategic-level analysis mainly encompasses the following:

- Study of comparative strength of the enemy and one's own in politics, economy, military and other areas;

- Proper study of 'various campaigns or various operational stages', and their relation with the war as a whole;

- Identification of important tactical aspects which can prove decisive;

- Identification of unique characteristics in the general situation[52]

Mao's understanding of military strategic affairs served his scheme for the communist revolution in China. He argued that, 'The seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution.' He considered war as 'a political action' 'to seize and retain state power.'[53] He was of the conviction that war is an instrument to carry society forward by breaking civilisational deadlocks created by vested interests. He argued that politics is all about class struggle. He felt that class struggle was a long-drawn competition among various groups of society that manifests itself in various violent and non-violent ways. For him, war was the supreme manifestation of class struggle between classes, nations, states, or political groups. He maintained that war *per se* was not morally condemnable. He saw a distinction between just and unjust wars. Just wars were progressive, and ensured the advancement of society: 'We support just wars and oppose unjust wars. All counter-revolutionary wars are unjust, all revolutionary wars are just'.[54] He was convinced that,

> War, this monster of mutual slaughter among men, will be finally eliminated by the progress of human society, and in the not too distant future too. But there is only one way to eliminate it and that is to oppose war with war, to oppose counter-revolutionary war with revolutionary war, to oppose national counter-revolutionary war with national revolutionary war, and to oppose counter-revolutionary class war with revolutionary class war.[55]

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52 Mao Zedong, 'Strategy is the Study of the Laws of a War Situation as a Whole', in 'How to Study War' (Chapter I), no. 51; Mao Zedong, 'Initiative, Flexibility and Planning' (Paragraph 88), *On Protracted War*, 1938, in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* at http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works (Accessed June 6, 2013) .

53 Mao Zedong, 'China's Characteristics and Revolutionary War', *Problems of War and Strategy*, 1938, Ibid (Accessed June 6, 2013).

54 Mao Zedong, 'The Aim of War is to Eliminate War', in 'How to Study War' (Chapter I), no. 51.

55 Ibid.

Thus, Mao saw war as politics in a different format conducted by the armed forces. The upholding of strategic defensive and the rejection of strategic offensive as an imperialist idea was an important feature of his understanding of war, and which subsequently produced the Chinese military strategy of Active Defence. The military strategy of Active Defence upholds war in self-defence, though strategic counter-offensive is permitted as pre-emptory strikes in self-defence on campaign and tactical levels. Thus, Mao's understanding of war, warfare, and military strategy provides an exposition about his philosophy of war, his views regarding the necessity of war, and the nature of war.[56]

The historical and normative setting of Mao's views on military affairs produced his notions of the following: the strategy of Protracted War; and the doctrine of Three Stage Warfare.

The Strategy of Protracted War

The two central strategic problems Mao sought to answer were, whether Japan can subjugate China and whether the revolutionary forces can achieve quick victory over both Japan (the external enemy) and the KMT (the internal enemy). Mao was convinced that Japan did not have limited territorial ambitions in China. He felt it had an imperial agenda, with political, cultural and economic goals, to occupy entire China. However, Mao ruled out the possibility of subjugation by sheer military force, underscoring China's large territory and population—particularly the rural masses—as strategic assets which would unsustainably overstretch Japan's scarce manpower and resources. He was of the view that a small country like Japan would not be able to occupy a large country like China in modern times when a war on this scale could not be isolated from international ramifications. Also, he was aware of the presence of powerful Chinese nationalist political

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[56] Mao's philosophy, strategy and doctrine of war are considered as his contribution to Marxist thought. See, Edward L. Katzenbach, Jr. and Gene Z. Hanrahan, 'The Revolutionary Strategy of Mao Tse-Tung', *Political Science Quarterly*, 70(3), September 1955, p. 321-340; Tang Tsou and Morton H. Halperin, 'Mao Tse-Tung's Revolutionary Strategy and Peking's International Behavior', *The American Political Science Review*, 59(1), March 1965, pp. 80–99.

forces in China's vast rural hinterland from where the resistance would continue with international support, thus making it impossible for Japan to occupy the whole of China. As for the revolutionary war against the KMT, he was convinced that the civil war was the only way left for the liberation of Chinese society from exploitation. In this context too, the vast Chinese hinterland and sympathetic rural masses were strategic assets against the KMT. He was convinced that eventually both the Japanese and the KMT would be defeated by the Chinese people. However, he argued that the struggle against the foreign invaders and the internal enemy would be long-drawn. He, thus, rejected any possibility of quick victory against either the Japanese or the KMT, and ardently advocated a strategy of protracted war. Subsequently, protracted war became a central feature in his military thoughts. It was a prescription to attempt to win a war from a position of weakness. The essence of his idea of a protracted war lay in comprehensive and consistent political work to politicise and mobilise the Chinese masses, and to continuously push back the enemy by a series of small tactical victories based on taking full advantage of China's geography and population. His idea of political work also involved the exploitation of political divisions in the enemy (particularly in case of the KMT), as well as building international support.[57] He opposed fighting battles that could prove decisive without a favourable strategic balance of power. His idea of protracted war changed the notions of loss in terms of territory or defeat. For him, only complete destruction amounted to being defeated.[58]

The Three Stage Warfare: Mao's Military Doctrine

It is in the light of this strategy that Mao visualised his concept of the Three Stage War, which then became his military doctrine. He employed his understanding about the use of both the masses and the geographical

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[57] Mao Zedong 'Statement of the Problem' (Paragraph 6), no. 52. The support of the peasants and the rural masses for the Red Army against the KMT, and later against the Japanese invading forces, is a recurring theme in Mao's writings, and a basic assumption in his strategy against them.

[58] Mao Zedong, 'Preparations for Combating "Encirclement and Suppression" Campaigns', 'Strategic Retreat', 'Strategic Counter-Offensive', in 'The Strategic Defensive' (Chapter V), no. 51.

vastness of China, shaped by his experiences of the Japanese invasion and the civil war, in the Three Stage War.

It should be remembered that Mao wrote his major military writings in the 1930s. Some of them were written on the eve of the Japanese invasion in 1937. The writings visualise the nature and type of war the revolutionary forces would fight with the Japanese invaders, as also in the Civil War with the KMT. In contemporary terms, the writings were also broad guidelines for the 'preparation for military struggle'. Three Stage Warfare can be considered the 'basic point' of Mao's 'preparation for military struggle'.

The Three Stage Warfare was strategically defensive. Its first two stages generally witnessed strategic retreat, whereas the third stage consisted of a strategic counter-offensive. The Three Stage Warfare was to be a long drawn process—always with new campaigns and new battles under new circumstance.[59] It employed mobile warfare assisted by guerrilla warfare. Mobile warfare was high-mobility war 'on extensive battlefields, making swift advances and withdrawals, swift concentrations and dispersals.' Its essence was 'fight when you can win, move away when you can't win', thus keeping war fronts fluid. In mobile warfare, 'regular armies wage quick-decision offensive campaigns and battles on exterior lines along extensive fronts and over big areas of operation'. Mao argued that 'All our 'moving' is for the purpose of 'fighting'.[60] In the Three Stage Warfare, guerrilla warfare was secondary, despite it taking the lead from time to time. As it emerges in Mao's writings, guerrillas were local peasants loosely directed but strongly inspired by the communist party, and active only in their local pockets, whereas regular communist armies, despite the fluidity of war, were under a political and military command with a high degree of centralisation, and their scale of operation was much larger.

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[59] Mao Zedong, 'Encirclement and Suppression' and Counter-Campaigns against It: The Main Pattern of China's Civil War' (Chapter IV), no. 51.

[60] Mao Zedong, 'Mobile Warfare', in 'The Strategic Defensive' (Chapter V), no. 51. Mao Zedong, 'Statement of the Problem' (Paragraph 6) and 'Mobile Warfare, Guerrilla Warfare and Positional Warfare' (Paragraph 91), no. 52.

The Three Stage mobile warfare strategy proposed strategic retreat against the strategy of 'engaging the enemy outside the gates'. Mao argued that 'engaging the enemy outside the gates' was erroneous, and meant the following:

> 'Pit one against ten, pit ten against a hundred'; 'Attack on all fronts'; 'Seize key cities'; 'Strike with two "fists" in two directions at the same time' and 'Don't let our pots and pans be smashed.[61]

The communists needed a calculated strategic retreat to acquire strength to defeat their more powerful enemies. Mao argued that the Communist Party's sixteen-character formula—'the enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue'—became the gist of strategic retreat.[62]

1. The First Stage: The first stage sees the enemy's rapid advance carrying out the strategic offensive. The enemy has potential weaknesses in terms of men and material. However, they are yet to show any effect. Although the enemy's strategic offence is unjust, the enemy is still not isolated by the international community, and is in full command of the situation. Strategic retreat, and not quick counter-offence and victory, becomes the only choice.[63] Mao rhetorically describes the temporary loss of territory as 'give in order to take'.

    > It often happens that only by loss can loss be avoided...If you refuse to let the pots and pans of some households be smashed over a short period of time, you will cause the smashing of the pots and pans of all the people to go on over a long period of time.[64]

    In a strategic retreat, war would be primarily mobile warfare. Guerrilla and positional warfare will assist mobile warfare. During

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[61] Mao Zedong, 'Strategic Retreat', in 'The Strategic Defensive' (Chapter V), no. 51.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Mao Zedong, 'The Three Stages of the Protracted War' (Paragraphs 36, 42), no. 52.

[64] Mao Zedong, 'Strategic Retreat', in 'The Strategic Defensive' (Chapter V), no. 51.

this period, the focus would be on convincing the sympathetic masses about the necessity of strategic retreat. Besides, tactically, strategic retreat would deceive the enemy to follow the revolutionary forces into the interior of the country away from the enemy's own base areas, which will weaken the enemy's position.[65]

2. The Second Stage: The shortage of troops and stiff resistance brings the enemy's strategic advance to a halt, thus ending the first stage of war. In the second stage, marked by a strategic stalemate, the enemy attempts to consolidate power, and revolutionary forces begin preparing for a counter-offensive. In this stage, the enemy attempts to defend the rear and occupied territory, operating from terminal points (centralised locations). The guerrillas would then fight intensely on exterior lines. Taking advantage of the enemy's neglect of his rear during his relentless strategic advance in the first stage, they set up their bases around the occupied areas. Thus, now the main feature of the fight will be guerrilla warfare, with mobile warfare becoming secondary. The bulk of the Chinese forces will be dispersedly deployed in the enemy's rear, in coordination with the local guerrillas. Their coordinated guerrilla warfare tactics would compel the enemy to come out from his stronghold to be annihilated in mobile warfare.[66] This situation will push the enemy to adopt a defensive posture overall, as opposed to its initial offensive posture. Nevertheless, the balance of power would still favour the enemy. This phase would also witness unprecedented mass mobilisation and national unity as seen in public support for the guerillas. The enemy would begin to be isolated internationally. With the enemy fully overstretched, the strategic balance would finally begin to tilt in China's favour by the end of this phase.[67]

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[65] Mao Zedong, 'Strategic Retreat' in 'The Strategic Defensive' (Chapter V), no. 51.

[66] Mao Zedong, 'The Three Stages of the Protracted War' (Paragraph 35), no. 52.

[67] Mao Zedong, 'Strategic Retreat', in 'The Strategic Defensive', (Chapter V), no. 51.

Mao opposed fighting potentially strategically decisive individual battles with uncertain outcomes; but when victory was sure, he believed in engaging the enemy in decisive engagements in major or minor campaigns or battles. Although Mao did not very clearly ascribe quick decision battles to any particular stage, most of these battles are likely to take place in the second stage. Here, there is also some difficulty in the approximation of the Chinese use of words such as 'operation' and 'campaign', with their connotations in Western terminology. Nevertheless, in the light of Mao's writings, it appears that these quick decision battles were operation-level battles. He believed that only a series of such decisive battles would 'deplete the enemy forces', and transform the Chinese forces from weak to strong. His thrust was to annihilate the enemy in small numbers. Thus, Mao endorsed an operational principle of 'quick-decision offensive warfare on exterior lines' for campaigns and battles, under an overarching strategic principle of 'protracted defensive warfare on interior lines'. This operational principle was meant to push the enemy on the defensive on exterior lines, compel him to divest his troops from the interior lines, and so gradually achieve the strategic objective of the enemy's strategic level attrition. Quick-decision battles should have quick victories which depend on the offensive employment of overwhelming numbers.[68]

Mao emphasised that the victory or defeat in the first battle in any campaign may prove to be a decisive influence on the morale of troops. Thus, it should be made a part of the larger campaign plan, and care should be taken to keep the next strategic stage in mind. For battles, he produced certain guidelines.

> It is inadvisable to fight when the force confronting us is too large; it is sometimes inadvisable to fight when the force confronting us, though not so large, is very close to other enemy forces; it is generally inadvisable to fight an enemy force that is not isolated and is strongly entrenched; and it is

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[68] Mao Zedong, 'Offence within Defence, Quick Decisions within a Protracted War Exterior Lines within Interior Lines' (Paragraphs 72-77), no. 52; see also, Mao Zedong, 'Mobile Warfare' and 'War of Quick Decision', in 'The Strategic Defensive' (Chapter V), no. 51.

inadvisable to continue an engagement in which there is no prospect of victory.[69]

Mao warned that sometimes the enemy too would like to prolong operation/campaign-level battles in order to avoid his own annihilation. However, inadequate reinforcement will not allow him to do so. Thus, the enemy's weakness in terms of numbers and its strategic mismanagement should be continuously exploited. Besides, although the enemy may like to prolong some battles when in a disadvantageous position, its overall strategy would still be to impose 'a war of quick decision' on China. This is something which China must avoid, and persist with a protracted war strategy to keep the situation under its grip.[70]

3. The Third Stage: In Mao's views, mobile warfare subsumes guerrilla warfare in this phase. Intense political and diplomatic work done during the second phase brings about the third stage in which, finally, a strategic counter-offensive can be launched on exterior lines on strategic level to recover national territory, and make the exhausted enemy retreat on a strategic-level.[71]

Thus, Mao's military strategy was based on the Communist Party's relationship with the masses. Its aim was revolution. The war Mao supported was defensive politically as well as militarily. Militarily, it was a protracted war. The use of geography and the reliance on political consciousness, commitment and determination was the defining feature of the strategy and the doctrine. Also, it is important that Mao fully appreciated international diplomacy in his understanding of strategy and doctrine.

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[69] Mao Zedong, 'Offence within Defence, Quick Decisions within a Protracted War Exterior Lines within Interior Lines' (Paragraphs 72-77), no. 52; see also, Mao Zedong, 'Starting the Counter-Offensive', 'War of Quick Decision', 'Mobile Warfare', in 'The Strategic Defensive' (Chapter V), no. 51.

[70] Mao Zedong, 'Offence within Defence, Quick Decisions within a Protracted War Exterior Lines within Interior Lines' (Paragraphs 72-77), no. 52; Mao Zedong, 'Starting Counter-Offensive', 'War of Quick Decision', 'Mobile Warfare', in 'The Strategic Defensive' (Chapter V), no. 51.

[71] Mao Zedong, 'The Three Stages of the Protracted War' (Paragraph 38), no. 52.

4. Maoist Strategy and Doctrine after the Liberation

Consistent with the political-military situation in China before 1949, Mao's military strategy and doctrine provided a roadmap for the communist party to become the leader of Chinese society and carry out a revolutionary war. However, once the Communist Party had won the civil war in 1949, captured state power, and established the People's Republic of China (PRC), it was soon felt that a military strategy and doctrine coming from the fluid conditions of a civil war and a foreign invasion could no longer be relevant for national defence. Mao's military doctrine needed to redefine itself as now the communist forces had responsibilities to defend national boundaries.

After 1949, attempts were made to revise Mao's People's War strategy. There are two prominent instances of such attempts: the first was seen in the mid-1950s after the Korean War (1950-53) in the backdrop of Defence Minister Peng Dehuai's military modernisation programme; the second, in the proletarian military line versus the bourgeois military line debate in the mid-1960s.

Peng's ideas on defence modernisation did not present a critique of Mao's People's War. However, his defence modernisation initiatives, which had Mao's support, indirectly questioned the People's War. The initiatives sought to redefine – though in a limited manner – Party-Army relations as well as professionalism in the army, generating a 'Red' versus 'Expert' debate. On the other hand, the proletarian military line versus the bourgeois military line debate offered a critique of People's War techniques. The focus of the debate in the mid-1960s was on Maoist military strategy and doctrine in the context of a possible US threat from Vietnam in the South.

Military Strategy and Doctrine in the 1950s

For the first time, the 1956 MSG showed an attempt to revise and update Maoist ideas of strategy and doctrine. It reflected the doctrinal changes which the modernisation efforts of Peng had brought about

in the 1950s. Issued at the enlarged meeting of the CMC in March 1956 by Peng under Mao's political guidance, it was a departure from the Maoist People's War or the Three Stage Warfare. As the communist revolution had achieved the liberation of China, the new strategic directive for the PLA was not revolution but 'defending the motherland'. The MSG identified a new enemy: the US. Japan, already defeated by the allied powers in 1945, was no longer a military power. The KMT, having retreated to Taiwan, was no longer a chief security threat to the CPC either. It was the US that was the most probable strategic enemy. It had anti-communist alliances in Southeast Asia; it recognised the ROC as China; and it had a defence treaty with the ROC. Thus, the MSG visualised that the geographical direction of the strategic threat was the East Coast. To deal with any likely confrontation, it advocated forward defence with positional warfare. Unlike the previous Three Stage Warfare, it favoured defending and holding the territory. For this, the PLA Navy and Air Force, and New Combat Arms within the Army were created. The oversized PLA, a legacy of the civil-war, was downsized by reducing troops significantly. The Draft Training Programme was issued in 1957.[72]

Factors Shaping Military Strategy and Doctrine in 1950s

China's changed military strategy and doctrine in 1950s was shaped mainly by the lessons learnt from the Korean War (1950-53). Political situation in China was also permissive and conducive for the change.

To begin with, the Korean War (1950-53), the first war the PLA fought immediately after the liberation, occasioned the first change in the PLA's strategy and doctrine as seen in the 1956 MSG. This war taught the most important lesson: that the Three Stage Warfare was not applicable outside the country. The backbone of Mao's Three Stage Warfare was the sympathetic masses, which were not available in Korea. Thus, the PLA, which relied on sympathetic rural masses for logistics during its revolutionary war before 1949 in China, realised the deficiencies in the logistics system during the Korean War. Interestingly, sometimes even the friendly North Korean military also had difficulty in recognising

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[72]   M. Taylor Fravel, no. 1, p.12.

Chinese troops, often wondering whether they were Chinese, North Korean or South Korean. Achieving surprise akin to that in mobile and guerrilla warfare was not possible in cross-border regular operations. The War reminded the PLA of the importance of airpower. Hitherto, the PLA had been essentially an infantry. Thus, the combat experiences in the Korean War compelled the first changes in China's military strategy and doctrine.[73]

During the 1950s, external threat assessment was that the US—the adversary in the Korean War—was the enemy, and the fraternal socialist Soviet Union (USSR) was the ally. To a great extent, the source of this assessment was ideological. The PRC had declared its ideological preference by seizing the property of the US embassy, as also signing the treaty of friendship, alliance and mutual assistance with the USSR in 1950, before the Korean War. It followed the foreign policy of 'lean[ing on] one side': that is, towards the USSR, in the 1950s. It received Soviet weapons and military training as well as non-military aid and assistance. Russian military instructors taught theories of organisation in Chinese military academies, and also gave training during this period, thus playing an important role in China's military modernisation bid in the 1950s.[74]

The change found justification in Mao's military views also. Mao had upheld guerrilla warfare for its mobility and flexibility but opposed *guerrilla-ism* that represented military backwardness and indiscipline. Therefore, progress and change in military affairs was not necessarily

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[73] John J. Tkacik, Jr., 'From Surprise To Stalemate: What The People's Liberation Army Learned From The Korean War: A Half-Century Later', pp. 293-326, in Laurie Burkitt, Andrew Scobell and Larry M. Wortzel (eds.) *The Lessons Of History: The Chinese People's Liberation Army At 75*, Strategic Studies Institute, Carlisle, PA, 2003 at http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lang=en&id=100614 (Accessed January 13, 2013).

[74] 'China Military Modernization in the 1950s and 1960s', http://www.photius.com/countries/china/economy/china_economy_military_modernizati~7393.html; Tita S. Torio, 'China's Military Modernization Program: Some Lessons for the Armed Forces of The Philippines', pp. 64-66, at http://www.asj.upd.edu.ph/mediabox/archive/ASJ-31-32-1995-1996/torio.pdf (Accessed January 8, 2016).

against Mao's thoughts. Although the Party and the PLA continued with an overlap of leadership from the top to mid-levels, the military objectives were subject to higher political goals, and the Party continued to maintain its control over the army through the Party committees at every corresponding level from top to bottom. The Party also allowed separate organisational structures at the bottom and mid-levels to develop after 1949.

Modernisation Aborted: Strategy and Doctrine Reversed

The period after late 1950s and early 1960s saw an abrupt end of the modernisation of the PLA as well as a doctrinal reversal. The end was brought on mainly by developments in domestic politics—more precisely by new developments in Party-Military relations—as well as factors pertaining to international politics.

The Reversal

In the early 1960s, Mao and Lin Biao put forward the concept known as Flexible National Defence (FND) suitably applicable to conventional war. Scholars cite this concept to argue that the People's War as seen in 1960s was not based merely on a guerrilla war doctrine. However, the FND did not appear to become the mainstay of People's War.[75]

The two minor MSGs were issued in 1960 and 1964.[76] During this period, the US continued to be the identified strategic enemy and the geographical direction of the threat was the East. However, in view of the US presence in Vietnam, now, the South of China, along with the East, also became the geographical direction from where the enemy could strike.

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[75] Harlan W. Jencks, "'People's War under Modern Conditions": Wishful Thinking, National Suicide, or Effective Deterrent?', *The China Quarterly*, (98), April-June 1984, p. 312. In the FND, Mao and Lin Biao took a flexible view of the relationship between man and technology, and warfare. Jencks traced People's War under Modern Conditions doctrine to the FND. However, this author points out the difference between the two in the section on 'War Visualisation' in chapter VI.

[76] M. Taylor Fravel, no. 1, p. 2.

Incidentally, as Luo Ruiqing, the chief of the PLA general staff, was removed from his post for attempting to counter the 'defence-in-depth' idea and arguing for a positional defence. The flexibility shown by Mao and Lin Biao in the FND could not produce a departure in Maoist strategy and doctrine. Here, it should be noted that while Luo thought that the possibility of an American attack on China from Vietnam was very real and argued for a positional defence, Mao and Lin Biao did not see it thus, and persisted with the People's War doctrine. Luo Ruiqing was eventually asked to relinquish his position.[77]

A Doctrinal Interpretation of People's War in the 1960s

The People's War in the 1960s, particularly after 1964, presented China's views on the potential enemy, the likelihood of war, the types of war that China may have to fight, the initiation of war, the course of the war, as well as Chinese capabilities and vulnerabilities. The doctrine examined the role of modern weaponry and acknowledged China's vulnerability on this count.[78] A reading of the strategy and doctrine of

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[77] Mira Beth Lansky, '"People's War" and the Soviet Threat: The Rise and Fall of a Military Doctrine', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 18 (4), October 1983, pp. 632-633.

[78] This section draws on Alice Langley Hsieh, *Communist China's Military Doctrine and Strategy*, The RAND Corporation Monograph, Santa Monica, 1963 at http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/429978.pdf (Accessed January 19, 2013); Ralph L. Powell, *Communist China's Military Doctrines*, Research Analysis Corporation, McLean Virginia, 1967 at www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=AD0666784 (Accessed January 19, 2013); Ralph L. Powell, 'Great Powers and Atomic Bombs are "Paper Tigers"', *The China Quarterly*, (23), July-September 1965, pp. 55-63; Ralph L. Powell, 'Maoist Military Doctrines', *Asian Survey*, 8 (4), April 1968, pp. 239-262; and Alice Langley Hsieh, 'China's Secret Military Papers: Military Doctrine and Strategy', *The China Quarterly*, 18, April-June 1964, pp. 79-99.

Hsieh and Powell's monographs and article which claim to rely on a confidential document which they accessed courtesy the US intelligence which in turn had received it from the Republic of China's intelligence. They first published their monographs, and later in *The China Quarterly* and *Asian Survey* as articles. Considering the stature of the journals they published in, the Cold-War context, and the content of the writing being consistent with other writings on the Maoist period, the claim about the secret document seems to be quite convincing.

this time reveals both a reversal from the forward-looking approach seen in the 1956 MSG, as well as an aggravated threat perception.

The People's War doctrine in the 1960s predicted a pessimistic scenario for China. It continued to identify the US as the strategic enemy, requiring China to be prepared to face a total and all-out attack. The doctrine visualized that the enemy would initiate war by dropping nuclear bombs on China through long-range missiles, followed by chemical and biological attacks and every other element of force. All this would finally be followed by the coming of the infantry. The enemy would ensure the complete destruction of China's national capabilities – military as well non-military – before mounting a ground invasion. It was believed that the enemy would follow such a course of war because its objective was to occupy China. Indeed, it was believed that the enemy would like to completely destroy China's national defence capabilities before entering Chinese territory because, as per the doctrine, the enemy knew that China's spirit is indomitable, which nuclear strikes cannot destroy.

However, the doctrine never indicated the basis of this visualisation, and why the US would launch a nuclear strike against China. The US presence in the Asia-Pacific was understood to be sufficient justification for such an extreme, worst-case scenario. Besides, no counter-offensive measures against the US were suggested. Eventually, the doctrine proved to be more rhetorical than sound military assessment.

This rhetoric needs to be seen in the context of Chinese domestic politics, particularly the Cultural Revolution. During this Revolution, China cut off diplomatic relations with most of the world, and went into self-imposed diplomatic isolation. In such a condition, the People's War visualised the US, Japan, Russia and India as actively conspiring against China and encircling it. It did not visualise any scope for international diplomacy to address China's security concerns, though it mentioned an international alliance of the forces of the peoples' struggle to which full support was pledged. However, the support in most cases was ideological, material or advisory. Active military support was generally withheld. A fine example of Chinese rhetoric was that China had already given the international forces of the people's struggle the 'spiritual atomic bomb' of Maoist thought. So, they did not need or

expect any other help,[79] and believed that they had to carry out their revolutionary struggle with the help of armies of local people.

The People's War doctrine in the 1960s banked on the heavy use of manpower and tactics such as the massed attack, and the human wave attack. It drew its inspiration from Mao's prescriptions articulated in the 1930s. The use of manpower in staggering numbers aimed at offsetting technological handicaps and *overcoming superiority through inferiority.* This understanding saw the raising of a massive militia. Militarily, the militia provided the numbers to overcome technological inferiority; politically, it aimed at countering the PLA's political influence.[80] Thus, the doctrine was essentially infantry-centric—a reversal from the 1956 MSG which recognised the importance of the air force and navy. Considering the visualisation of war in the doctrine, air power could have been considered as providing supporting role. But this was not so. The navy was also almost non-existent in the doctrine. In keeping with the emphasis on numbers in the doctrine, apart from routine drills, any extended military exercises or training were strongly discouraged as these would establish the military profession as a special trade which required special education; as well as raise questions regarding man's superiority over technology and the political control over the army.[81]

In a nutshell, the People's War doctrine in the 1960s played up Mao's prescriptions of the 1930s of using the vastness of Chinese territory,

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[79] Ralph L. Powell (1967), no. 78, p. 20.

[80] John Gittings, 'China's Militia', *The China Quarterly*, (18), April-June 1964, pp. 100-117.

[81] Lansky informed that for ten years, 'no large scale-exercises were held.' Mira Beth Lansky, no. 77, pp. 632.

Powell underlines that China's nuclear test of 1964 was inconsistent with the doctrine's emphasis on man over technology. Ralph L. Powell (1967), no. 78, pp. 2-3, 23-27. This inconsistency drew attention to the question of technology among the communists. Although Communist Party factions and discourse were anti-technology, a view sustained largely due to the peculiar political environment and economic backwardness of China, the tests suggested that the communist leadership was not unmindful of the role of technology in modern warfare.

and considering every Chinese a soldier, or potential soldier. While Mao's prescriptions had a reasonable political appeal and military value in their original context, these prescriptions were given untenable extension in the 1960s in the context of the fear of a potential nuclear holocaust. The capacity of China's numerical strength in providing recruitment, logistics, the belief in the capacity of the Chinese people to make sacrifices as well as the political motivation of the population, the meaning of defeat and destruction were changed and taken to unconvincing levels. Only total physical destruction or a complete ideological capitulation of the entire nation was seen as a defeat.

The 'wisdom' behind the Maoist People's War in the 1960s was as follows:

> If men, not weapons, determined the outcome of war, then a modernised and professional army was no longer a first priority, and if the people were the ultimate reservoir of power, then the army was no longer crucial for national defence.[82]

These doctrinal expositions do not stand the scrutiny of logic. One is left wondering whether the Chinese really believed in what they said about the inevitable American nuclear strike and occupation of China. Surviving – that too victoriously – a nuclear, chemical and biological catastrophe of doomsday proportions is impossible. The role of international diplomacy was hugely under-appreciated in the doctrine. Suffice to say that this doctrine was a mix of faith, fantasy, and rhetoric, and catered to factional politics and the boosting of morale. In times of limited national capabilities, morale boosting also has military value.[83]

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[82] John Gittings, 'Political Control of the Chinese Army', *The World Today*, 19 (8), August 1963, pp. 331.

Many inspections, investigations and purges on ideological lines were undertaken in the army in 1960-61. The entire course of events led to great bitterness in the army against the left radicals in the Party. The army accused the Party of not providing effective leadership in the Taiwan Strait crisis. The Party retaliated by accusing the army of 'warlordism' and lack of commitment to socialism.

[83] G.D. Deshingkar, 'The Maoist Strategic Doctrine', *India International Centre Quarterly*, 3(4), October 1976, pp. 249.

Overall, the People's War did not contain any element of offence whatsoever.

Factors Responsible for the Reversal

The journey of the reversal of military strategy and doctrine reflects developments in China's domestic politics, especially within Party-Military relations, as well as China's changing external threat perception. Interestingly, the journey also reflects how the absence of an actual military threat and victory in a military struggle can create complacence in strategic and doctrinal understanding.

Changed Party-Military Relations Shaping Military Doctrine

Military modernisation in the 1950s took place alongside a latent power struggle within the Party. The Hundred Flowers Movement — that later culminated in an anti-Rightist movement — was the first expression of the power struggle in the Communist Party after the liberation. Although the army was not targeted by intellectuals in their criticisms of the Party during the Movement, many military figures identified as professionals, were victimised during the subsequent anti-Rightist movement. Peng's military views (that supported professionalism in the military) were described as 'erroneous pure bourgeoisie'. They became the reference point for attacks on him and the other modernisers, in the factional politics current at the time. Incidentally, the modernisation campaign had generated the 'professional' versus the 'political' debate in the army on whether communist China should have a professional army or a political one. The campaign included measures which were considered at variance with communist philosophy as well as the revolutionary legacy of the Party and the PLA. The measures included professional training, the creation of a professional officer corps for a modern and professional structure in the army (which was moving beyond amateur and guerrilla past), and the separation between combat and non-combat duties. Although the initiatives were limited in nature, the radicals interpreted these as placing professionalism over the army's commitment to socialism, and complained that this would, in the long run, undermine political control over the army. To begin with, this 'Red' versus 'Expert' debate was

moderate; however, it soon aligned with the power struggle in the Party.[84] 'Red' stood for conventional communist views of Party-Military relations whereas the 'Experts' were the modernisers and those who were pro-professionalism.

From 1956 onwards, the Party began re-asserting its 'Red' views. It initiated many rectification campaigns in the army.[85] After Peng's purge for criticising Mao's Great Leap Forward Movement, the 'Red' views gained ascendance. Under Mao loyalist Lin Biao (who replaced Peng as Defence Minister in 1960), the PLA became involved in the factional politics in subsequent years. Loyalty to Mao and his People's War became the litmus test for political correctness for the Maoists under Lin. His

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[84]   Professionals underscored the importance of technology in modern warfare; a command and responsibility based hierarchical organisation; criticised parallel political control that led to jurisdictional problems and inefficiency; and opposed the militia, as well as the non-military activities of the army. On the other hand, the political views advocated an egalitarian army organisation; objected to the military's bad behaviour with common civilians; upheld the militia as the backbone of national defence; and emphasised political education for the military and its participation in socialist construction. After the second Strait crisis, the Party radicals developed a grudge against the USSR because of the latter's unwillingness to share nuclear weapons or technology with China, and not coming out in support of China as per their treaty. The PLA, however, was of the view that despite all this, Russian help was necessary to fulfil China's military requirements.

   For China's military modernisation in 1950s, the 'red' versus 'expert' debate and subsequent political repercussions, please see, Ellis Joffe, 'The Conflict between Old and New in the Chinese Army', *The China Quarterly*, (18), April-June 1964: pp. 118-140; George J. Terry, 'The "Debate" on Military Affairs in China: 1957-1959', *Asian Survey*, 16 (8), August 1976, pp.788-813; and David A. Charles, 'The Dismissal of Marshal P'eng The-huai', *The China Quarterly*, (8), October-December 1961: pp. 63-76.

[85]   The rectification campaigns withdrew officers' privileges; prohibited them from keeping their families with them, and started a general socialist education programme with an emphasis on Mao's military teachings. The rectification campaigns launched an 'Officers to the Ranks' movement in 1958 requiring even the senior most officers to work like an ordinary soldier for a certain period of time; and started the 'everyone a soldier' campaign in 1958 to raise a nationwide militia. The PLA was pressed into economic activities, particularly during the Great Leap Forward.

systematic campaigns converted the army into 'a test-bed for political work', or the arena for factional politics. He used the PLA to venerate Mao, and elevated his thoughts to the level of scriptures. In the process, he glorified the human factor over technology in war, and established it as the general intellectual conditioning of the Army, opposing science and technology as the intellectual framework for the military. This ideological positioning in military affairs was the reason behind the neglect of large-scale professional military training exercises.[86]

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[86] The long and the short of Lin Biao's role in the Cultural Revolution is as follows: the purge of Peng, the victimisation of other PLA officers and the pressing of the army into GLFM had left the army bitter. However, Lin successfully co-opted the army leadership by various means—such as expressing regrets, promotions, restoring their privileges, and reducing their non-military activities. The PLA, in return, enthusiastically implemented Mao's teachings as endorsed by Lin Biao; and officials and soldiers joined the Young Communist League. Mao loyalists were infiltrated into the Party committees in the army, and his loyalists from the army infiltrated the Party committees of other institutions. The Five-Good campaign, campaigns 'to strengthen political and ideological work in the army' (1960), and the 'learn from the army movement' (1964) were launched to emphasise ideological education; these ultimately eulogised Mao and his thoughts and presented the previously demonised army as a role-model for Maoist virtues. Thus, until the Cultural Revolution, the army was basically an arena where political manoeuvring was taking place. The situation, however, took a different turn in January 1967. Seeing the unexpected resistance put up by veteran Party leaders to the Red Guards, Mao ordered the army to assist the Red Guards. Again unexpectedly, the army did not accept the Red Guards' leadership and, in general, played a balancing role and maintained stability and order amidst chaos. It set up 'revolutionary committees' comprising the Red Guards, the army, and Party veterans. In the process, the power 'gravitated' to the army. By the end of the Cultural Revolution, the army was ruling China at the local and regional levels through revolutionary committees, and had emerged as the biggest stakeholder in the Party central committee and its poliburo.

See John Gittings, 'The "Learn from the Army" Campaign', *The China Quarterly*, (18), April-June 1964, pp. 153-159; Philip Bridgham, 'Mao's "Cultural Revolution": Origin and Development', *The China Quarterly*, (29), January-March 1967, pp. 1-35; Ralph L. Powell, 'The Increasing Power of Lin Biao and the Party-Soldiers 1959-1966', *The China Quarterly*, (34), April-June 1968, pp. 38-65; John Gittings, 'The Chinese Army's Role in the Cultural Revolution', *Pacific Affairs*, 39 (3/4), Autumn 1966-Winter 1966-1967, pp. 269-289. Ellis Joffe, 'The Chinese Army after the Cultural Revolution: The

External Threat Perception

A changed threat perception that led China into self-imposed international isolation during the Cultural Revolution also contributed to the reversal. The Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev's denouncement of Joseph Stalin's policies in 1956 (known as De-Stalinisation) and his policy of peaceful co-existence with the US-led world created serious ideological differences between the USSR and Maoist China. Later, during the Second Strait Crisis (the military faceoff with the Republic of China [ROC] in 1958), the USSR did not extend China military help — despite the 1950 treaty — the way the US did to the ROC (the US and the ROC signed the Sino-American Mutual Defense Treaty in 1954). The USSR seemingly withheld military help due to the fear of escalation. However, it was a disappointment for China. Moreover, the USSR declined to give nuclear technology and other modern weapons to China. This created mistrust in Sino-USSR relations.

Separately, the USSR did not endorse the development model of the Great Leap Forward Movement launched in 1958. It withdrew its assistance, and re-called its scientific advisors from China. Those Chinese officers who were concerned about the breakdown of military cooperation with the USSR were viewed as pro-Soviet and anti-Mao.[87] Although the formal Sino-Soviet rift took place after the mid-1960s and the USSR was formally identified as an enemy around the time of the military clash at the Ussuri River in 1969, the Soviet withdrawal had already impacted the modernisation of the PLA. The US remained an ideological adversary and enemy all along. Thus, China gradually came to have adversarial relations with *both* the superpowers. This may have contributed to China's reversal to the manpower-based Mao's People's

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Effects of Intervention', *The China Quarterly*, (55), July-September 1973, pp. 450-477. Ellis Joffe highlights the Party's attempt to "reconstruct" the Party and restore its control after the Ninth Party Congress. The PLA had 235 members (49 per cent) out of 479 in the Party Standing Committee at the time of the Ninth Party Congress in April 1969 (p. 456) and 87 "out of the 170 full members of the Central Committee" (p. 457).

[87] John Gittings, no. 82, pp. 335-336.

War military doctrine that wanted to 'make everyone a soldier' in order to counter technological inferiority.[88]

The absence of any serious military threat after the Taiwan-Strait crisis in 1958 allowed Maoist politics to afford the heavy political involvement of the army in the Party's factional politics, neglecting professionalism. In the joint US-ROC communiqué of 1959, the US had compelled the Chiang Kai-Shek government to renounce military means to recapture the Mainland from the Communists.

The Combat Experience

The absence of the possibility of a military invasion, and the victory in war with India in 1962 facilitated the doctrinal reversal that helped the Maoist faction in politics. It has been argued that Mao used this war to consolidate his position in politics. The victory in the war provided China an opportunity to justify political control over the PLA. The Party committee system was upheld as fostering *esprit de corps* in the army. The use of massive numbers, massed attacks or human wave tactics, and the encircling of isolated Indian troops akin to Mao's People's War were underscored as the strengths of the Chinese army.[89] Thus, it is interesting that the war did not bring any doctrinal innovation. Instead, the years after the war witnessed a reversal in doctrinal affairs.

The Clash of Two Lines and the Challenge to the People's War

The 'proletarian military line' versus 'the bourgeois military line' debate that took place in government publications (like the *Beijing Review*) through sponsored articles in the 1960s was a subtle expression of dissatisfaction against this doctrinal reversal and the unreal character of the People's War doctrine of the time. After Peng's purge, the so-called professionals

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[88]   Harold P. Ford, 'Modern Weapons and the Sino-Soviet Estrangement', *The China Quarterly*, (18), April- June 1964, pp. 164-165.

[89]   Larry M. Wortzel, 'Concentrating Forces and Audacious Action: PLA Lessons From The Sino-Indian War', pp. 327-352, in Laurie Burkitt, Andrew Scobell and Larry M. Wortzel (eds.) no. 73.

or modernisers changed their tactics for pragmatic reasons during 1960s.[90] They continued to pay court to Maoist thought; but at the same time they pressed on with ideas, which were heretical to the Maoists. This tactic was characterised by their opponents as 'wave a red flag against a red flag'. The debate explains the transition from the Maoist People's War to the People's War under Modern Conditions. During this time, the Chief of the PLA General Staff, Luo Ruiqing, represented the 'professionals', and Defence Minister Lin Biao represented the 'guerrillas' or bourgeois and proletarian lines respectively. The so-called bourgeois line questioned the basic assumptions of the People's War, which the so-called proletarian line was upholding. The main point of the debate was whether the strategy of 'luring the enemy in the deep', 'trading territory for time', retreating endlessly into the hinterland, and showing infinite patience was a strategy worth pursuing in the post-liberation context. The 'professionals' argued that the enemy should not be allowed to crash the gates. They supported linear and positional defence to repulse the enemy invasion at the border itself. They questioned the wisdom of vacating cities. They furnished evidence in support of their argument from the Chinese revolutionary struggle, the Russian civil war, and especially from Russian resistance when invaded by Nazi Germany. They did so in order to escape the charges of heresy. They reinterpreted the Russian fight against fascist Germany. Their argument was that the glorified Russian retreat in the face of Hitler's forces was a compulsion, and not a choice; it had led to a huge loss of life. The Soviets 'defence-in-depth' was not classic mobile guerrilla warfare. The Russians actually put forward 'a defence-in-depth of successive fortified lines as a 'shield', and large, armour-heavy force formations as the counter-attacking 'sword' within….mobile reserves' behind 'fortifications in depth'. They also argued that since there were so many technologies available to annihilate an invading force 'on the sea, in the air, or at the base from which it launches its attack', there was no need to invite the enemy inside. They wondered whether the enemy's end-objective would always be to decimate China, and not a more limited one of simply occupying a portion of it and sitting there forever.

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[90]   This section draws on Mira Beth Lansky, no. 77, pp. 619-649.

They argued that,

> In order to withstand attack by superior forces with limited objectives, it would be necessary to force them to sustain a high rate of attrition from the onset and to prevent them from achieving their objective rapidly, i.e., within their logistical limits. This could be achieved by creating a dense network of self-contained and mutually supporting positional defences blocking invasion routes.[91]

Thus, they advocated jettisoning the idea of fluid warfare for fixed defence installations that would also serve to defend cities. After the end of Cultural Revolution, the Maoist People's War doctrine began to pave the way for the People's War under Modern Conditions doctrine. The Party's resentment against the political involvement of the PLA entailed the dilution of the army's political role. Industrial and real estate development along the Manchurian border had made 'luring the enemy into the depth' an irrelevant tactic. In brief, the revolutionary guerrilla techniques could no longer be attractive as in the past, since now, the Chinese communists had a territorial authority to safeguard. That China could have afforded a huge loss of human life in war was a cliché too, particularly in the era of deadly technologies. The dictum of man's superiority over weapons gradually lost political favour. As seen in the 1979 Vietnam War, glorified tactics like massed attacks were simply overrated.[92]

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[91]   Mira Beth Lansky, no. 77, p. 627.

[92]   William T. Tow, 'Chinese Strategic Thought: Evolution toward Reality', *Asian Affairs*, 7 (4), March-April 1980, pp. 252-255.

5. The China-Vietnam War and the Falklands War: Reminders for Change

The China-Vietnam War of 1979 is considered a turning point that compelled introspection in the political and military leadership in China about how they visualised and conceptualised war. The Falklands War in 1982 was a distant war, unrelated to China. Nevertheless, Chinese military thinkers and planners reportedly followed it closely. It is also considered to have contributed to China's military doctrine in the 1980s.

The China-Vietnam War is known as China's last Maoist War. Although China waged the war in 1979 after Mao's death, national and international developments that led to the war came from the Mao's era. The war was waged to punish Vietnam for its alleged transgressions and ingratitude shown towards China for its help in Vietnam's anti-colonial struggle. The China-Vietnam War underlined that the People's War thinking was not applicable to the military operations beyond national borders. It revealed the PLA's weakness in integration, coordination, logistics, and command and control, thus exposing a poor understanding of contemporary warfare. On the other hand, the Falklands War between Argentina and the United Kingdom (UK) in1982 seems to have generated interest in naval warfare, which had long been neglected in China's military strategy and doctrine.

The following section spells out how these two wars might have inspired changes in Chinese military doctrinal understanding.

The China-Vietnam War

In the China-Vietnam War, China disciplined Vietnam and controlled the 'overall strategic situation' as the USSR — with whom Vietnam had signed a treaty — did not extend any military support to Vietnam.[93] However, despite the perceived military superiority and confidence

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[93]   Xiaoming Zhang, 'China's 1979 War with Vietnam: A Reassessment', *The China Quarterly*, (184), December 2005, p. 867.

shown by the Chinese leadership, the result in the China-Vietnam War was a stalemate, and Chinese casualties were surprisingly high. Thus, while China achieved the political objectives of the war, militarily the PLA made limited operational gains. The reasons for this lie in China's poor execution of the war, which again reflected a poor understanding of the contemporary warfare.

The war proved to be 'mutually punishing' in terms of casualties and loss. The Vietnamese put the Maoist precept of numerical superiority over the enemy to a tough test in this war. The PLA deployed more than 300,000 regular, special, and local troops and units. Vietnam took comparatively higher casualties. The invading Chinese forces advanced some miles (six in the mountains and 20 in plains) into Vietnamese territory, capturing some cities including a provincial capital. The exact number of Chinese causalities has been debated, though 30,000 seem to be a fair estimate. This conservative estimate of Chinese casualties constitutes about 10 per cent of the total ground forces mobilised by China. The Chinese also suffered a huge loss of materials. Official statistics have never been released in this regard.[94] The Vietnamese claimed that it was their militia that inflicted these causalities on the invading forces. The best Vietnamese forces and fire-power were based near Hanoi for its defence. The militia suffered a relatively higher number of casualties because it carried out offensive attacks on the invading Chinese forces — the reason for Vietnam's higher casualties. The scholars have given credence to the Vietnamese assertion that had the Chinese advanced further, they would have taken even greater losses.

The Chinese were found to be clueless even about the topography of a neighbouring and previously 'fraternal' North Vietnam. The troops were unaware of Vietnam's geography, topography, and cartography. The PLA relied 'on outdated maps', and had very limited reconnaissance

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[94] This section of the monograph is drawn on Harlan W. Jencks, 'China's "Punitive" War on Vietnam: A Military Assessment', *Asian Survey*, 19(8), August 1979, pp. 801-815; Edward C. O'Dowd and John F. Corbett, Jr., 'The 1979 Chinese Campaign In Vietnam: Lessons Learned', pp. 353-378 in Laurie Burkitt, Andrew Scobell and Larry M. Wortzel (eds.) no. 73; Xiaoming Zhang, no. 93, pp. 851-874; P.R. Chari, 'Military Aspects of the Sino-Vietnam Conflict', *Strategic Analysis*, 3 (1), 1979, pp. 15-18.

capability. The Chinese war planners were ignorant of Vietnamese 'combat doctrine and tactics'. They could not anticipate the Vietnamese use of guerrillas, sappers and militia — a confounding matter since China had been upholding the People's War. Vietnam too had carried out its liberation war, in which China supported it, by practising people's war. The use of the militia by Vietnam reduced the force ratio from the assumed 8-1 to 2-1, and did not allow the PLA to have one-sided force superiority. The Chinese failed to carry out a combined operation. The Chinese air force made only support sorties. The infantry, artillery, and tank units demonstrated a lack of coordination. The three branches displayed ignorance of each other's manoeuvres, thus highlighting problems in doctrine and training. It has been reported that 'infantry soldiers, who fastened themselves to the top of tanks with ropes to prevent themselves from falling off on the march, were stuck when fired upon by the enemy.'[95] It has been recorded that tank units and infantry were operating independent of each other. The Chinese artillery failed miserably. Its incapability in basics like 'measuring distance and calculating data' was exposed in the war. It could undertake only 'large-scale barrage firings on prominent terrain features or inaccurate fire on smaller targets.' It was not able to provide covering fire ('call for fire'). It is also believed that 'the Chinese artillery was no more effective than the artillery of the Napoleonic era or the early American Civil War'.[96]

The Chinese Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAM) as well as its anti-aircraft artillery and short-range fighters, based in Guangxi province bordering Vietnam, were found inadequate and obsolete. Its SAMs and short-range fighters did not have reach beyond 'about 50 km from the border'. On the other hand, Vietnam had established a 'modern and formidable' air defence system in and around Hanoi and Haiphong. The Vietnamese air-defence system consisted of 'fighter-bombers, longer-range tank guns, and Sagger Anti-Tank Guided Missiles (ATGM)'.[97] China restricted the use of air power to within Chinese territory — mainly for logistical purposes. Chinese combat engineers had great difficulties

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[95] Xiaoming Zhang, no. 93, p. 871.

[96] Edward C. O'Dowd and John F. Corbett, Jr., no. 94, p. 356.

[97] Harlan W. Jencks, no.94, p. 814.

in detecting Vietnamese landmines, destroying their bunkers, and building bridges required for troop movement.[98] Reportedly, China did not have 'enough of a fast-moving, distant, offensive action'-oriented logistics. The troops could not manage and sustain even a four or five kilometre supply line in Vietnamese territory. They started facing scarcity of food and water within a week of the war. The poor management as well as Vietnamese sabotage of Chinese logistics and transportation did not allow storage and transportation facilities in the Guangzhou and Kunming Military Regions to operate smoothly. Consequently, the Chinese lost 'considerable quantities of supplies', and diverted 'a large number of forces' to keep 'the communication lines open.'[99] The war revealed problems in the command and control system of the PLA. Units experienced problems in commander-soldier relations, especially when the commanding officers were brought from different units.

Thus, the poor logistics, mobility, and coordination turned the Chinese military advance into Vietnam into a 'sluggish march'.[100] The War re-encountered the difficulties of logistics and mobility that had been faced during the Korean War, though many of the shortcomings exposed during this war were new, and probably on a much larger scale since this was the PLA's first joint war with the participation of the infantry, artillery, and the armoured corps. Once again, after the Korean War, the China-Vietnam war exposed that the People's War concept was not applicable in offensive or cross-border operations. In spite of the Chinese leadership maintaining dismissive public posturing towards casualties and Vietnamese fighting prowess, the experience in Vietnam came as a shock. The war pushed the need for the military modernisation.

Although the present and on-going modernisation of the PLA started several years after the War, the lessons of the war justified the modernising views and demands raised by the new leadership of Deng

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[98]   Edward C. O'Dowd and John F. Corbett, Jr., no. 94, p. 356.

[99]   Xiaoming Zhang, no. 93, p. 871.

[100]   P. R. Chari, no. 94.

Xiaoping. The lessons were no doubt reinterpreted over a period of time. In the initial years, they focused on 'the tactical level of war with the emphasis being on command and control, co-ordination between troops, force structure, and weaponry.' Later interpretations began extrapolating the lessons regarding both strategy and doctrine.[101] The lesson was that the Mao's People's War was irrelevant in situations that went beyond civil war, and did not fit in international combats.

The Falklands War

The Falklands War underlined for China the importance of a correct reading of enemy war objectives. China took lessons on offensive naval combat. It once again reiterated the role of a better command-and-control and coordination in winning a war. The reading of the war left China impressed with the role submarines and air power could play in modern warfare. The Chinese have underscored the wrong reading of British objectives and capabilities by Argentina, as well as its inadequacy in making tactical estimates (Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance [ISR]) as the reasons responsible for its defeat. The Chinese view is that the Argentinians were mistakenly convinced that Britain would attack mainland Argentina, and not the Falklands. Besides, the Argentinians were also apprehending trouble on their border with Chile, and had diverted a considerable number of troops to that border. Consequently, Falkland was left undefended, with only three per cent of its forces on the Islands. Contrary to Argentina's assessment, Britain defeated Argentina in the Falklands, and stopped there.

The Chinese have also underlined that Argentinians command and control system acted in an utterly haphazard way. They hardly mobilised their population or other resources for the war. They failed to sustain initiative, and could not exploit Britain's long supply line. The Chinese were impressed by the way the British successfully organised and managed the thousands of miles long supply line, which could have proved to be their Achilles' heel. In their analysis of the Falklands war, the Chinese noted that the role of submarines and air power in creating a protective ring around the British fleet was very impressive. The

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[101] Xiaoming Zhang, no. 93, p. 873.

Falklands War drew Chinese attention towards the importance of overseas bases and access facilities, and that 'a firm and stable piece of territory or land' was essential to conduct such naval operations. For the Chinese, the war underlined 'the role of amphibious forces in landing, and building a solid base of operation' in offensive naval combat. For them, the British conduct of the Falklands War was a successful example of an integrated war, and the importance of a self-sufficient battle group. British success in the Falkland Islands — thousands of miles away from home territory — presented a stark contrast to the dubious success of the Chinese forces in contiguous Vietnam.[102]

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[102] Christopher D. Yung, 'Sinica Rules the Waves? The People's Liberation Army Navy's Power Projection And Anti-Access/Area Denial Lessons From The Falklands/Malvinas Conflict', in Andrew Scobell, David Lai and Roy Kamphausen (eds.) *Chinese Lessons from Other People's Wars*, Strategic Studies Institute, Carlisle, PA, 2011, pp. 81-95.

6. People's War Under Modern Conditions

People's War under Modern Conditions, attributed to Deng Xiaoping, introduced strategic, and doctrinal changes to Mao's People's War. However, the change was far from being radical and complete. It showed evolution on account of the conduct of war; but it did not produce any alternative framework of strategic and doctrinal thinking (unlike People's War), although it did show a changed outlook towards military strategy and doctrine. At the same time, on account of conduct of war too, the evolution was limited. It could not completely break from the People's War based on 'luring the enemy into the depth.' Nevertheless, it set the evolutionary process in motion. The limited evolution reflected Deng Xiaoping's political compulsions to maintain a delicate power balance with Maoist factions. As far as the external threat perception shaping the evolution was concerned, the USSR's military build-up throughout 1970s on the Chinese borders substantially contributed to the evolution. The requirement of national economic development and the leadership's changed ideological orientation in the post-Maoist phase also contributed to the evolution. Lessons learnt from the China-Vietnam War in 1970s had a share in contributing to the evolution.

The 1977 and the 1980 MSG

Military, strategic, and doctrinal changes under People's War under Modern Conditions were first formally seen in the MSGs of 1977 and 1980. Both MSGs show that the break from People's War to People's War under Modern Conditions was gradual. The 1977 MSG (issued at CMC Plenary Meeting in December 1977 by Ye Jianying under the political guidance of Deng Xiaoping) officially identified the Soviet Union as the enemy in the northern side of China. It dropped guerrilla warfare as the main form of operations, but retained mobile warfare and strategic directive for 'active defence, luring the enemy in deep'. Dropping the idea of guerrilla war was an early attempt to break away from the ideology of the People's War. Ellis Joffe has

pointed out how comments and statements regarding military and strategic affairs published in the official media and literature presented a dilemma between maintaining the Maoist legacy and the need for doctrinal innovation. They generally appear as endorsing compromise formulae in which often the first part of a statement had a Maoist overtone while the second part added some qualifications to it.[103] The nomenclature of the People's War under Modern Conditions doctrine itself is instructive in this regard.

The 1980 MSG came as a real breakthrough. This MSG was issued in October 1980 under the political leadership of Deng Xiaoping. The military proponents of this MSG were Song Shilun and Su Yu. While the Soviet threat in the North continued to be treated as the strategic threat in the MSG, the strategic directive for active defence by luring the enemy in deep and the use of mobile warfare as the main of form of operation were abandoned. Forward defence and positional warfare under the strategic directive of Active Defence were propounded. It was the 1980 MSG that formally produced the People's War under Modern Conditions doctrine attributed to Deng.

War Visualisation

Unlike its predecessor, the People's War under Modern Conditions doctrine had a limited focus. It was mainly concerned with the conduct of war. The core issue addressed in this doctrine was how to deal with a major and large-scale Russian invasion with minimum human cost and without vacating the territory. Although the doctrine did not visualise a world war, a total war, and all-out invasions as a possibility — and neither did it consider the Russian invasion as imminent — it agreed that the probabilities of China's military confrontation with the USSR still existed. However, the occupation and political subjugation of China was not considered Russia's war objective. It was visualised that even a large-scale Russian invasion would be limited to the border areas.

The Three Stage War — comprising strategic retreat, strategic stalemate, and the strategic counter-offensive — was not to be undertaken. Instead,

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[103] Ellis Joffe, no. 18, pp. 555-562, 570-71.

the enemy was to be countered in the initial phase of the conflict itself, denying him entry into Chinese territory. The initial phase was deemed most crucial. In this, the Chinese regulars and guerrillas would even cross the border to interdict the enemy by hindering the enemy's mobility, or striking at its rear. Fully conscious of its technological inferiority when compared to Soviet military technology, the PLA emphasised gaining localised advantage by immobilising the Russian infantry and armoured advance, or at least making it slog by breaking their speed. Wang describes it as 'deter, if not actually stop, *any* Soviet attack' at the border.[104] In the border areas of Manchuria adjoining Mongolia, the war would be highly mobile and swift, but a proper linear positional defence along the border would be taken to defend the territory. Every city would be defended like *Stalingrad* — a reference to the heroic Soviet defence of the city of Stalingrad against the German Nazi forces during World War II.[105] The professional military would lead the war. The mandate of the militia and guerrilla forces was now limited to harassing the enemy. They were not the mainstay of strategy and tactics any longer. The protracted war was no longer a feature of the Chinese military doctrine. National mobilisation against the enemy was only a theoretical possibility — just in case the USSR defied logic and launched an all-out invasion of China. The military was not to be the only instrument for meeting the Russian challenge. Political and diplomatic instruments were equally important in this doctrine. China was sure of international sympathy and support in the event of a Soviet invasion.

Scenarios about nuclear strikes by the enemy on China, so characteristic of the People's War doctrine, were generally absent in the new doctrine. In some instances it mentioned nuclear deterrence, and appeared to focus more on the response to a nuclear attack, than on how to survive it. China's possession of nuclear bombs and a rudimentary delivery system had changed its outlook towards a nuclear attack. Besides, in People's War, the US was visualised as the enemy who would launch a

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[104] Robert S. Wang, 'China' Evolving Strategic Doctrine', *Asian Survey*, 24 (10), October 1984, pp. 1040-48.

[105] Harlan W. Jencks, no. 75, pp. 313-314.

nuclear strike, while the Soviets were not seen as such a grave threat. But People's War under Modern Conditions, that intended to increase the cost of the invasion for the Soviets, believed that a nuclear strike by the Soviets was not improbable. This may also have changed China's nuclear strategy that now underlined a second nuclear strike capability.[106] Here, Ellis Joffe informed that the PLA military training in 1980s did not include anything about a post-nuclear strike scenario,[107] though Robert S. Wang wrote that, in 1982, the Chinese army reportedly carried out exercises in which it visualised the Soviet's tactical nuclear strike on China. In these exercises, the Chinese military carried out drills for post-nuclear strike situations as well as the use of nuclear weapons 'to break-up the concentrations of enemy forces'.[108] However, it should be noted that China reiterated its commitment to no first-use of nuclear weapons in this new doctrine too.

A prominent feature of the new doctrine was that it was not infantry-centric. Air power, naval power, and missile capabilities also got due attention. This was in sync with the new strategy of halting the enemy at the gate and, if possible, going beyond the gate. The Russian deployment of its naval fleets in the Pacific Ocean and near Vietnam, as well as the PLA's analysis of the Falklands War in the South Atlantic led to a new focus on naval development. The Chinese introduced the concept of 'composite armies', or 'group armies', in 1983 for combined arms operation against a likely Soviet invasion, which was the precursor of the concept of integrated warfare. Later, in the 1990s and 2000s, this would be further refined as force-structure for an 'in-depth strike'. In these group armies, the infantry, the armoured and other corps of the army were to be integrated. During this period, 36 main force army corps were reorganised, and military regions were reduced from 11 to seven.[109] Following the 1980 MSG, Third Generation Combat Regulations were drafted and issued between 1982

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[106]   Robert S. Wang, no. 104, pp. 1040-48.

[107]   Ellis Joffe, no. 18, p. 563.

[108]   Robert S. Wang, no. 104, pp. 1045-48.

[109]   Paul H. B. Godwin, no. 19, p. 580-81.

and 1987; and, first campaign outlines were issued in 1987. Similarly, a new Training Programme was issued in 1980.[110]

In the final analysis, the People's War under Modern Conditions doctrine made national defence less bloody and the invasion more costly for the enemy; it also accorded attention to various components of military power. However, this doctrine was conscious of the superiority of Soviet technology and China's technological inferiority.

Although the People's War under Modern Conditions still basically relied on attrition, albeit aggressive, it is incorrect to assume that it was essentially an extension of People's War doctrine's Flexible National Defence. The viewpoints of the two doctrines were diametrically opposite. The strategic shift from the earlier to the latter doctrine indicates the wide ranging change in the Chinese understanding of international politics and diplomacy, as well as domestic politics and military affairs.

Factors Shaping the Evolution

The course of the doctrinal evolution from People's War to People's War under Modern Conditions represented decade-long processes beginning 1969. The late 1960s onwards, events moved very fast. The Cultural Revolution began receding, and the Party reasserted its authority over the army. In 1969, China and the USSR had a military clash at river Ussuri over a territorial dispute. The clash marked the completion of the Sino-Soviet rift. The USSR replaced the US as a security threat to China. Eventually, the US and China had a rapprochement in 1971. Mao's trusted ally, Lin Biao, who played a pivotal role in the Cultural Revolution for Mao, died in a mysterious plane crash in 1971. Mao distanced himself from Lin Biao. A pragmatic leadership began asserting itself and began assuming a greater role in the Party. Deng Xiaoping's ascendency marked the leadership change. The pragmatist leadership promoted technology for national development as well as in military affairs. In theory, it accepted professionalism in the military. It took a sober view of the international security strategic situation. These developments shaped the changes in the Chinese military doctrine.

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[110] M. Taylor Fravel, no. 1, pp. 17-18.

Party-Military Relations

The army's role in the Cultural Revolution, the prosecutions of the army officers in the Lin Biao affair, and the Gang of Four affair put the PLA on the defensive.[111] This situation provided Deng an opportunity to push for the PLA's disentanglement from politics. In his speeches in the 1970s, Deng underscored the damage factional politics had done to the PLA. He argued that Lin Biao's politics had seriously damaged the combat worthiness of the PLA.

> Through protracted struggles against warlordism, the army achieved unity in its own ranks, and formed close ties with the masses. However, it was thrown into considerable chaos after Lin Biao was put in charge of army work in 1959, and especially in the later period under him. Now, many fine traditions have been discarded and the army is seriously bloated organisationally. The size of the armed forces has increased substantially, and military expenditures take up a larger proportion of the state budget than before, with a lot of money being spent just on food and clothing. What is more important is that an over-expanded and inefficient army is not combat-worthy.[112]

He also attacked the Gang of Four that fractured political power during the chaos of Cultural Revolution in China:

> The Gang of Four really debased our standards of social conduct. For 10 years or even longer, they engaged in disruptive activities, acting at the outset in collaboration with Lin Biao.[113]

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[111] The Gang of Four is a sobriquet given to the faction comprising Mao Zedong's wife, Jiang Qing, and three other leaders: Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan, and Wang Hongwen who captured power briefly after the demise of Mao Zedong. See, Ellis Joffe, 'The Army after Mao', *International Journal*, 34(4), Autumn 1979, pp. 568-584.

[112] Deng Xiaoping, 'The Army Needs to Be Consolidated', Speech, January 25, 1975, *in Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* at http://dengxiaopingworks. wordpress.com/ 2013/02/23/the-army-needs-to-be-consolidated/ (Accessed October 9, 2013).

[113] Deng Xiaoping, 'Mao Zedong Thought Must Be Correctly Understood as an Integral Whole', Speech, July 21, 1977, *in Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* at http://dengxiaopingworks.wordpress.com/2013/02/25/mao-zedong-thought-must-be-correctly-understood-as-an-integral-whole/ (Accessed October 9, 2013).

He identified the following problems as the immediate concerns to resolve:

> Other comrades are worried that unless there is immediate consolidation, the army, which was sabotaged for so long by Lin Biao and the Gang of Four, might not be able to go into battle in the event of an enemy attack. These worries are not groundless. Hence the questions: How can we consolidate the army? How can we ensure preparedness in the event of war? How can we run the army well? All these questions must be answered if we want to modernize national defence.[114]

Deng started the long and strenuous process of the reversal of the army's prominent position, though the process could effectively start only after Mao's death in 1976. Deng's background as military leader and his connect with the army helped him accomplish the army-party/army-politics disentanglement. This process involved the re-evaluation of Mao's political and ideological legacy, 'the role of ideology' in military affairs, the criticism of the army for supporting the radicals during the Cultural Revolution, the impact of Deng's economic liberalisation and opening up, the PLA's politicisation, and the promotion of professionalism by carrying out personnel and other reforms. In this political and economic context, the Party permitted the army to demand modernisation. Encouraged by this, the PLA vented its frustration regarding its weapons, doctrine, organisation, and other matters. Although the Party was sympathetic and initiated some corrective measures, it rejected any massive weapon modernisation at the cost of economic welfare, and put defence modernisation fourth in the order of priority for national modernisation — agriculture, industry and science and technology being the other three. Deng accepted the demand of defence modernisation, but only as a subsidiary function of overall economic modernisation. He restricted the PLA to

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[114] Deng Xiaoping, 'The Army should Attach Strategic Importance to Education and Training', Speech, August 23, 1977, *in Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* at http://dengxiaopingworks.wordpress.com/2013/02/25/the-army-should-attach-strategic-importance-to-education-and-training/ (Accessed October 15, 2013).

discharging purely military functions, introduced professional criteria for holding military positions, and weeded out 'the over-aged, unskilled, and unqualified' officers who had been occupying military posts for political considerations. At the same time, Deng reasserted political control over the army without supporting the demand of a national and ideologically neutral professional army.[115]

However, it should be noted that Deng did not acquire a firm grip over state power immediately after Mao's death. It took for him some more years to fully assert his leadership. Therefore, considerable care was taken to accommodate old Maoist factions and sentiment. Thus, this situation could not provide a radical break from Mao's People's War doctrine.

Strategic Assessment and Threat Perception

The People's War under Modern Conditions doctrine moved away from the Maoist rhetoric and propaganda as existed under the People's War doctrine. It presented a balanced strategic assessment and threat perception. On the one hand, it stopped appealing for preparations for an imminent all-out attack on China by the enemy; on the other, it took due note of the real Russian threat on the northern border but did not present a disproportionate picture of this threat. As has been mentioned, it visualised the possibility of a limited military conflict with Russia in the border region. This balanced view reflected Deng's sober worldview and a realistic strategic assessment.

The decade of the 1970s witnessed a changing official strategic assessment in China under Deng. He reversed the Maoist analysis of the Cold War and bipolarity in opposite direction. For him, the Cold War and the bipolarity would not lead to another catastrophic world war but ensure a balance of power which would make a major military conflict unlikely. His routine refrain was that there would be no war

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[115] Richard D. Nethercut, 'Deng and the Gun: Party-Military Relations in the People's Republic of China', *Asian Survey*, 22 (8), August 1982, pp. 695-697; Alastair I. Johnston, 'Changing Party-Army Relations in China, 1979-1984', *Asian Survey*, 24 (10), October 1984, pp. 1032-1034.

over the next five to seven years. This effectively meant ruling out any major or large-scale war in the foreseeable future, thus propounding a sober and less alarmist view of international politics.

> The international situation is also good. It is possible that we may gain some additional time free of war. Applying Comrade Mao Zedong's strategy of differentiating the three worlds and following his line in foreign affairs, we can contribute our share to the international struggle against hegemonism. Moreover, the Soviet Union has not yet finished its global strategic deployment. And the global strategy of the United States, after its defeat in Southeast Asia, has shifted to the defensive — the United States isn't ready to fight a world war yet either. Therefore, it is possible to win a delay in the outbreak of war.[116]

During this phase, China ceased to have a hostile view of the international situation. The old fantastical propaganda that the world was conspiring against China ended. China developed some appreciation of international diplomacy and international organisations, unlike the Maoist era. Now, it had a relatively nuanced view of international diplomacy as seen by its characterisation of the US. For it, the US was still an imperialist power. But it viewed the US either as a friendly or as a neutral power which would support China in the event of aggression by the USSR, which was now considered the biggest enemy.

> Furthermore, it must be stressed that we have done a lot of diplomatic work in the past two years, and have secured an excellent international environment for the realisation of China's four modernisations. Judging from the international reaction to our defensive counter-attack on Viet Nam, we have the genuine sympathy of the vast majority of people. It is now even clearer to everyone how brilliant and far-sighted was the strategy of

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[116] Deng Xiaoping, Speech at a Plenary Meeting of the Military Commission of the Central Committee of the CPC, December 28, 1977, *in Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* at http://dengxiaopingworks.wordpress.com/2013/02/25/speech-at-a-plenary-meeting-of-the-military-commission-of-the-central-committee-of-the-cpc/ (Accessed October 23, 2013).

differentiating the three worlds formulated by Comrade Mao Zedong in the evening of his life. It is also clearer how brilliant and far-sighted were his policy decisions on this issue, namely, that China should side with the third-world countries and strengthen its unity with them, try to win over the second-world countries for a concerted effort against hegemonism, and establish normal diplomatic relations with the United States and Japan. This strategic principle and these policies have been invaluable in rallying the world's people to oppose hegemonism, changing the world political balance, frustrating the Soviet hegemonists' arrogant plan to isolate China internationally, improving China's international environment, and heightening its international prestige.[117]

Thus, the USSR replaced the US as the strategic enemy in the 1970s. The Chinese challenge for international socialist leadership and Sino-US rapprochement brought about this development. This threat perception was shaped by the increasing military deployment of the USSR from the late 1960s onwards. In 1965, the USSR had 17 military divisions deployed in the Russian Far East, a Russian region that borders China. In 1969, the year when the Sino-Soviet military conflict took place at the river Ussuri, the number was 21. They were all deployed in the east of Lake of Baikal. Two out of these were in Mongolia. In the very next year, in 1970, the number of the Soviet army divisions in the Sino-Soviet border areas reached 30, of which two were deployed in Mongolia. In 1973, two years after the Sino-US rapprochement, the number alarmingly jumped to 45 divisions. The number of divisions deployed in Mongolia remained the same. In 1979, when the USSR invaded Afghanistan, there were 46 divisions which remained constant for many years to come. Out of 46, six were tank divisions and 40 were motor rifle divisions. And, in Mongolia, the number went up to three from two.

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[117] Deng Xiaoping, 'Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles', Speech, March 30, 1979, in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* at http://dengxiaopingworks.wordpress.com/2013/02/25/uphold-the-four-cardinal-principles/ (Accessed October 29, 2013).

The last data available about this period is from 1981. The detailed breakup of the data for this year is as follows.

The Soviet Army Deployment at Sino-Soviet Border in 1981

	Tank Divisions	Motor Rifle Divisions
Central Asian Command/Region	1	6
High Command Far East		
Siberian		5
Transbaykal Command/Region	3	7, plus 1 division
Far Eastern Command/Region	1	20, plus 2 divisions
Mongolia Command/Region	1	2
Total	6	40, plus 3 divisions
Grand Total		46, plus 3 artillery divisions

Source: Author's extraction from various issues of *The Military Balance*, IISS, London.

Although the Soviet navy was (reportedly) also active at Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnamese waters in 1980—which was perceived as being hostile to China[118] — the Russian threat was basically from the northern land borders. The large-scale Russian deployment along the Chinese border was essentially a threat to Inner Mongolia — a big industrial centre. The previously discussed mode and conduct of war visualised under People's War under Modern Conditions was aimed at defending this industrial centre.

Peace and Cooperation: The Requirements of Development

Notwithstanding the concerns about Russian deployment in the border areas, the Russian invasion of Afghanistan and the hostile activities by

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[118] Ellis Joffe, no. 18, pp. 568-69.

Vietnam with perceived USSR backing, Deng stayed clear of war mongering. For him, preparing endlessly for a final battle was irrational as well as detrimental to national development. Deng's priority was the economic development of China. He underlined the need for international peace and cooperation for this purpose:

> China hopes for peace more than anything else. China hopes that there will be no war for the rest of the century. We need to develop the country and shake off backwardness. The primary task we have set as the initial goal for the realisation of modernisation is to create comparative prosperity by the end of this century...Therefore, we cherish the hope for a peaceful international environment. Should war break out, our plan would be thwarted, and in that case we could not but postpone the plan. During the period up to the end of the century and extending decades into the future, we hope that there will be peace.[119]

About international cooperation, Deng maintained:

> To realise the four modernisations, we must follow the correct foreign policy of opening to the outside world. Although we rely primarily on our own efforts, on our own resources and on our own foundations to realise the four modernisations, it would be impossible for us to achieve this objective without international cooperation. We should make full use of advanced scientific and technological achievements from around the world, and also of potential funding from abroad so that we can accelerate the four modernisations. This opportunity did not exist for us in the past. Later, when conditions changed, we failed to make use of them for some time. It is high time that we learn to utilise this opportunity.[120]

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[119] Deng Xiaoping, 'China's Foreign Policy', Speech, August 21, 1982, , in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* at http://dengxiaopingworks.wordpress.com/2013/02/25/chinas-foreign-policy/ (Accessed October 30, 2013).

[120] Deng Xiaoping, 'We can Develop a Market Economy under Socialism', Speech, November 26, 1979, in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* at https://dengxiaopingworks.wordpress.com/2013/02/25/we-can-develop-a-market-economy-under-socialism/ (Accessed October 30, 2013).

Thus, peace and cooperation became the main themes of Deng's vision for China's development, which in turn shaped his understanding of military and war. In this understanding, there was a due space for international diplomacy for conflict mitigation.

Changing Appreciation of Technology

Also, Deng had a technocratic orientation. Unlike the Maoist discourse of the 1950s and the 1960s, Deng underscored the human factor to be important for mastering technology. But he did not believe that humans replaced technology. He argued that to consider Marxism and technology as mutually opposed was an erroneous view.

> The first point is the necessity of understanding that science and technology are part of the productive forces. The Gang of Four raised a hue and cry over this, confounding right and wrong and sowing much confusion in people's minds. Marxism has consistently treated science and technology as part of the productive forces. More than a century ago, Marx said that expansion of the use of machinery in production requires the conscious application of natural science. Science too, he said, is among the productive forces. The development of modern science and technology has bound science and production ever more tightly together. It is becoming increasingly clear that science and technology are of tremendous significance as productive forces.[121]

He asserted that the reasons of China's backwardness lay in its technological backwardness. This required urgent attention.

> We must recognise our backwardness, because only such recognition offers hope. Now it appears that China is fully 20 years behind the developed countries in science, technology and education. So far as scientific research personnel are concerned,

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[121] Deng Xiaoping, Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the National Conference on Science, March 18, 1978 at http://dengxiaopingworks.wordpress.com/2013/02/25/speech-at-the-opening-ceremony-of-the-national-conference-on-science/ (Accessed November 5, 2013).

the United States has 1,200,000 and the Soviet Union 900,000, while we have only some 200,000. The figure for China includes the old, the weak, the sick and the disabled. There are not too many who are really competent and can work regularly. As early as the Meiji Restoration, the Japanese began to expend a great deal of effort on science, technology and education. The Meiji Restoration was a kind of modernisation drive undertaken by the emerging Japanese bourgeoisie. As proletarians, we should, and can, do better.[122]

This period saw the beginning of the Chinese engagement with the world in search of capital and technology. In the military realm, a famous example is that of Chinese military officers going on 'window-shopping' tour in search of arms in the late 1970s. The tour indicated the leadership's in principle acceptance of the need for military modernisation as well as the importance of international cooperation in the military realm.[123] However, as mentioned, the efforts in this direction were severely constrained by the shortage of resources. It was not possible to easily accept the technological modernisation of the PLA as a priority under the People's War under Modern Conditions.

Deng's Balancing Act

It has been pointed out that Deng was trying hard to strike a delicate balance among various ideological, political and financial constraints within the doctrine of the People's War under Modern Conditions. Deng's speech at a CMC Plenary Meeting on December 28, 1977 helps us understand the pressures he was trying to cope with while attempting to redefine national defence, and why the People's War under Modern Conditions could not become the new holistic doctrinal

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[122] 'Respect Knowledge, Respect Trained Personnel', May 24, 1977, Excerpt from a talk with two leading comrades of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* at http://dengxiaopingworks.wordpress.com/2013/02/25/respect-knowledge-respect-trained-personnel/ (Accessed November 5, 2013).

[123] Francis J. Romance, 'Modernization of China's Armed Forces', *Asian Survey*, 20 (3), March 1980, pp. 304, 309-310.

framework. In this speech, he tried to harmonise the Maoist People's War with the following: his own understanding of the role of technology in warfare; the Maoist insistence for preparing for a large-scale and imminent major war and his own understanding of a delayed war; a military's desire for rapid modernisation; a reminder about the limitations of rapid modernisation; budgetary constraints; and the prudent utilisation of whatever is available.

In this speech, he also reminded the Chinese people that although a world war would be delayed, the hegemonic and desperate power — alluding to the USSR, 'small incidents', and 'accidental or local happenings' — could lead to escalation. According to him, the question was not when the enemy would invade but whether China was sufficiently prepared to fight off the invasion, or whether its fortifications, ammunition and fight-worthiness were satisfactory. He also said that the understanding of acquiring ammunition by capturing it from the enemy was outdated. The Chinese military needed its own ammunition, rear service, and fortifications. Training the troops and raising their combat worthiness also needed to be taken on priority. In his speech, he did not accept that technology was the decisive factor in war. His argument was that while technology could not be overlooked, it should not be forgotten that if China were to fight a war immediately, it would have to fight and triumph over a superior enemy with inferior weapons because weapon modernisation was not possible overnight. Therefore, he reiterated that the People's War was still relevant. 'Our experience has always shown that we can defeat a superior enemy with inferior equipment, for our wars are just, they are people's wars.' China's large population and geographical vastness were still strategic assets. But, as he said, the improvement in weapons and training was required to 'reduce unnecessary losses'. And since the improvement would need time, in the meantime, 'preparations' and cadre training 'in the art of directing modern warfare' had to be speeded up. He pointed out that while military equipment was being modernised, military leaders were not 'capable of directing a modern war' in which the new equipment would be used. Since most of them did not know how to handle these weapons, Deng felt that training should be special and should receive urgent priority. Likewise, he argued that the defence budget had to be decided keeping in view larger developmental requirements, and that it would be dependent on the state of industrial and agricultural

development. Nevertheless, the budget allocated for weapon modernisation was reasonable, and would prove to be enough if properly utilised. In a nut shell, in this speech, Deng accepted the logic of military modernisation, but toned down the demand for it to accommodate Maoist sentiments and address actual financial constraints. What is significant here is that instead of focussing on immediate weapon modernisation, Deng focussed on doctrinal modernisation and training reforms.[124]

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[124] Deng Xiaoping, Speech at a Plenary Meeting of the Military Commission of the Central Committee of the CPC, December 28, 1977, in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping* at http://dengxiaopingworks.wordpress.com/2013/02/25/speech-at-a-plenary-meeting-of-the-military-commission-of-the-central-committee-of-the-cpc/ (Accessed November 6, 2013).

7. Military Strategy and Doctrine Since the Mid-1980s

From the mid-1980s onwards, the evolution of China's military doctrine saw many changes. In less than two decades, three major changes have been witnessed in quick succession. Beginning with the idea of a Local and Limited War, Chinese military doctrine has moved to Limited War under High Technological Conditions, and then to the current Informationised War. The changes in doctrine have shown the increased importance given to professionalism and technology during this journey. Its delineation of nature and types of warfare has become more nuanced and sophisticated. This fast-paced evolution has reflected changes in Party-Military relations, changing perceptions of the external threat in response to the changing international balance of power, and an enhanced appreciation of the importance of technology. During this period, changed Party-Military relations have occasioned greater disentanglement of the PLA from political affairs. External threat perceptions have reflected the international situation as accrued at the end of the Cold War, during the post-Cold War security optimism, and finally the belief in the comeback of the US as the principal perceived source of threat.

Local and Limited War

Local and Limited War was the second military doctrine propounded by Deng during his leadership. The year of the promulgation of the Local War doctrine is not certain. However, Godwin maintains that the Local and Limited War doctrine flows from the 1985 directive of the CMC, which required China not to prepare 'for an 'early, major, and nuclear war' with the USSR'. The doctrine expressed the view that 'the most likely form of conflict in the foreseeable future' was 'local limited war around China's borders'. Despite this directive, the perceived threat from the USSR continued to remain a theoretical scenario for

some more years to come.[125] Thus, it would be appropriate to discuss this as the doctrine that emerged around the mid-1980s.

Under the Local and Limited War doctrine, China's revised security assessment was much more complex and nuanced than the hitherto conventional ones. It was premised on the assumption that while the prevailing nuclear stalemate in the world would not allow large-scale wars, the unequal levels of technology could prompt the Great Powers into adventures to test new technologies in battle conditions. In this changed threat assessment, small-scale, local, and limited wars were a possibility. They were small, local, and limited in terms of geographical scope, political objectives as well as the financial costs involved. Civil-conflicts, territorial claims and ethnic tensions were recognised as the potential causes of such wars in a multi-polar world. Thus, the doctrine was a diversion from the large-scale conventional military conflict; instead it advocated gaining advantage and superiority in local, small, and limited wars over the adversary. However, the doctrine did not rule out the possibilities of medium scale wars, and argued that the army should work to gain relative superiority in them. This new doctrine saw this phase as being transitory as it also encourages the preparation for the large-scale wars that could take place in the 21st century. On the whole, the Chinese seemed to view small, limited, and local wars as political incidents, inviting international attention and intervention.

This doctrine visualised border conflicts, maritime territorial conflicts, 'surprise air attacks', fighting off an enemy's sudden limited thrust into the Chinese border, and retaliatory punitive attacks by China as the different types of military conflicts that China may have to handle. Separatist movements, arms build-up, and the proliferation of high tech weapons in the neighbourhood of China were also visualised as security concerns. Moreover, for the first time, the navy and the naval dimensions received significant attention in China's military doctrine in the Local and Limited War doctrine. Maritime territorial disputes and the possibilities of facing a naval blockade in the event of a conflict

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[125] Paul H.B. Godwin, 'Chinese Military Strategy Revised: Local and Limited War', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 519, January 1992, p. 192-93.

with Taiwan were considered a new security threat in the doctrine.[126] Thus, the doctrine visualised the nature of war and types of warfare that would be more probable in the coming periods.

Overall, the doctrine articulated a more realistic threat assessment in the light of changing geopolitical dynamics. Combined Arms Group Armies (CAGA) was the invention of the Local and Limited War doctrine. Paul Godwin traces the War Zone Independent Campaign concept of the 1990s (to be discussed separately) to CAGA.[127] However, the doctrine did not appear to be offering any long-term view about military affairs. In terms of identifying a strategic opponent, and visualising the main strategic direction and main form of operations, the doctrine was silent. One would say that this silence was perhaps in response to the assessment of the geopolitical situation in the world at the time which saw the waning of the perceived Soviet threat and the US was yet to make a comeback as a perceived threat. There was no identifiable major source of threat as such, and thus, the threat perception was quite diffused.

Limited War under High Technological Conditions

The Local and Limited War doctrine paved the way for a more sophisticated doctrine Limited War under High Technological Conditions. This doctrine may be attributed to President Jiang Zemin's leadership. This is the doctrine which in another form — the Informationised War doctrine — continues to be the official Chinese doctrine at present. The Limited War under High Technological Conditions doctrine marked a complete rupture from the Maoist military doctrine, and ushered the PLA into an era where science and technology were the main planks for military modernisation. The doctrine made a clear departure from the Mao's People's War doctrine.

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[126] Yao Yunzhu, 'The Evolution of Military Doctrine of the Chinese PLA from 1985 to 1995', *The Korean Journal of Defence Analysis*, 7(2), Winter 1995, pp. 69-71. An analysis of Limited War and Limited War under High Technology Conditions is available on pages 71-73.; Paul H.B. Godwin, no. 125, p.196.

[127] Paul H.B. Godwin, Ibid., p. 195.

Deng's first doctrine — People's War under Modern Conditions — was more of a compromise between Maoist orthodoxy and his own pragmatism which accepted the role of technology but downplayed science and technology as the framework for military modernisation, and upheld positional defence but essentially implemented the People's War technique of attrition. His second doctrine — Local and Limited War — did not appear to offer any long-term view about military affairs. It is to the credit of Jiang Zemin that he introduced a comprehensive military doctrine — Limited War under High Technological Conditions. Jiang's doctrine created a new paradigm in Chinese doctrinal thinking in its reflection of important developments in Party-Military relations, China's strategic threat assessment, its appreciation of technology, and the lessons learnt from international combat experiences.

The Doctrine

The 1993 MSG, issued at the CMC's enlarged meeting in January 1993, proved to be a radical departure point in Chinese doctrinal evolution. The PLA propagator was Zhang Wannian while Jiang Zemin gave political endorsement to this MSG. The CMC's enlarged meeting officially pronounced 'winning local war under high-technology conditions' as a strategic directive. Initially, the MSG apparently did not identify any particular enemy, or any geographical direction of the perceived threat. However, later, Taiwan and the US became China's strategic opponents in this MSG. Similarly, the East Coast became the geographical source of threat. The MSG visualised joint operations as the main form of operation that were directed for forward defence or the regional projection of power. In line with the new doctrine, Fourth Generation Combat Regulations were drafted and issued during 1995-99, and a series of campaign outlines were issued in 1999. The Training Programme directive was issued in 1995 and 2001. Organisationally, a major portion of the troops was reduced between 1997 and 2002.[128]

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[128]   M. Taylor Fravel, no. 1, pp. 24-28.

Jiang's statement that 'any future war would be a war involving high-technology, a war of multiple dimensions, a war of electronics, and a war of missiles, and that the PLA would have to be ready for such a reality',[129] captured the essence of the doctrine. The doctrine upheld the normative superiority of technology over men for the first time after 1949. The CMC had formally accepted this as a doctrine for fighting a war in high-technology conditions in 1992 — a year before the issuance of the MSG. This reinforces the view that the MSG should only be taken as an explanatory reference document. The doctrine was radical also in the sense that, for the first time, it explicitly included elements of offence as well as taking the war beyond Chinese territory.

Under the new doctrine, the war would be local, in which borders were to be seen as 'strategic frontiers', and 'victory' would be achieved 'through elite troops'. China would uphold strategic defence and will not start any war; however, if it sensed any hostile enemy movement, it would seize the 'initiative' and pre-empt the enemy by 'striking first'. Discarding the 'victory over superiority through inferiority' precept, the new doctrine would ensure 'victory over inferiority through superiority'. This meant abandoning the Maoist precept of relying on human will and numerical strength. The doctrine sought to establish the primacy of technology. Instead of long-drawn wars, local wars would be 'quick battles to force quick resolution'. Luring the enemy into the Chinese depths would be replaced with an 'in-depth strike' in enemy territory. The war would now involve fewer troops and more flexibility and camouflage, greater surprise, more air mobility, long-range raids, 'vertical encirclement', and 'surgical operations'. Precision-guided munitions, non-nuclear increase in lethality and destructive conventional arms and high use of advanced technology would be the essential features of small-scale and local wars.[130]

The new doctrine aims at a fusion of offensive and defensive modes of warfare as modern technology, highly mobile enemy attacks,

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[129] You Ji, 'The Revolution in Military Affairs and the Evolution of China's Strategic Thinking', *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 21 (3), December 1999: p. 353.

[130] Nan Li, no. 20, pp. 443-463.

precision, and the lethality of the long-range ballistic missiles (LRBM) have made static defence irrelevant. Incidentally, breaking through enemy lines; encircling or outflanking the enemy; and penetrating or infiltrating enemy lines, broadly constitutes offensive warfare, whereas holding territory by positional or mobile resistance is considered defensive warfare.

War Zone Campaign (WZC)

War Zone Campaign (WZC) is in the core of the Limited War under High Technological Conditions doctrine. On a geographical scale, the WZC lies between a CAGA campaign visualised under the Local and Limited War doctrine and 'partial or total national mobilisation' for a major war across various zones. Although the WZC can be traced to the 1980s, it developed fully in the 1990s. The Limited War under High Technological Conditions visualised wars on war zone levels which normally mean a military-region scale campaign. The WZC is different from CAGA not only in geographical terms but also in terms of the nature of war mobilisation. CAGA was an infantry-led campaign, mandating the coordination among various components of ground forces. On the other hand, the WZC combines all the elements of military power and is an ideal example of joint warfare. The WZC is not necessarily led by the infantry.

The national supreme command remains in charge of the affairs in the WZC; and there is not much difference between the campaign and the war objectives under it. The best forces equipped with 'high-tech arms and advanced C4I' participate in a WZC. The purpose of WZC is to allow a full play to PLA's 'pocket of excellence' which would remain under-used in CAGA operations. At the same time, the 'pocket of excellence' would spread too thin in a general war. The multi-dimensional war machinery required by a WZC entails a greater geographical expanse, and a considerably powerful adversary. The purpose is to concentrate all the best men and materials possessed by the PLA to overwhelm the enemy. The WZC employs Elite Forces and Sharp Arms (EFSA), deploys Rapid Action Units acting as 'indirect forward presence' to gain psychological advantage, focuses on Trans-regional Support Operations — technology-based mobility — for flexible mobility, and moves its best troops from any part of China to any other part. An 'in-depth strike' could be characterised as the core activity

on which the whole concept of the WZC rests. In an 'in-depth strike', the force would be multiplied by combining the various components of force, including tactical missiles, long-range artillery, as well as airlift capabilities that will enable the infantry to break through into enemy territory and destroy the enemy's capability in the 'in-depth' areas of the enemy.

The idea is to take the fight beyond forward lines, and carry out 'beyond-forward-position assault, or transcendent assault, and heli-borne assault' to blunt the enemy's counter-offensive capabilities. This mode of warfare requires automated command, control, communication and intelligence, electronic warfare capabilities, support and maintenance systems, and reserves. Light and high efficiency arms are suited for in-depth strikes in small wars whereas comprehensive strike capabilities — light and heavy arms — are required for an in-depth strike in medium-scale wars. Additionally, the new doctrine underscores that the preparation for small and limited military conflicts should be made by keeping the diversities of military regions in view, as limited military conflict is possible in any military region.[131]

This description of the WZC as the main form of operations highlights strategic intention, the objectives of battle, and the focus on technology under the Limited War under High Technological Conditions doctrine. The WZC clearly demonstrates radical evolution from the previous three versions of the Chinese military doctrine.

Informationised War Doctrine: The Revolution in Military Affairs

The Chinese discourse on Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) added another dimension to the Limited War under High Technological Conditions that produced the Informationised War doctrine in 2004. The 1991 Gulf War and NATO's intervention in Kosovo in 1999

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[131] Nan Li; 'The PLA's Evolving Campaign Doctrine and Strategies', in James C. Mulvenon and Richard H. Yang (eds.) *The People's Liberation Army in the Information Age*, RAND Corporation, 1999, pp. 146-174 at http://www.rand.org/pubs/conf_proceedings/CF145.html (Accessed January 19, 2013).

spurred discussions and writings on the revolution in military affairs, though the genesis of the RMA in China can be traced to the military writings in the 1980s.[132] The RMA is a holistic concept comprising social, economic, political and technological components with technology being one of components. However, since it was technology in the Iraq War that triggered Chinese thinking on RMA, the RMA appears technology-centric in the Chinese context. After presenting a broad-brush picture full of colourful, fancy and exotic jargons, the Informationised War doctrine has acquired coherent shape in the last decade, as seen in China's national defence White Papers and the Party Congress reports. Informationised War has come a long way since it was considered mainly an intellectual agenda. The White Papers and reports contain ample references regarding official thinking on the RMA and Informationised War.

The Informationised War Doctrine

The advent of the Informationised War doctrine is credited to the 2004 MSG, and was issued at the CMC enlarged meeting in June 2004 under the leadership of Jiang Zemin. The strategic directive of this doctrine was 'winning local wars under informationised conditions.' The doctrine visualised a forward defence/regional projection, keeping

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[132] For a comprehensive discussion on Informationized War and Chinese RMA, see Jacqueline Newmyer, 'The Revolution in Military Affairs with Chinese Characteristics', *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 33 (4), August 2010, pp. 483-504; Arthur S. Ding, 'China's Revolution in Military Affairs: An Uphill Endeavour', *Security Challenges*, 4 (4), Summer 2008, pp. 81-99; Magnus Hjortdal, 'China's Use of Cyber Warfare: Espionage Meets Strategic Deterrence', *Journal of Strategic Security*, 4 (2), 2011, pp. 1-24; Toshi Yoshihara, *Chinese Information Warfare: A Phantom Menace or Emerging Threat?*, Strategic Studies Institute (SSI), Carlisle (Pennsylvania), November 2001 at http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ssi/chininfo.pdf (Accessed February 12, 2013); June Teufel Dreyer, *The PLA and the Kosovo Conflict*, Strategic Studies Institute (SSI), Carlisle (Pennsylvania), May 2000 at http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lang=en&id=104603 (Accessed February 16, 2013); James Mulvenon, 'The PLA and Information Warfare', in James C. Mulvenon and Richard H. Yang, (eds.) *The People's Liberation Army in the Information Age*, RAND Corporation, 1999, pp. 175-186; You Ji, no. 129, pp. 344-364.

in view the strategic opponents Taiwan and the US. Thus, the geographical direction was the East Coast and the Western Pacific. Integrated Joint Operations were the main form of operations visualised. To meet the operational requirement of the doctrine, the Training Programme was issued in 2008. The drafting of the 5th Generation Combat Regulations has been underway since 2004.

The doctrine visualises a defensive war under the most difficult and complex circumstances, with confrontation between systems. It underlines integrated joint operations as the basic feature of the operations. Joint operations will bring 'the operational strengths of different services and arms into full play' and 'combine offensive operations with defensive operations'. They will 'make the best use of' 'strong points to attack the enemy's weak points.' It prescribes refinement of 'the command system for joint operations.' It advocates 'the joint training system and the joint support system' in sync with informationised joint operations. It calls for the optimisation of 'the structure and composition of forces, and the speeding up of 'the building of a combat force structure suitable for winning local wars in conditions of informationisation.'[133]

There is a legitimate question whether the Informationised War doctrine is really a new doctrine, or a refinement of the Limited Wars under

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[133] 'National Defence Policy', Chapter II, *White Paper on China's National Defense in 2008*, Information Office of the State Council (SCIO), China. The biennial defense White Papers are all available at http://eng.mod.gov.cn/Database/WhitePapers/index.htm (Accessed December 14, 2013).

The White Papers are normally published in the year after a two-year period under review. For example, the 2014 White Paper covered the year 2013 and 2014, but it was published in the year 2015. They are named after the last year of the period under review. For example, the 2014 White Paper (which covers 2013 and 2014) is known as the 2014 White Paper. In this monograph, the last year of the period under review has been mentioned for referencing purposes, not the year in which they were actually published. Besides, before the 2012 White Paper, the title of the White Papers was China's *National Defense*. Since 2012, the two White Papers have different titles. The title of the 2012 White Paper is *The Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces*, and the title of the 2014 White Paper is *China's Military Strategy*.

High Technological Conditions doctrine. Although the focus on computer networks and the discourse built around them is definitely a novelty, the doctrine essentially carries forward the normative agenda set by the previous doctrine. Nevertheless, the Informationised War doctrine has made the previous doctrine more coherent by giving it a clear direction. Its success lies in providing a clear doctrinal objective, and a common language for the modernisation of the PLA.

War Visualisation

War visualisation under the Informationised War doctrine is cyber space-centric. It would not be an exaggeration to argue that the Informationised War emphasises cyber space in the same spirited manner the way the Maoist People's War emphasised on man and territory.

There are three possible uses of the word 'information' in Informationised War which also produces six types of warfare. First, at the broadest level, 'information' means knowledge of the adversary's social, political and economic structure; secondly, in a narrower sense, it denotes precise knowledge, in the espionage sense, of the physical location of the enemy's assets, and his command and control structure; thirdly, at the narrowest level, it simply pertains to the enemy's cyber space. These three types of information constitute the six types of information warfare: propaganda war; the physical destruction of the enemy's material or human assets through long-range precision strikes; creating military deception; Electronic Warfare (EW); computer network warfare; and hacking into enemy's cyber world.[134]

Information in terms of cyberspace has the highest prominence in the Chinese discourse on Informationised War, though high-end precision remote strike technologies are also equally important. The basic understanding in computer network warfare is that governance in the world is becoming digitised by the day. Breaking into the enemy's

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[134] Toshi Yoshihara, no. 132, pp. 15-18. See, James Mulvenon, no. 132, pp. 175-186. Mulvenon provides good insights into the conceptual and definitional aspects of Informationised War (see pp. 180-184).

digitised governance system and paralysing it when strategic exigency demands, is technologically possible. For example, by hacking into the enemy's computer networks, orders can be prevented from reaching lower levels by jamming communication systems; or the enemy's power generation and supply can be thrown out of gear. It is obvious that this doctrine is very offensive when employed.[135] The assumption behind the physical annihilation of the enemy's command and control system is that the annihilation will bring about the collapse of the enemy's war-fighting machine at once, thus bringing about a quick resolution to the war. This assumption is the basis of 'surgical removal', 'selective attacks', and 'precision raids' by missiles or other superior electronic weapons operations.[136]

Thus, the Informationised War doctrine basically aims at, 'acquiring the capacity to inflict significant costs on an adversary, even a conventionally superior one, through a variety of means from targeting space assets and electro-magnetic pulse attacks to strikes on aircraft carriers and even civilian computer networks'.[137]

The literature on RMA and Informationised War is replete with jargon like 'potential energy', 'warfare engineering', 'paralysis combat', 'assassin's mace', and 'invisible forces' The essence of these phrases is to develop joint and integrated military operation capabilities, and 'key-point', 'non-contact', secrete strike capabilities. Informationised War visualises war in all dimensions: that is, ground, sea, air, space, and electronics. C4ISR — that stands for command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance — is the essence of the Informationised War. Technologies like 'high-resolution photography in surveillance satellites', cutting-edge satellites, 'combined air-ground Early Warning Systems (EWS) for guided missiles', 'infra-red detection

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[135] Besides Toshi Yoshihara's monograph, the author has drawn on Magnus Hjortdal's 'China's Use of Cyber Warfare: Espionage Meets Strategic Deterrence' (no.132), on Chinese cyber warfare. This is an important read on the subject discussed in this section of this monograph.

[136] For fighting methods in Informationised War, see, Jacqueline Newmyer, no. 132, p. 498.

[137] Ibid., p. 501.

systems', 'deep strike surveillance and control planes', 'unmanned reconnaissance planes', 'clearer imagery', 'increase in information transmission speed', 'higher storage density', 'miniaturised photo-electronic devices and systems', and 'fusion of microwave technologies with photo-electronics', as well as 'airborne and space-based synthetic aperture radar' form the essentials of Informationised War. These are basically internet, remote sensing, and reconnaissance technologies.[138]

Underlying Assumptions of Informationised War

What is it that makes Chinese military and military thinkers so convinced about the Informationised War doctrine? One could answer this question by saying that the Chinese are convinced that it is information that determines International Relations (IRs), and also the outcome of war. The word 'information' is ubiquitous in the discourse on Informationised war which considers information as the key to winning a modern war. In their understanding, only a state with an unrestricted inflow of information as well as the ability to restrict the outflow of information can win a modern war. The assumption is that gathering precise and complete information is possible; and, that once you have the correct information, you can win the war without fighting since when the adversary realises that you know all about him, he will lose the war even before fighting it. This was an appealing precept articulated by Sun Tzu.[139]

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[138] 'Potential energy' indicates high-tech capabilities; 'warfare engineering' means 'simulations and other peacetime activities to determine conflict outcomes'; 'paralysis combat' stands for 'key-point' strikes to 'paralyse the enemy'; 'assassin's mace' alludes to secret weapons or operations; and 'invisible forces' are high-end surveillance and reconnaissance type non-combat military technologies. Jacqueline Newmyer, no. 132, p. 489.

[139] For nuclear deterrence to information deterrence, see Jacqueline Newmyer, Ibid., pp. 488-490. Asymmetric precepts of Informationized War aiming at subduing enemy without aiming for his annihilation, or winning the war without fighting represents essentially a non-Western paradigm of strategic thinking. For this postulation, see, Jacqueline Newmyer, Ibid., pp. 490-494; Edward Sobiesk, 'Redefining the Role of the Information Warfare in Chinese Strategy', SANS Institute Paper, March 2003, pp. 7-10, at http://www.sans.org/reading_room/whitepapers/warfare/redefining-role-information-warfare-chinese-strategy_896 (Accessed December 19, 2013).

Rightly or wrongly, China is convinced that digitised governance is the Achilles' heel of the developed and militarily advanced countries. This is where China, which is still relatively weak in terms of military technology, can score over the West. The sense of vulnerability and the perceived parity in cyber technologies proposes an 'asymmetric war', which aims to undercut the adversary's strength by striking at its weakest points. Chinese military thinkers tend to believe that information technology is affordable, and that the US and the other Western countries do not enjoy a one-sided superiority in this field.[140] Incidentally, the Informationised War doctrine is the first Chinese military doctrine that emulates the *enemy*: the US and its Western allies. Scholars highlight the fact that Chinese writings on revolution in military affairs and on Informationised War draw heavily on American writings.[141]

The RMA and Informationised War Doctrine in the Defence White Papers

The Chinese Defense White Papers provide a fairly detailed exposition that reveals what the Chinese mean by Informationised War. They underline the RMA as synonym of informationisation which stands for advanced computer, information, and electronic technologies.

The 2004 White Paper argued 'gaining worldwide momentum' to describe the transition 'from mechanisation to informationalisation' as a defining feature of contemporary war fighting capabilities. It visualized contemporary war as 'a confrontation between systems' in which 'asymmetrical, non-contiguous and non-linear operations' were the main operational forms. It categorized the world between the countries which

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[140] Toshi Yoshihara discusses the motivations behind the Chinese RMA at length (no.132, pp.9-14). However, the asymmetric nature of Informationized Warfare is a standard theme in the literature.

[141] To find corroboration about the US as a concern in the Chinese RMA, see Edward Sobiesk, no. 139, pp. 4-5. Incidentally, in the beginning, there were aspersions that the Chinese reliance on American writings is deliberate obfuscation to hide China's own understanding, intentions and capability for waging an information war. However, the Machiavellian orchestration on such a scale is not possible in today's China where publishing is not under the complete control of the state. See, Jacqueline Newmyer, no. 132, pp. 485-487.

possessed high-tech weaponry and military equipment as well as the matching informationalised military doctrine, and the countries which were still passing through the mechanisation and semi-mechanisation phase.[142] Identifying China with the second category, the 2004 White Paper declared informationalisation as the strategic focus of China's military modernisation.

The 2004 White Paper also revealed that the PLA had been 'pushing forward informationalisation in the field of military operations, focusing on command automation' for the previous two decades, and it was 'actively engaged in the research and practice of informationalisation'. It also placed on record that 'computers and other IT equipment' had been 'gradually introduced into routine operations'. The PLA had upgraded operational information support. Its main battle systems were increasingly equipped with IT elements. It also declared that informationalisation of 'military information systems' and 'informationalised main battle weapon systems' were to be the mainstay of the military modernisation, with combat efficiency being the major criteria. Besides, it underlined the focus on 'system interoperability and information-sharing capability' as well as civil-military integration at research and production levels.[143] It informed about the promulgation of the Guidelines for the Development of Automated Command Systems of the Chinese PLA, and the Regulations of the Chinese People's Liberation Army on Strategic Automated Command and Control System (SACCS) by the CMC.

The 2008 White Paper articulated the PLA mission to 'lay a solid foundation' for mechanisation and informationisation by 2010, 'accomplish mechanisation and make major progress in informationisation by 2020', and almost complete the informationisation based modernisation 'by the mid 21st century.'[144] 'New and high-tech

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[142] 'The Security Situation', Chapter I, *White Paper on China's National Defense, 2004*, Information Office of the State Council (SCIO), China at http://eng.mod.gov.cn/Database/WhitePapers/index.htm (Accessed December 13, 2013).

[143] 'Revolution in Military Affairs with Chinese Characteristics', Chapter III, no. 142.

[144] 'National Defence Policy', Chapter II, no. 133.

weaponry and equipment', 'training talented people', 'military training in conditions of informationisation', and a modern logistics system were the requirements for achieving informationisation.[145]

The 2010 White Paper listed China's achievements, reporting that 'the total length of the national defence optical fibre communication network' had 'increased by a large margin, forming a new generation information transmission network with optical fiber communication as the mainstay, and satellite and short-wave communications as assistance.' It reported that the building of information systems for reconnaissance and intelligence, command and control, and battlefield environment awareness had witnessed considerable progress. Logistics and equipment support too had been informationised considerably. Interoperability among command and control systems, combat forces, and support systems had achieved basic successes that had made 'order transmission, intelligence distribution, command and guidance more efficient and rapid.' The 2010 White Paper expressed satisfaction about the pace and progress of 'the training of commanding officers for joint operations, the management personnel for informationisation, personnel specialised in information technology, and personnel for the operation and maintenance of new equipment.'[146]

The 2012 White Paper reports about the PLA raising 'the level of routine combat readiness, intensifying scenario-oriented exercises and drills', conducting 'well-organised border, coastal and territorial air patrols and duties for combat readiness', and learning to 'handle appropriately various crises and major emergencies.'[147] Thus, the focus of the Chinese RMA is unmistakably on high-end computer and electronic technology.[148]

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[145] 'National Defence Policy', Chapter II, no. 133.

[146] 'National Defence Policy', Chapter II, *White Paper on China's National Defense 2010*, Information Office of the State Council (SCIO), China at http://eng.mod.gov.cn/Database/WhitePapers/index.htm (Accessed December 13, 2013).

[147] 'National Defence Policy', Chapter II, *White Paper on the Diversified Employment of China's Armed Forces*, 2012, Information Office of the State Council (SCIO), at China http://eng.mod.gov.cn/Database/WhitePapers/index.htm (Accessed December 13, 2013).

[148] The kind of absolute mastery over information flow this doctrine envisages is hard to achieve. It is also suggested that the Chinese are over-reading into

The Major Differences between Joint Operations and Integrated Joint Operations

	Actor/	Service Structure /Identities	Coordination Boundaries	Levels	Depth	Time	Effects
JO	Individual Service, vertical and tall	Clear	Plan-based	Campaign level	Limited depth	Limited times	Units
IJO	Networked system, flat and short	Blurred	Action-based	All levels	All depth	All times	System

Source: Nan Li, 'New Developments in PLAs Operational Doctrine and Strategies', p. 9 (The essay by Nan Li is accessible through google search by title).

PLA's New Historic Missions: Non-Traditional Security in Military Strategy

The PLA's New Historic Missions bring non-traditional security concerns in China's military strategic framework. New Historic Missions for the PLA is the legacy of Hu Jintao. Hu assumed the leadership of the Party and the State in 2002. He provided the overarching theoretical guidance for Scientific Development for 'defence construction and army building' in 2002 in the 16th Party Congress. The concept of

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the events of the 1991 Gulf War and the Kosovo War. Besides, this doctrine that seeks to paralyse a nation by large-scale technological intrusion is highly provocative and escalatory, and invites colossal pre-emptive retaliation when employed offensively. The assumption that this doctrine can work independent of overall conventional military superiority is also erroneous. This doctrine can sustain with support of overall conventional military superiority that can guarantee against escalation. Moreover, it does not address China's equal vulnerability in information warfare. When all is said and done, there is no surety about China's capability for information warfare. For a critical assessment of Chinese capabilities regarding informationised war, see Toshi Yoshihara, no. 132, pp. 29-34; For the reference regarding possible over-reading into the Gulf War and other limitations, see, James Mulvenon, no. 132, pp. 177-78, 184-85.

New Historic Missions, which he articulated in 2004 after becoming the CMC chairman, was implementing overarching theoretical guidance. The New Historic Missions underscore 'three provides, and one role':

1. Providing an important guarantee of strength for the Party to consolidate its ruling position;

2. Providing a strong security guarantee for safeguarding the period of important strategic opportunity for national development;

3. Providing powerful strategic support for safeguarding national interests;

4. Playing an important role in safeguarding world peace and promoting common development.[149]

These ideas, reportedly, were first officially published in the 2006 Defense White Paper. The same White Paper underscores the diversity of military tasks the PLA was supposed to undertake:

> It improves its capabilities of countering various security threats, accomplishes diversified military tasks, and ensures that it can effectively respond to crises, maintain peace, deter and win wars under complex circumstances.

The 17th Party Congress ratified the New Historic Missions in 2007 as also the diversified military tasks.[150]

> For the armed forces to fully carry out the historical missions assigned by the Party and the people at this new stage in the new century, we must always follow the guidance of Mao Zedong's military thinking, Deng Xiaoping's thinking on building the armed forces in the new period and Jiang Zemin's thinking on building national defense and the armed forces, and take the Scientific Outlook on Development as an important guiding principle for strengthening national defence and the armed forces. We must implement the military strategy for the new period, accelerate

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[149] James Mulvenon, 'Chairman Hu and the PLA's "New Historic Missions"', *China Leadership Monitor*, (27), p. 2 at http://media.hoover.org/sites/default/files/documents/CLM27JM.pdf (Accessed January 3, 2014) .

[150] James Mulvenon, no. 149, pp. 1-2 and 7-8.

the revolution in military affairs with Chinese characteristics, ensure military preparedness, and enhance the military's capability to respond to various security threats and accomplish diverse military tasks. We are determined to safeguard China's sovereignty, security and territorial integrity and help maintain world peace (emphasis added).[151]

China's Defence White Paper (2012) defines and identifies Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) as follows:

Formulating the concept of comprehensive security and effectively conducting MOOTW. China's armed forces adapt themselves to the new changes of security threats, and emphasise the employment of armed forces in peacetime. They actively participate in and assist China's economic and social development, and resolutely accomplish urgent, difficult, hazardous, and arduous tasks involving emergency rescue and disaster relief. As stipulated by law, they perform their duties of maintaining national security and stability, steadfastly subduing subversive and sabotage attempts by hostile forces, cracking down on violent and terrorist activities, and accomplishing security-provision and guarding tasks. In addition, they strengthen overseas operational capabilities such as emergency response and rescue, merchant vessel protection at sea and evacuation of Chinese nationals, and provide reliable security support for China's interests overseas.[152]

New Historic Missions as such do not amount to military doctrine as they neither visualise a war scenario nor offer principles to conduct any particular type of warfare. They indicate a broad range of activities the PLA has to undertake in the 21st century. Military Operations Other than War, a subset of New Historical Missions, are all about humanitarian activities like disaster management, evacuation, relief and rescue, aid and assisting the civil administration, anti-piracy missions in the Gulf

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[151] *Report to the Seventeenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China*, 2007, Beijing, at http://www.china.org.cn/english/congress/229611.htm (Accessed January 3, 2014).

[152] 'New Situation, New Challenges and New Missions', Chapter I, no. 147.

of Aden, UN peacekeeping and sending medical ships (like *Peace Arc*) on medical tours of duty. All of these activities are in the domain of non-traditional security and soft-power creation, or military diplomacy.

However, this evolution is indeed contributing to the PLA's capabilities and experiences as seen in the PLA's naval task forces to the Gulf of Aden since 2008, PLAAF's evacuation of the Chinese nationals from Libya in 2011 and building capacities for UN Peacekeeping[153]. Besides, what is to be emphasised is that New Historic Missions are playing a significant role in China's military training as is evident in the various military exercises in which the focus on civil-military logistic integration has been very pronounced. China's White Paper on Military Strategy, 2014 further refines and advances this concept. It provides a framework for protection of a full spectrum of China's non-traditional security interests — a theme to be discussed separately.

Factors Shaping Doctrinal Evolution Since the Mid-1980s

The doctrinal evolution since the 1980s mirrors the changes in domestic politics and Party-Military relations in China. It underlines that the increased professionalism in China's military doctrine was a result of the decisive victory of Deng's liberal leadership which emphasized the military's non-political functions — something quite opposed to the earlier Maoist politicisation of the military. Later, Jiang Zemin carried forward Deng's mantle. At the same time, the doctrinal evolution has responded to the international political and military situation, the emergence of the US as the sole super- power, with the Gulf Wars, the Kosovo War, and the US operations in Afghanistan being the main military episodes.

Party-Military Relations

As has been discussed, Deng's first military doctrine in late 1970s — the People's War under Modern Conditions — appeared to be striking a balance between Maoist politics and pure military affairs. This was the time when Deng was still sharing power with the Party Chairman

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[153] For China and UN Peacekeeping see, Prashant Kumar Singh, 'China's Military Diplomacy: Investigating its Participation in UN Peacekeeping', *Strategic Analysis*, 35 (5), September 2011, pp. 793-818.

and Premier Hua Guofeng. Mao had designated Hua as his successor. After Hua, he had to share power with Hu Yaobang for some time. He could take power under his grip only by the mid-1980s. The new doctrine in the mid-1980s — the Local and Limited War — reflected his ascendency. After the People's War under Modern Conditions, it signified a further separation from Maoist politics. As the preceding discussion on Local and Limited War shows, it overcame the need to strike a balance between Maoist politics and pure military affairs. It appeared more concerned with geopolitical and military analysis than any domestic political compulsions, or the need to pay lip service to Mao and his thought.

Later, in the 1990s, Jiang Zemin completed the process of PLA's separation from politics that Deng had begun. He decisively tilted the process towards professionalism and modernisation. During his Presidency and the Party Chairmanship, the General Political Department (GPD), responsible for political education, became confined to activities such as family welfare; the institutional interaction with the army was reduced to the CMC; the PLA was allowed to express its views on lesser number of political issues; the political eligibility for promotions was diluted; the People's Armed Police was created for internal security; the process of enacting rules and regulations for the PLA began; and, more importantly, China's National People's Congress (NPC) passed the landmark National Defence Law in 1997 which seemed to be bringing the PLA away from under the authority of the Party and placing it under the State.[154] His successes are believed to be the result of 'an implicit bargain' he struck with the PLA. As he belonged to the post-revolution leadership generation, was without a glorious political and military past, was conscious of the military's importance for consolidating power amidst factional politics, Jiang went into overdrive to win over the military generals. Following the bargain, he endorsed the PLA's longstanding demand of weapons modernisation, and granted the necessary political and budgetary support for this

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[154] Ellis Joffe, 'The Military and China's New Politics: Trends and Counter-trends', in James C. Mulvenon and Richard H. Yang (eds.) no. 132; David Shambaugh, 'Civil-Military Relations in China: Party-Army or National Military?' *Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies*, 16, 2002, p. 19-20.

modernisation. In return, he received an assurance that the PLA would uphold his and the Party's authority.[155]

This bargain advanced the cause of professionalism. The army reiterated its loyalty to the Party by becoming more depoliticised; it gradually became disinterested in non-military issues, and focussed on 'army building'. This grand bargain ushered the PLA into an era of military and Party separation and technological modernisation — a trend that describes the present conditions, and continues. Thus, to a great extent, professionalism and a technology-oriented military doctrine was the result of the changed Party-Military relationship in the post-Mao era.

Strategic Threat Assessment

As has been noted, the Local and Limited War doctrine in the mid-1980s did not have a clearly identified strategic opponent and direction. Although it explained the nature of threats, it did not offer nuanced types of warfare. This deficiency in the doctrine was partly because of China's strategic threat assessment which was based on its reading of the international balance of power in that period. A new emerging understanding of the international situation changed China's threat assessment too. In the Chinese view, in the early 1980s, the two superpowers were showing signs of weariness, and the world was moving towards multi-polarity, though the US still had the edge and would maintain it.[156] Simultaneously, the Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's famous speech at Vladivostok in 1986 facilitated a rapprochement between the USSR and China, thus signalling the end of the perception of a possible Soviet attack on China.[157] Consequently, any large-scale invasion of China was ruled out. Also, a major war was not seen as a possibility. Thus, the mid-1980s offered the best security

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[155] David Shambaugh, no.154.

[156] Yao Yunzhu, no. 126, pp. 57-68; Paul H.B. Godwin, no. 125, pp. 193-195. This article by Godwin, along with his 'Changing Concepts of Doctrine, Strategy and Operations in the Chinese Peoples' Liberation Army 1978-87', are important doctrinal analyses of this period.

[157] Dimitri K. Simes, 'Gorbachev: A New Foreign Policy?' *Foreign Affairs*, March 2015 at http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/41714/dimitri-k-simes/gorbachev-a-new-foreign-policy (Accessed July 2, 2015).

scenario for China till then. Accordingly, security challenges in an emerging multi-polar world were to be different from those of a bipolar one.

However, China's strategic threat perception began changing once again after the end of the Cold War. On the one hand, the disintegration of the USSR in 1991 ended any possibility of a large-scale invasion of China; and on the other, the American show of military technology in the Gulf War of 1991 stunned China. The Gulf War came as a rude reminder about how much military technology had advanced. The two events shaped the evolution from the Local and Limited War doctrine to the Limited War under High Technological Conditions doctrine. With limited wars as the only focus, high technology provided a new and complete framework in the doctrine. Also, at this time, China could afford the technology because of its growing economic resources and global integration.

China's strategic threat assessment evolved through the decades between 1990 and 2000s. The threat assessment during this period displayed divergent strands. The prevalence of relative peace and order in the world, the success of China's One-China policy, and the measured reaction of its immediate neighbours (like India and the ASEAN countries that China had mistrusted) to the 1989 Tiananmen Square episode, ensured its positive identification with the world. China joined various international bodies and multilateral organisations during this period. China also started, though mainly in the 2000s, cooperation with foreign militaries. Its strategic threat assessment in the early 1990s was that the large-scale wars would be unlikely in a multi-polar world, but there was a high probability of limited wars for local reasons. The 'trigger happy' US and its allies may disrupt world peace from time to time. The strong US reaction to the Tiananmen Square episode and the subsequent sanctions imposed on China; its criticism of China's human rights record; its continuing support for Taiwan (especially during the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis in which the US sent two aircraft carriers to Taiwan Strait); the Tibet issue; the trade war between the two countries, and anti-China voices in US domestic politics raised concerns in China. China's strategic interpretation of the Gulf Wars was that the world, supposedly marked by 'peace and development', was not really very peaceful. Instead, the war against Iraq was seen as a warning to

the so-called Axis of Evil nations (Iraq, Iran and North Korea) and close competitors not to challenge American leadership and dominance.'[158]

This threat assessment underlined the US becoming the principal strategic opponent, and the East Coast becoming the principal strategic direction. The threat perception also identified the Taiwan Contingency as the likely strategic threat.

Technology and US-NATO Combat Experiences

China's reading of the military engagement in the 1990s and the 2000s by the US and its NATO allies contributed to the Chinese military doctrine in two ways. On the one hand, it contributed to the perceived gravity of China's strategic threat assessment and on the other, it demonstrated the superiority and domination of technology in contemporary warfare. The 1991 Gulf War (also known as Operation Desert Storm) has been considered as a watershed event in this regard. After this war, China woke up to the possibilities of high-technology limited wars, and the war worked as a catalytic inspiration for defining the Chinese military doctrine in terms of technology.[159]

The mesmerising display of superior technology in the two Gulf Wars (1991 and 2003), the NATO intervention in Kosovo in 1999, and the US/NATO intervention in Afghanistan in 2001 have, undoubtedly, collectively contributed to China's doctrinal evolution. In the Chinese view, the two Gulf Wars, and particularly the intervention in Kosovo, demonstrated the 'trigger-happy' character of the US (China had its own take on the US sending aircraft carriers to support Taiwan during the Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1996). The strategic conclusions about technology and war were that technology had fundamentally

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[158] The author draws this section from his doctoral thesis titled 'Multilateralism and China's Security Concerns in post-Cold War Era: The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the ASEAN Regional Forum', wherein he has underscored these phases while studying China's involvement in multilateral organisations. The thesis was submitted at CEAS/SIS/JNU New Delhi in 2009.

[159] Nan Li, no. 20, pp. 456-58.

transformed war into a high-technology war; that modern war was a supremely integrated war in which various facets of military power work in tandem, and that the acquisition of high military technology involves staggering expenditure.

Operational Lessons Drawn from the US-NATO Combats

The reading of US/NATO combat experiences has greatly shaped Limited War under High Technological Conditions as well as its later version, the Informationised War doctrine. The takeaway of this reading has been the use of high-end electronics producing non-contact long-range weapons, as well as information technology in war. The aforementioned WZC gives a glimpse of the influence of this reading of the technological dimensions of these wars. The precise and accumulated operational lessons the Chinese drew from these wars can be summed up as follows: that the PLA would have to take care of 'three attacks, three defends'. This meant that China has to fight against 'cruise missiles, stealth aircraft, and attack helicopters', and defend against 'precision strike, electronic interference, and enemy surveillance and reconnaissance'.

The PLA emphasized that precision and information technology facilitated attacks that were 'well-timed' and 'well-coordinated'. 'Non-contact' brought victory to the US and NATO in the 1991 Gulf War as well as the Kosovo War in 1999. The oft-quoted 'short arms and slow legs' — probably indicating the lack of long-range strike and speedy mobilising capabilities — best captures the Chinese realisation regarding its technological limitations in the period after the first Gulf War. The PLA closely followed the US's destruction of the Iraqi command, control, communications, and intelligence systems ('decapitation principle'). The PLA was impressed by precision-guided munitions and the use of space technology in the wars. The Second Gulf War reinforced Chinese learning of the previous Gulf War and the Kosovo war. However, the extensive use of computer networks in the Second Gulf War drew even greater Chinese attention. Despite some unverifiable Chinese observations that the US had jammed Saddam Hussein's computer networks which made Iraq's defence

untenable, the impact of these wars on the PLA is undeniable. These wars ignited China's interest in revolutionising its military.[160]

The Chinese Reading of the US Operations in Afghanistan

The US's operations in Afghanistan have provided significant lessons to the PLA. They have yet again underscored the importance of the following: manoeuvring from the air; the importance of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) in precision attack; the role of information technology in joint operations; the effective employment of small-sized forces; and space technology's direct impact on the battlefield. The operations have highlighted the effective use of helicopters for logistical purposes. From 2006 onwards, the PLA's focus has been on developing a rapid and mobile air logistics. The PLA's air power is focussing on both the support as well as combat roles.

The PLA is particularly interested in acquiring UAS for ISR operations. Probably for the first time, in late 2005, the PLA started experimenting with UASs. The experiments were reported to be quite successful technologically, but were not yet combat-ready. China has used them for surveying large areas during natural disasters on a trial basis. Moreover, the US's ability to launch combined firepower from sea, ground, and air by using the Global Positioning System (GPS) has tremendously impressed the PLA. As a consequence, even small ground-level units are being equipped with this technology. The PLA is even more impressed by US's ability to hit very 'small targets in both rural and urban areas' without inflicting much collateral damage. Besides, the PLA has noted the role of close air-support in US ground operations in Afghanistan.[161]

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[160] Paul H. Godwin, 'From Continent to Periphery: PLA Doctrine, Strategy and Capabilities towards 2000', *The China Quarterly*, (146), June 1996, pp. 464-487; Dean Cheng, 'Chinese Lessons from the Gulf Wars', pp. 153-199 in Andrew Scobell, David Lai and Roy Kamphausen (eds.), *Chinese Lessons from Other People's Wars*, Strategic Studies Institute (SSI), Carlisle (Pennsylvania), 2011 at http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lang=en&id=142555 (Accessed February 18, 2013).

[161] Martin Andrew, 'The Influence of U.S. Counterinsurgency Operations in Afghanistan on the People's Liberation Army', in Andrew Scobell, David Lai, Roy Kamphausen (eds.), no. 160, p. 248

In other words, China is designing its force structure to implement these lessons as observed in its Peace Mission military exercises. The battle group that participated in Peace Mission 2007 — a Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) military exercise under the leadership of Russia and China — consisted of the following: 'a light (wheeled) mechanised infantry battalion (40 Type-92 wheeled infantry fighting vehicles)'; 'two companies of 18 PTL02 assault guns'; 'one battalion of 16 Z-9W attack helicopters (some with an under-nose turret mounting a laser range-finder/designator and thermal imager); 'one battalion of 16 Mi-17 transport helicopters (each capable of carrying up to six 57 millimetre rocket pods containing 32 rockets each); as well as 'one company of 12 ZBD05 airborne combat vehicles mounting a 30X165mm automatic cannon and a co-axial 5.8x42 mm machine gun capable of carrying four soldiers in the rear.' These technologies and the emerging force structure are at the forefront of military developments in China.[162]

Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD): A Digression

In contemporary Chinese military literature, the phrase Anti-Access/ Area Denial (A2/AD) appears recurrently. Occasionally, this might give impression that A2/AD is a Chinese strategy or doctrine. However, it should not be confused with Chinese doctrine. This is essentially an American term/concept, which is employed to analyse American capabilities in the face of the adversary's A2/AD capabilities. The underlying concern of the discussions about this term is how to maintain America's access capabilities to reach the centre of action. In recent times, American defence and strategic literature have extensively focussed on Chinese A2/AD capabilities. The PLA's Active Strategic Counterattacks on Exterior Lines (ASCEL) flowing from 'active offshore defence' comes close to American A2/AD.[163]

When employed to understand Chinese defence strategy, A2/AD studies those Chinese strategy and tactics and, more importantly, the capabilities

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[162] Martin Andrew, no.161, pp. 250.

[163] See Anton Lee Wishik II, 'An Anti-Access Approximation: The PLA's Active Strategic Counterattacks on Exterior Lines', *China Security*, (19), 2011, World Security Institute, pp. 37-48. This article locates A2/AD in Chinese writings on ASCEL.

which China will deploy to delay any American approach to Taiwan Strait in a Taiwan contingency. Thus, this is an important counter-intervention component in China's deterrence strategy. Under the A2/AD interpretation of Chinese capabilities, the asymmetric nature of Chinese strategy and tactics — 'reliant upon long-range strike capabilities' and 'directed at the United States' overseas military bases and major weapons' — is underscored. Under A2/AD, China is understood to implement strategic principles, such as 'avoiding a direct confrontation with superior military', 'seizing the initiative early', 'achieving military surprise', 'key-point strikes', concentrated attacks, and 'achieving information superiority'. These principles are not too unfamiliar in Chinese defence strategy. They are there in the WZC both in the Limited War under High Technological Conditions doctrine, as well as the Informationised War doctrine.

A number of studies on the Gulf War I by the Chinese have already underlined many of these strategic principles. The Chinese are of the view that Iraq lost a precious time-window by not striking first when Western forces were assembling in the Gulf for its invasion. In any Taiwan contingency, China wants to exploit this time-window. Secondly, Chinese A2/AD strategy appears to implement the tactics of 'paralysis combat', 'assassin's mace' and 'invisible forces' from the Informationised War doctrine. The strategy relies heavily on electronic and satellite surveillance technologies, an important component in the Informationised War doctrine. The weapons used in this strategy are understandably Anti-Ship Ballistic Missiles (ASBM) and other advanced missile, submarine, and mine-warfare technology.[164]

As of now, the objective of the perceived Chinese A2/AD is to hold back American forces in any Taiwan contingency until the PLA troops land in Taiwan and build defences. The battle objectives are to harass American troops by delaying their access to the centre of the action by carrying out operations such as:

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[164] Roger Cliff, 'Anti-Access Measures in Chinese Defense Strategy', Testimony presented before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission on January 27, 2011, CT"354, RAND Corporation, pp. 3-5 at *www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/testimonies/…/RAND_CT354.pdf* (Accessed September 23, 2013).

'Attacks on (their) systems and facilities used to transport, supply, and repair and maintain forces in the theatre'

Attacks on (their) systems used to collect, process, and disseminate information for forces in the theatre';

'Damaging or destroying (their) air bases and aircraft carriers' thus preventing '(the US) combat aircraft from contributing to combat operations within the theatre';

Attacks on US 'runways, aircraft parked in the open, command-and-control systems, fuel and ammunition supplies, air crews, and support facilities and personnel';

'Neutralising [US] aircraft carriers' as they are 'vulnerable while redeploying, transiting narrow waterways, when undergoing resupply, and when the weather is bad'.

Sinking US aircraft carriers is not the only target. Damaging its runway and interdicting their supply would also equally serve the objective to delay US access to the Taiwan Strait.[165]

The essence is to hit men and other infrastructure, and to send the war machinery out of action. This is to be achieved by employing 'anti-satellite weapons, ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, aircraft with long-range Air-to-Air Missiles (AAM), stealth aircraft, computer network operations, Electro Magnetic Pulse (EMP) weapons', as well as other various innovative methods.[166]

Thus, as of now, these capabilities have a defensive or deterrence purpose only. Besides, as they are still in a nascent stage, their quality and effectiveness in a large-scale confrontation is uncertain on account of the absence of operational experience.[167] However, considering the investment China has made in developing these capabilities, they cannot be dismissed.

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[165] Roger Cliff, no. 164, p. 5.

[166] Roger Cliff, Ibid., pp. 5-7.

[167] Major Christopher J. McCarthy, 'Anti-Access/Area Denial: The Evolution of Modern Warfare', pp.8-9 at http://www.usnwc.edu/Lucent/ OpenPdf.aspx?id=95&title=The%20Global%20System%20in%20Transition (Accessed December 9, 2014).

The Evolution of the PLA's Military Doctrine

Periods	Scale	Length	Posture	Dynamics	Manpower/Technology	Arms/Services
Pre-1979: People's War	Early, Total, Nuclear War	Protracted	Defence Dominant	Mobile, 'lure enemy in deep'	Manpower-intensive, 'inferior fighting superior'	Combination of regular, local and militia
Post-1979: People's War under Modern Conditions	Major, total war	Less protracted	Defence Dominant	Positional defence of borders and cities	Less Manpower-intensive	Combined arms (infantry, armour, artillery, engineering etc.)
Post-1985: Local War under Modern Conditions	Local War	'Quick Battle, Quick Resolution'	Offence: 'Gain Initiative by striking first'	Mobile forward deployment	'Elite forces and sharp arms'	Combined arms Joint services operations (ground, naval, air, missile services)
Post-1996: Local War under High-tech Conditions	War Zone Campaign	'Quick Battle, Quick Resolution'	Offense Dominant	Mobile forward deployment	Mechanised 'elite forces and sharp arms,' 'local and temporary superiority'	Integrated joint operations
Post-2002: Local War under Information Conditions	Campaign and Battle	'Quick Battle, Quick Resolution'	Offense Dominant	Mobile, power projection	Mechanised and informationised 'elite forces and sharp arms'	

Source: Nan Li, 'New Developments in PLAs Operational Doctrine and Strategies', p. 6 (The essay by Nan Li is accessible through google search by title).)

8. The PLA Training in a Doctrinal Light

Deng Xiaoping emphasised doctrinal and training modernisation as a priority because of a lack of funds for capability modernisation. Since then, training modernisation has remained a core area in China's defence modernisation. It has significance also because China lacks actual combat experience. It has not carried out any significant military action since the 1979 China-Vietnam War. A perusal of the various Party Congress Reports and the White Papers makes it clear that military training has been receiving serious attention in China's defence modernisation. These documents also make clear that military training is closely in keeping with China's military strategy and doctrine.

The Sixteenth Party Congress Report (2002) emphasized the 'strategic importance of education and training' as well as 'intensive science-and-technology-related military training'. It also recognized the need to recruit 'high-quality military personnel of a new type'. To achieve 'the historical tasks' of 'mechanisation and IT application' underlined in the Sixteenth Party Congress Report,[168] 'the strategic objective' of 'building computerised armed forces, and winning IT-based warfare, expounded by the Seventeenth Party Congress Report (2007), the PLA needed to have 'military training under IT-based conditions' as well as the recruitment and training of 'a new type of high-calibre military personnel in large numbers'. The Seventeenth Party Congress Report also stated civil-military integration in military training and logistics.[169]

The Eighteenth Party Congress report stated the objective of carrying out intensive 'military training under computerised conditions', enhancing

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[168] *Report to the Sixteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China*, 2002, Beijing at http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/49007.htm#7 (Accessed January 8, 2014).

[169] *Report to the Seventeenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China*, 2007, no. 151.

'integrated combat capability based on extensive IT application', besides developing completely modern logistics, as well as training programme. This was in keeping with its deadline of 2020—the year by which the PLA was 'to complete military mechanisation and make major progress in full military IT application'. This was characterised as 'the dual historic tasks of the military'. Moreover, importance was accorded to maritime, space and cyber space security as well as winning a 'local war in an information age'.[170]

The White Paper on China's National Defence in 2002 articulated the idea of high-tech conditions as the main feature of military training. It describes how PLA training had speeded up the process of 'transforming the training from the conventional training to one featuring new technology' in the previous two years. A military exercise organised by the General Staff Headquarters in October 2000 near Beijing was, perhaps, one of the earliest exercises in which new and high technologies, such as 'computer networking, reconnaissance sensing, Enterprise Content Management (ECM), and simulation to drill and test the new operational concepts, weaponry and training methods' were taught.

The White Paper also reported that joint operations had become the backdrop of military training through annual military exercises. It also revealed that the 'Nanjing and Guangzhou military area commands had organised field exercises with joint landing operations, focusing on the coordination of joint and combined arms landing operation. These exercises had focussed more precisely on joint training, ground force amphibious landing training, and the training of rapid reserve mobilisation' in 2001. 'The general headquarters/departments were studying communications and command at the joint operational level, the training of landing and mountain operations…and [had also] explored the features and patterns of an integrated network and electronic warfare.' It can be inferred that the Training and Evaluation Outline (T&EO) promulgated by the General Staff Headquarters in July 2001 and the new Regulations on Military Training of the PLA by

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[170] *Report to the Eighteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China*, 2012, Beijing at http://www.china.org.cn/china/18th_cpc_congress/2012-11/16/content_27137540_9.htm (Accessed January 10, 2014).

the CMC in September 2002 contained the changing nature and focus of the training of the PLA.

Around the same time, to foster the agenda of 'informationisation', an information network platform teaching scientific research to the armed forces was created. This linked the 'PLA's colleges and schools', and had 'nearly 100,000 websites and centres.'[171] The 2004 White Paper highlighted the goal of 'training a new type of high-calibre military personnel', which constituted an important part of 'the Strategic Project for Talented People'. This was consistent with the goal of 'transforming the military from being a manpower-intensive one to a technology-intensive one.'[172]

The 2004 White Paper highlighted the PLA's focus on joint operational training in considerable detail. It writes of the PLA's promotion of 'joint training among services and arms at all levels to enhance joint fighting capabilities.' The White Paper pointed out that improving the joint fighting capabilities of commanding officers was one of the major objectives of this training. Around the same time, the PLA also implemented joint fighting training programme at tactical levels. The White Paper reported that 'the units of different arms and services stationed in the same areas' conducted joint tactical training. It also reported that 'the General Staff Headquarters organised a PLA-wide demonstration on regional cooperation for military training in Dalian' in September 2003.

Moreover, the word 'regional cooperation' was used in the context of joint exercises at tactical levels among the units of different arms and services stationed in the same areas. One of the objectives of these exercises was to increase the awareness of the officers of each arms and service, as well as about other arms and services. The White Paper reported that the PLA was capable of conducting 'almost all combined tactical training activities at the division, brigade and regiment levels on

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[171] 'Military Training', Chapter on Armed Forces Building, *White Paper on China's National Defence in 2002*, Information Office of the State Council (SCIO), China.

[172] 'National Defence Policy', Chapter II, no. 142.

base'; also, all services and arms had set up their basic simulation training systems for operational and tactical command; and a military training network system had been set up to interconnect the Local-Area Networks (LANs) of military area commands, services and arms, and command colleges.[173]

The 2006 White Paper highlights the objective of accelerating 'the transition from military training under conditions of mechanisation to military training under conditions of informationisation.' The General Staff Headquarters issued a comprehensive plan for carrying out military training in June 2006. The PLA was supposed to design 'its training on actual combat, use scientific and technological means in training, advance the reform of training, and elevate military training to a higher level.' Thus, it identified 'basic technical and tactical training, combined tactical training, and strategic and operational training' as the levels of military training wherein 'the requirements for winning local wars under conditions of informationisation' was being tested. It asked for military training 'in near-real-war environment', 'with live ammunition'. 'On-base, simulated and networked training' seemed the outstanding feature of the PLA training. The 'internal integration of fighting units, systems integration of fighting elements, and comprehensive integration of fighting systems' were the objectives of the training.[174]

The 2008 White Paper emphasized an increasing focus on informationisation in training, trans-regional exercises, 'integrated exercises for logistical and equipment support, and MOOTW training. The White Paper also informed about an impending new edition of the T&EO. It underlined joint training, improvements in on-base training and simulated training, the promotion of web-based training, and the conduct of training exercises with opposing players. The White Paper made a special reference to 'conducting training in complex electromagnetic environments', and reported that 'the PLA is spreading basic knowledge of the electromagnetic spectrum and battlefield electromagnetic environments, as also the learning and mastering basic

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[173] 'Intensifying Joint Training', Chapter III, no. 142.

[174] 'Military Training', Chapter IV, *White Paper on China's National Defence, 2006*, Information Office of the State Council (SCIO), China.

theories of information warfare, particularly electronic warfare. It is also working on the informationising of combined tactical training bases, and holding exercises in complex electromagnetic environments.[175]

The 2010 White Paper underlined that the new edition of the T&EO had intensified the 'training of command organs, training in operating command information systems, and informationised weaponry and equipment, as well as information skills.' The new edition explained maritime, space and electromagnetic space security as features of PLA training, underscored MOOTW training, and studied 'the technical and tactical performance of Electronic Counter Measures (ECM) equipment. It intensified Anti-Jamming (AJ) and ECM training, and organised operational training exercises in complex electromagnetic environments.' The White Paper brought attention to the construction of large-scale integrated training bases for joint training that can fulfil the need of IT-based combined tactical training bases. Priority was given to 'the construction of complex electromagnetic environments.'

The White Paper also informed that the PLA had devised a complementary framework for training; its campaign-level training was to be conducted within the framework of strategic-level training; its service campaign-level training was to be conducted within the framework of the joint campaign-level training; and its unit training conducted within the framework of campaign-level command post training. The entire spectrum makes an organic whole. Command information systems helped the PLA organise the 'combined training of different combat components, the assembly training of various combat elements, and the joint training of all systems and all components.' The White Paper threw light on 'intensifying joint training of task formations and confrontational training', as well as 'training in complex electromagnetic environments, unfamiliar terrain, and complex weather conditions.' It also talks about 'trans-regional exercises for organic divisions (brigades) led by campaign-level command organs'.[176]

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[175] 'Promoting the Improvement of Military Training', Chapter III, 2008, no. 133.

[176] 'Promoting Transition in Military Training', Chapter III, no. 146.

Remarkably, the White Paper (2012) reveals that 'war fighting capabilities based on information systems have been thoroughly improved.' It reports the wide use of concepts such as 'information dominance, confrontation between different systems, precision strike, fusion, integration and jointness' in training. Besides, it highlights trans-Military Area Command (trans-MAC) training aimed at developing 'rapid-response and joint-operation capabilities in unfamiliar environments and complex conditions'. It also notes that 'the divisions and brigades of the same specialty with similar tasks and tailored operational environments are organised to carry out a series of trans-MAC live verification-oriented exercises and drills in the combined tactical training bases.' These exercises are focused on 'long-distance manoeuvres and confrontational drills.' The White Paper records many such exercises having taken place since 2009. These were basically army exercises; however, in some exercises, some People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) units also participated. 'Mission Action' for trans-MAC manoeuvres — a series of campaign-level exercises — has been carried out since 2010.

The highlights of confrontational exercises have been the following: 'live force-on-force exercises; online confrontational exercises; computer-simulation confrontational exercises; 'reconnaissance vs. counter-reconnaissance exercises; jamming vs. counter-jamming practice; precision strikes vs. protection and counterattack exercises — all in complex battlefield environments. The 2012 White Paper pays special attention to the training of the PLA Navy with its 'training mode of task force formation in blue water.' Under this mode, 'different formations of combined task forces composed of new types of destroyers, frigates, ocean-going replenishment ships and ship-borne helicopters' carry out training in 'complex battlefield environments'. Some of the features of this training are: 'remote early warning, comprehensive control, open sea interception, long-range raid, anti-submarine warfare and vessel protection at distant sea.' The Navy's coastal forces also 'carry out live force-on-force training for air defence, anti-submarine, anti-mine, anti-terrorism, anti-piracy, coastal defence, and island and reef sabotage raids.' The White Paper has reported that, 'since 2007, the PLAN has conducted training in the distant sea waters of the Western Pacific involving over 90 ships in nearly 20 batches'. In this exercise, it practised 'effective measures to respond to foreign close-

in reconnaissance and illegal interference activities by military ships and aircraft.'[177]

The latest White Paper (2014) does not provide details regarding Chinese military training. It only discusses it under the theme: 'preparation for military struggle'. The White Paper underlines the priority of enhancing 'realistic military training'. It declares that,

> the PLA will continue to conduct live-setting training, IT-based simulated training, and face-to-face confrontation training in line with real-combat criteria, and strengthen command post training and joint and combined training. It will intensify training in complex electro-magnetic environments, complex and unfamiliar terrains, and complex weather conditions.[178]

In this phraseology, 'unfamiliar terrains' may be construed as a hint towards distant and non-Chinese territories too, indicating Chinese preparations for overseas operation capabilities.

Finally, one can say that Chinese military training has developed in a doctrinal light in last more than one decade. It appears to be compensating for the lack of operational experiences. Training programmes have increasingly focussed on fighting a short, quick, limited and high-tech war. The 'complex electro-magnetic environment', 'joint-ness', and 'integration' are the special focus areas in the training programmes, with emphasis on high-end electronics and network-centric warfare. Training programmes also highlight China's military interest in distant waters. Although the results of the new training programmes are difficult to determine, the direction of the new training programmes is very much guided by the current doctrine.

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[177] 'Carrying out Scenario-based Exercises and Drills', Chapter III, no. 147.

[178] 'Preparation for Military Struggle', Chapter V, *China's Military Strategy* (White Paper, 2014), May 2015, State Council Information Office (SCIO), China at http://eng.mod.gov.cn/Database/WhitePapers/2015-05/26/content_4586714.htm (Accessed August 9, 2015).

9. The Changing Doctrine and Capabilities of the PLA

The following discussion of China's military capabilities reveals that the PLA's capability acquisition has more or less reflected the strategy and doctrine of the time.[179]

The PLA Army

In the 1960s, the Chinese PLA Army basically had defensive capabilities to fight off an invading military. However, these capabilities were very limited. This was the time when China was following the People's War doctrine. The data shows increased numbers of army assets — mainly Soviet IS-2 hy and T-34s — on the eve of the China-Vietnam war (1979). However, these seem to be of the old Soviet stock only. The major development reported around this time was China's production of Type-59/-63 medium, Type 50 (PT-76) amphibious and Type-62 light tanks. During this time, self-propelled artillery also appeared in the army's assets.

The focus on tanks and Self-Propelled (SP) artillery was crucial to implementing the People's War under Modern Conditions that was aimed at taking on the Soviet threat on the border, or in the border areas, only. The period around 1990 — when China had the Limited and Local War doctrine and the Limited War under High Technological Conditions doctrine was yet to arrive — the Chinese army showed forward movement towards modern Type-80 main battle tanks. Data indicates Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) vehicles, SP artillery, and multi barrel rocket launchers acquiring more focus, both in quantity and quality. The need for missiles of range up to 500 kilometres was also felt. The possession and development of SSM: M-9 and M-11

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[179] The data in this chapter has been drawn from various issues of *The Military Balance*, published annually by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), London.

missiles were reported. These platforms were in line with the idea of a local, limited, and short duration war under the Local and Limited War doctrine.

By 2000, the PLA army reported an inventory of advanced Type-88B, Type-88C, and Type-98 main battle tanks. Further modernization and strength augmentation of Armoured Infantry Fighting Vehicle (AIFV) and APC were reported. Around this time, the development of Air Defence (AD) and the helicopter-based Air Arm of Army was reported. The general focus was on mobility — a crucial feature of the Limited War under High Technological Conditions doctrine. Data from *The Military Balance 2015* underlines the continued focus on MBT, and AIFV/APC modernisation. Besides, the data also highlights new capabilities such as attack helicopters, transport for heavy lift, and unarmed vehicles for ISR — all acquired in recent years. The latest capabilities are part of China's Informationised War doctrine. Thus, on the whole, at present, the Chinese army's weapons present a picture of mechanised capabilities, with considerable capacity for informationised war.

The PLA Air Force

China acquired almost 3,000 aircrafts from the Soviet Union between 1951 and 1955. Before this, the air capability of the revolutionary PLA was almost negligible. The main air capability of the PLA at this time included the MiG-15, IL-10, and Yak-9. China started manufacturing J-6 (MiG-19) in 1963. Besides, it started designing the J-7, J-8 and Q-5 in the 1960's, though production started later. The first version of the J-7 was introduced in the late 1960s. The upgraded and first versions of the J-8 were introduced in the late 1970s. Improved versions followed in the late 1980's. The Q-5 entered service in 1970. No major development took place in the Chinese air capability in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. This was mainly due to the Sino-Soviet rift in the 1960s.

After the Sino-Soviet rapprochement, China started receiving arms from Russia in the 1990s. The PLAAF acquisitioned the first batch of Su-27 in 1992, and the second batch in 1996. China also started the licensed production of Su-27, which became the J-11 that was later inducted in the PLAAF after 2000. China developed its J-11B in 2004-2005. The production of the most updated J-8 F version began in

2003. Manufacturing of the J-10s started in 2003; this is an advanced 3.5 generation aircraft. China purchased the SU-30 MKK in early 2002-2003. It inducted JH-7A fighter bombers in 2004. In the middle of the same decade, it purchased the IL-76MD for the further enhancement of its transport fleet. The advanced version of the Z-9W helicopter, with anti-tank missiles (ATM), was inducted in 2005.

Data also shows the considerable possession of electronic warfare, ISR, and Airborne Early Warning & Control (AEWC) capabilities required under the Informationized War doctrine. In this regard, *The Military Balance 2015* reported the PLAAF to have Y-8CB/G/XZ, JZ-8 Finback, JZ-8F Finback, and KJ-200/KJ-2000/Y-8T capabilities. It is believed that the PLAAF acquired these capabilities mainly in the second half of the first decade of the 21st century. At present, the PLAAF is reported to be working on developing J-21 and J-31 stealth fighter capabilities. *The Military Balance 2015* data also reveals considerable modernisation in transport capabilities. On this front, the PLAAF is reportedly working on Z-20 helicopters for troop mobilisation, and Y-20 helicopters for heavy lift.

The PLA Navy

On the naval front, China had 30 old-design submarines in the mid-1960s. Its destroyer and frigate capabilities were very limited in terms of numbers. It had four destroyers, four destroyer escorts, and 12 frigate escorts during this time. However, by the late 1970s, there was considerable progress; by then, it had acquired 91 attack submarines with 1 Han SSN, and 1 G-class submarine (with Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile [SLBM] tubes). It also had acquired 11 destroyers and 14 frigates. By 1990, it was in possession of one SSBN—a major naval development for China. The numbers of the Han Nuclear-powered submarine (SSN) had gone up to 4 from 1 in the late 1970s. By 1990, it had 87 other conventional submarines, though the submarine strength of China is questionable due to the non-operational status of many Romeo-class submarines.

Around the same time, its destroyer and frigate strength showed considerable progress, both in terms of numbers as well as the capabilities of sensors and weapons. It had total of 55 principal surface

combatants that included 18 destroyers and 37 frigates. The number of amphibious platforms remained the same from mid-1960s to 1990. In the mid-1960s, the PLA Navy had 60 'amphibious-type landing ships'. The numbers were 58 around the year 1990. However, the difference lay in their capacity. Towards the end of 1990s, the SSBN strength was the same, but 1 Han SSN was added to the existing strength of four in the late 1980s. Likewise, the numbers of principal surface combatants remained almost same, with 20 destroyers and 40 frigates — 60 in all. The amphibious strength (59) too was almost unchanged. However, increasing modernisation of the ships was making the difference. The noteworthy development of the decade of 1990s was the emergence of the Naval Air Force, with bombers and fighters and other capabilities. In previous decades, the naval air force was limited to coastal areas.

The latest reported submarine strength of the PLA navy by *The Military Balance 2015* is four SSBN, and 66 tactical submarines that include five SSN and 60 conventional SSK submarines. The number of frigates has, remarkably, gone up to 54, while the numbers of destroyers have come down to 17, implying the removal of redundancy. The present landing capacity of the amphibious platforms is showing impressive growth. The navy had 85 landing ships. The conclusion is that capabilities, capacities, and numbers of the naval platforms are increasing. Where the numbers are static, they demonstrate increasing modernisation. Where they are falling, they indicate redundancy removal. Overall, the evolution of Chinese naval strength demonstrates its increasing ambition of becoming a blue-water navy, which also indicates a departure from the continental orientation of the Chinese military doctrine.

The PLA's Cyber Capabilities

Although the PLA's cyber capabilities are still a matter of guess work, *The Military Balance 2013* provides a broad sketch. It informs that the main doctrine document is the 'Integrated Network Electronic Warfare' [INEW] document, 'which guides PLA computer-network operations and calls for the combination of network warfare and EW tools at the start of a conflict in order to paralyse (or at least degrade) an opponent's C4ISR capabilities.' *The Military Balance 2013* reveals that a new concept known as 'information confrontation' is developing which will 'integrate

both electronic and non-electronic aspects of information warfare within a single command authority.' It also reveals that, 'Three PLA departments — Informatisation, Strategic Planning, and Training — have either been established or re-formatted to help bring about this transformation.' It further reveals that,

> China's cyber assets fall under the command of two main departments of the General Staff Department (GSD). Computer network attacks and EW would, in theory, come under the 4th Department (Electronic Countermeasures [ECM]), and computer network defence and intelligence gathering comes under the 3rd Department (Signals Intelligence [SIGINT]).[180]

Importantly, it informs that the 'the 3rd Department is supported by a variety of 'militia units', comprising both 'military cyber-warfare personnel and civilian hackers.' It reports about the existence of 'a new 'Information Safeguards Base'. This is tasked with addressing cyber threats, and safeguarding China's information security and infrastructure'. It received its colours from General Cheng Bingde, the Head of the PLA GSD in 2010. However, it is not clear whether the base is for offensive purposes. It also reports the creation of Cyber Blue Team to improve the PLA's 'ability to safeguard internet security' in 2011.

The Military Balance 2014 informs that the INEW has moved towards the concept of 'information confrontation'. It reveals that, in the Chinese view of warfare under informationised conditions, war is a confrontation between 'complete systems of ground, naval, air, space and electromagnetic forces.' Accordingly, the PLA wants integrated 'systems to improve battle space.' *The Military Balance 2014* underlines that 'since 2008, major PLA military exercises, including Kuayue 2009 and Lianhe 2011' have included cyber and information war elements which are 'both offensive and defensive in nature.' It also mentions a US security company (Mandiant) reporting about 'a secret Chinese military unit — "Unit 61398"'. The unit is alleged to indulge in data theft. This Shanghai-based unit was reportedly created in 2007. *The Military Balance 2015* repeats the same information.

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[180] 'China, People's Republic of (PRC)', *The Military Balance*, IISS, London, 2013, p. 295.

10. Military Strategy and Doctrine under Xi Jinping

President Xi Jinping's three-year tenure in power as the President of China and Party General-Secretary provides some tentative conclusions about possible changes in China's military strategy under his rule. The State Council Information Office has released China's latest Defence White Paper (2014)—the first under Xi's presidency. In a noteworthy departure, the 2014 White Paper has been titled *China's Military Strategy.*[181] China's New Security Law and New Cyber-security Law –– both ratified in July 2015— also contribute to the understanding of the latest trends in China's military strategic thinking, though the laws are not military legislation.

Xi Jinping's vision of the Chinese Dream and A New Type of Major Power Relations as well as his One Belt, One Road project provides the broad ideological and security vision in which the emerging trends in China's military thinking should be placed. China's changing threat perception as well as evolving Party-Military relations — the two themes in this monograph — should also contribute to understanding the changes that have come about in China's strategic thinking under Xi Jinping. The alarming security scenario in the Asia-Pacific appears to have shaped military strategic changes in China in recent times. The evidence of changes in Party-Military relations may be found in Xi Jinping's anti-corruption drive in the PLA.

The new title as well as the analytical structure of China's Defence White Paper 2014, while being more or less on the lines of Military Strategic Guidelines (MSG), yet gives it the appearance of an official statement on China's military strategy. While the earlier White Papers primarily provided most of its ingredients, the 2014 one stands out for its analytical framework. It displays new elements that may be considered signs of strategic changes, and to some extent the latest

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[181] *China's Military Strategy* (White Paper 2014), no. 178.

MSG. The previous MSG was released in 2004. If the 2014 White Paper is accepted as an MSG document, it would be the first time that it has been released as a public document and not an internal document only for the PLA.

The Military Strategy White Paper, 2014 has attracted the attention of many experts on Chinese military affairs. Their commentaries and the bare text of the Paper underline the fact that although there are not too many fundamental changes in China's military strategy, there are some significant points of departure, including a renewed focus on some old themes in China's military strategy. The 2014 White Paper clearly identifies the PLA's strategic missions and tasks, as well as the principles of strategic guidelines for active defence in a manner which is analogous to the MSG. The reading of the missions, tasks, and the principles highlights the changes and reinterpretates China's strategic thinking. The missions, tasks and principles in this Paper carry a certain specific character. The strategic missions and tasks are as follows:

- To deal with a wide range of emergencies and military threats, and effectively safeguard the sovereignty and security of China's territorial land, air, and sea;

- To resolutely safeguard the unification of the motherland;

- To safeguard China's security and interests in new domains;

- To safeguard the security of China's overseas interests;

- To maintain strategic deterrence and carry out nuclear counter-attack;

- To participate in regional and international security cooperation, and maintain regional and world peace;

- To strengthen efforts in operations against infiltration, separatism and terrorism so as to maintain China's political security and social stability;

- To perform such tasks as emergency rescue and disaster relief, rights and interests protection, guard duties, and support for national economic and social development.

The principles of the strategic guidelines of active defence that the White Paper on Military Strategy, 2014 elucidates to fulfil the missions and execute the tasks, are as follows:

- To be subordinate to and in the service of the national strategic goal, implement the holistic view of national security, strengthen PMS, prevent crises, deter and win wars;

- To foster a strategic posture favourable to China's peaceful development, adhere to the national defence policy that is defensive in nature, persevere in close coordination of political, military, economic and diplomatic work, and positively cope with comprehensive security threats the country possibly encounters;

- To strike a balance between rights protection and stability maintenance, and make overall planning for both, safeguard national territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests, and maintain security and stability along China's periphery;

- To endeavour to seize the strategic initiative in military struggle, proactively plan for military struggle in all directions and domains, and grasp the opportunities to accelerate military building, reform and development;

- To employ strategies and tactics featuring flexibility and mobility, give full play to the overall effectiveness of joint operations, concentrate superior forces, and make integrated use of all operational means and methods;

- To make serious preparations to cope with the most complex and difficult scenarios, uphold bottom-line thinking, and do a solid job in all aspects so as to ensure proper responses to such scenarios with ease at any time and in any circumstances;

- To bring into full play the unique political advantages of the people's armed forces, uphold the CPC's absolute leadership over the military, accentuate the cultivation of fighting spirit, enforce strict discipline, improve the professionalism and strength of the troops, build closer relations between the government and the military as well as between the people and the military, and boost the morale of officers and men;

- To give full play to the overall power of the concept of people's war, persist in employing it as an ace weapon to triumph over the enemy, enrich the contents, ways and means of the concept of people's war, and press forward with the shift of the focus of war mobilization from human resources to science and technology;

- To actively expand military and security cooperation, deepen military relations with major powers, neighbouring countries and other developing countries, and promote the establishment of a regional framework for security and cooperation.

This reading of the above-mentioned mission and tasks, presents an integrated view of the traditional and non-traditional, the economic-political, of security issues, home and overseas interests, and concerns and commitments. Safeguarding 'China's overseas interests' as well as its security and interests in 'new domains', appears to be a high-priority task. This is somewhat different from the earlier, conventional highest priority tasks of safeguarding 'the sovereignty and security of China's territorial land, air and sea' and 'resolutely [safeguarding] the unification of the motherland.' The principles remarkably underline the seizing of the strategic initiative. The focus on 'winning informationised local war' is also a somewhat new development in strategic thinking. The assertion of the Party's authority, the need for civil-military integration, and the citation of the philosophy of People's War have been constant themes in China's military affairs. However, reading the principles alongside domestic development and Party-Military relations in China under Xi Jinping suggests that the People's War framework is being upheld, with a renewed focus on Party-Military relations and civil-military integration.

Defining 'the security of China's overseas interests' as the strategic task is an important development in China's military strategic thinking. This development recognizes China's growing global economic profile and presence, and shapes military strategic thinking accordingly. The White Paper defines 'the security of overseas interests' as something which concerns 'energy and resources, strategic Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs), as well as institutions, personnel and assets abroad', and considers their security as 'an imminent issue.' This framework may not be entirely new for China. Hu Jintao's New Historic Missions had visualised China's national interests and security concerns in a diversified

manner. However, they were more in the nature of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. The aforementioned definition of the security of China's overseas interests presents a far more complex and critical view of overseas interests than seen in Hu Jintao's New Historic Missions.

Notably, the White Paper on Military Strategy, 2014 also visualises the security of overseas interests as the mainstay of China's military strategy. This change reflects the growing economic stature of China in the world which is seen, among other things, in China's international trade, investment and loans abroad, the high volume of energy supplies to China, as well as the presence of the Chinese government, private institutions, and personnel abroad in the economic field. Under Xi Jinping, the importance China attaches to overseas interests and their protection can be seen in the New Security Law also, which was ratified by the National People's Congress of China in July 2015. Article 16 of the Law stipulates 'carrying out overseas military actions to maintain national security' as the security task of the State. Article 30 further stipulates that 'the State takes necessary measures in accordance with the law to protect the security and lawful rights and interests of overseas Chinese citizens, organizations and institutions; and ensures the nation's overseas interests are not threatened or encroached upon.'[182]

The task of safeguarding 'China's security and interests in new domains' is about pushing the frontiers of China's maritime, space and cyber security. The White Paper states that to respond 'the new situation[s]'— 'the basic point for PMS' — is to be adjusted. The 'basic point' would now be 'winning informationised local wars, highlighting maritime military struggle, and maritime PMS' in place of 'winning local war under informationised conditions.' Fravel recognises this as an important strategic departure, though not a fundamental one. He argues that this shift demonstrates that, in China's view, the 'application of information technology in all aspects of military operations' has greatly increased at

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[182] National Security Law (Second Reading Draft), May 7, 2015 at http://chinalawtranslate.com/nsld2/?lang=en#_Toc418794826 (Accessed August 10, 2015). The author has accessed the second draft of the draft law, and not the finally promulgated law.

present, making it 'even more important.' The meaning of this shift, as per his inference, is that now China looks for information domination in war. It is no longer enough to fight a war in informationised conditions. Thus, on the whole, informationised war continues to remain the 'basic point' or 'preparation for military struggle' (PMS) in the Military Strategy White Paper.[183]

The White Paper on Military Strategy, 2014 also demands far greater focus on outer space and cyber space, which it considers as the 'commanding [the] heights' of 'strategic competition among all parties'. The Paper sees informationised war as 'the form of war' everywhere in the world, and remarks that the RMA in the world is moving towards 'a new stage'. In particular, it highlights the developments in 'long-range, precise, smart, stealthy and unmanned weapons.' In a similar vein, the Paper implies the graduation of operational doctrine from 'integrated operations, precision strikes to subdue the enemy' to 'information dominance, precision strikes on strategic points, [and] joint operations to gain victory.'

In this context, the expression '[to] work hard to seize the strategic initiative in military competition' needs to be given thoughtful attention. The phrase 'strategic initiative' is absent in the previous Defence White Papers as well as in the sections concerning the Chinese military in the Party Congress reports. The use of this phrase warrants closer scrutiny of the relevance of the Maoist precept of Strategic Defence or Active Defence, which remains an overarching guiding principle in the present White Paper too — much like in the earlier ones. As has been mentioned, the precept shuns the initiation of war or military conflict; it upholds only strategic counter-offence and supports seizing initiative on operational level. Thus, the appearance of the expression 'the strategic initiative in military competition' might prove to be a departure in China's military strategic thinking. 'The strategic initiative' could be interpreted as limited to the realm of China's defence modernization. However, it could also be interpreted as China not being averse any

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[183]   M. Taylor Fravel, 'China's New Military Strategy: 'Winning Informationized Local Wars'', *China Brief*, 15 (13), June 23, 2015 at http://www.jamestown .org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=44072&tx_ttnews[backPid]=789&no_cache=1#.VjvXLF4pq2A (Accessed August 10, 2015).

longer to the idea of initiating war. The implication of the changed understanding could be that China may not initiate war only for the reasons of meeting any immediate military threat. It could initiate war for political reasons. In other words, political provocation or unfavourable political disturbances caused by Japan, the Philippines, Vietnam, or Taiwan could justify the initiation of war. Thus, the phrase 'the strategic initiative' needs to be followed closely in times to come.

Fravel underlines the idea that the White Paper on Military Strategy, 2014 acknowledges Chinese aspirations in the far seas. The maritime dimension of the White Paper covers concerns in the near as well as in the far seas, thus reflecting China's concerns about maritime sovereignty issues in the near seas as well as concerns about the security of overseas interests in the far seas. Therefore, Fravel points out that, for the first time, 'maritime military struggle' and 'preparations for maritime military struggle' have received formal recognition and greater salience in this White Paper when compared with the primacy given to 'China's land-based conflicts and operations' in the earlier White Papers. He underlines the evolution in China's naval strategy moving from 'near seas defense' to 'near seas defense' and 'far seas protection'.[184]

The 2014 White Paper recognises the change that had been going on for a long time. China's decision to send a task force comprising of three surface combatants of the PLA Navy (PLAN) to the Gulf of Aden and the waters off Somali Coast in the Horn of Africa was a major event. The task force was sent in December 2008 under UN authorisation. It marked the beginning of 'China's out-of-area naval operations' in the true sense. Before this, the PLAN's out-of-area naval operations were, by and large, port visits and joint search and rescue exercises. After December 2008, the task forces have reinforced the need for access to port facilities, more surface combatants, the role of helicopters, better satellite communication, replenishment ships, and better medical care and food preparation in out-of-area naval operations by the PLAN.[185]

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[184]   M. Taylor Fravel, no. 183.

[185]   Christopher D. Yung, Ross Rustici et al., *China's Out of Area Naval Operations: Case Studies, Trajectories, Obstacles, and Potential Solutions*, China Strategic Perspectives, No. 3, National Defense University (NDU) Press, December 2010, pp. 19-21.

Since then, the PLA has given considerable attention to overseas bases and attendant requirements. Acquiring dual use logistics facilities have become a major requirement of out of area naval operations by the PLA. A newspaper report suggested that China was looking for 18 military bases worldwide. These are as follows: Chongjin Port (North Korea); Moresby Port (Papua New Guinea); Sihanoukville Port (Cambodia); Koh Lanta Port (Thailand); Sittwe Port (Myanmar); Dhaka Port (Bangladesh); Gwadar Port (Pakistan); Hambantota Port (Sri Lanka); Maldives; Seychelles; Djibouti Port (Djibouti); Lagos Port (Nigeria); Mombasa Port (Kenya); Dar es Salam Port (Tanzania); Luanda Port (Angola); and Walvis Bay Port (Namibia).[186] Many of these ports — like the Gwadar and Hambantota ports — have reported Chinese naval activities. These have been reported as being of a dual-use nature.

Besides, these developments correspond China's growing out of area naval capabilities as well as the confidence seen in its naval exercises in the Western Pacific. The exercises from 2007 to 2014 have shown three distinct phases: 2007-09; 2010-12; and 2013-14. In these phases, naval exercises have gone to diversified straits, have increased in frequency, and displayed a complex deployment of naval assets. During 2007-09, the PLAN carried out six exercises, whereas during 2010-12 the number was 13, and it was 19 during 2013-14.[187] Perhaps the most symbolic development in China's far seas ambitions was the commissioning of PLAN's first aircraft carrier *Liaoning* in September 2012. The quest for aircraft carriers has been termed as part of the Chinese dream about a strong military.

With regard to external threat perceptions, the Military Strategy White Paper conforms to the preceding White Papers which considered the external strategic environment as being, on the whole, favourable to China's national development. Moreover, China's capabilities to manage

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[186] 'Chinese Paper Advises PLA Navy to Build Overseas Military Bases', January 8, 2013 at http://www.china-defense-mashup.com/chinese-paper-advises-pla-navy-to-build-overseas-military-bases.html (Accessed August 10, 2015).

[187] Christopher H. Sharman, *China Moves Out: Stepping Stones Toward a New Maritime Strategy*, China Strategic Perspectives, No. 9, National Defense University (NDU) Press, Washington, April 2015, pp. 13-25, p. 21 and p. 27.

risk have increased. However, the Paper also refers to US military presence and alliance in the Asia-Pacific as well as China's concerns about Japan being its principal strategic opponent. It also underscores China's west (Tibet and Xinjiang) as areas of potential military insecurity. However, the East Coast remains the strategic direction for preparing for military struggle. China is concerned about the military implications of the US's Asia Rebalancing in the Asia-Pacific.

The White Paper on Military Strategy, 2014 also flags China's concerns about Japan's revision of its military policies that, in China's view, are affecting the Post-War 'mechanism'. It has made references to 'a tiny few' who 'maintain constant close-in air and sea surveillance and reconnaissance against China'. Most plausibly, this seems to be a reference to the Philippines and Vietnam. It gives voice to China's concern about 'some external countries' that 'are also busy meddling in South China Sea affairs'. This should be understood as an oblique reference to countries such as India, which have expressed concerns about the security situation in the South China Sea. Also, Taiwan has received greater attention in the White Paper on Military Strategy, 2014. No doubt, the US alliance has been the strategic opponent for the last two decades. Likewise, the unification of Taiwan has been a constant strategic mission. Overall, the East Coast has been the strategic direction in the period mentioned. Nevertheless, the reference to the US has generally been couched in ideological terms of opposing 'hegemonic powers.' However, In the 2014 White Paper, the US's Asia Rebalancing and heightened maritime tensions with its allies (such as Japan and the Philippines) appear as a security concern giving rise to a sense of alarm. Before 2012, Japan was mentioned as a US security ally in some White Papers. However, in the 2012 and 2014 White Papers, it receives greater and exclusive attention as a security concern. From 1998 to 2006, the unification of Taiwan and the Taiwan Contingency was an important talking point in the White Papers. However, 2008 onwards, formulations on Taiwan became quite customary in the White Papers. In fact, in the 2012 White Paper, the Taiwan issue did not receive more than one sentence. In the present White Paper, the Taiwan issue receives increased attention. All this indicates the enhanced importance of the East Coast or the Asia-Pacific as the strategic direction for China.

This no doubt corresponds to the changing security scenario in the Asia-Pacific. It has been noted that, after 2008, when the buzz of the US's relative decline started, China has become more assertive regarding its maritime claims. This has been matched by counter-assertions of sovereignty by other claimants such as Japan and Vietnam. Since the trawler incident in September 2010, China and Japan has been in state of military alarm. The security situation in the East China Sea has been grave, particularly after the nationalisation of the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands by Japan in September 2012.

The region has witnessed heightened tension due to sabre-rattling and war-mongering tactics between China and Japan. Some parts of the East China Sea were declared as the Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) by China, in November 2013. The Japanese government approved the revision of Article 9 of the Constitution which broadened the ambit of self-defence to include the use of force for the defence of allies as well in July 2014. China perceives this as proof of Japan's military ambitions. China and Vietnam have also had non-fatal skirmishes in the disputed waters over the issue of setting up an oil rig by China in May 2014. Vietnam saw violent anti-Chinese demonstrations that included the loss of lives and property after the oil rig incident. In January 2013, the Philippines moved the Permanent Court of Arbitration for the arbitration of maritime disputes in the South China Sea —much to the annoyance of China.[188]

Moreover, extra-regional powers (such as India) have demanded peaceful navigational passage in the South China Sea as the right of the

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[188] 'China Establishes 'Air-Defence Zone' over East China Sea', *BBC News*, November 23, 2013, at http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-25062525 (Accessed December 11, 2015); Linda Sieg and Kiyoshi Takenaka, 'Japan Takes Historic Step from Post-War Pacifism, OKs Fighting for Allies', *Reuters*, July 2, 2014, at http://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-defense-idUSKBN0F52S120140702 (December 11, 2015); Hilary Whiteman, 'How an Oil Rig Sparked Anti-China Riots in Vietnam', *CNN*, May 19, 2014, at http://edition.cnn.com/2014/05/19/world/asia/china-vietnam-islands-oil-rig-explainer/ (Accessed December 11, 2015); 'The Republic of the Philippines v. The People's Republic of China', the Website of Permanent Court of Arbitration', at http://www.pca-cpa.org/showpage65f2.html?pag_id=1529 (December 31, 2015).

international community, clearly declining to support or oppose Chinese claims in the sea. The media has reported overtures made by Vietnamese and Filipinos for India to play a greater and active role in the dispute's resolution.[189] Also, there have been speculations about China's imminent declaration of the ADIZ in the South China Sea. China's land reclamation activities and the building of military facilities in the islands under its control in the South China Sea have been viewed as a concern.[190] China-Taiwan relations have been normalised since 2008, when the KMT's Ma Ying-jeou became the President of Taiwan. He has followed a policy of reconciliation, to which the Chinese government has responded. However, beginning 2014, Cross-Strait relations have been displaying some worrisome trends. In March-April, the Sunflower Movement came as a surprise for the governments on both sides as it was a powerful challenge to the course of normalisation. Following this, it was reported that China was blocking Taiwan's Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Malaysia. After failure in his bid to meet President Xi Jinping at the Beijing APEC Summit in 2014, President Ma publicly

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[189] 'As China Flexes Its Muscles, Vietnam Seeks India's 'Active Support' on South China Sea Row', *The Times of India*, October 27, 2014, at http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/As-China-flexes-its-muscles-Vietnam-seeks-Indias-active-support-on-South-China-Sea-row/articleshow/44950403.cms (Accessed December 15, 2015); Indrani Bagchi, 'India Ignores China's Frown, Offers Defence Boost to Vietnam', *The Times of India*, October 29, 2014, at http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/India-ignores-Chinas-frown-offers-defence-boost-to-Vietnam/articleshow/44965272.cms (Accessed December 15, 2015); Sachin Parashar, 'India Backs Philippines on South China Sea Row', *Times of India*, October 15, 2015, at http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/India-backs-Philippines-on-South-China-Sea-row/articleshow/49363556.cms (Accessed December 15, 2015).

[190] Alice Slevison, 'An ADIZ with Chinese Characteristics', *The Diplomat*, October 19, 2015, at http://thediplomat.com/2015/10/an-adiz-with-chinese-characteristics/ (Accessed December 11, 2015); 'China's Land Reclamation in South China Sea Grows: Pentagon Report', *Reuters*, August 21, 2015, at http://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-china-pentagon-idUSKCN0QQ0S920150821 (Accessed December 11, 2015); 'China 'Must Stop' Land Reclamation in South China Sea – Obama', BBC, November 18, 2015, at http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-34853878 (Accessed December 11, 2015).

expressed his disappointment with China. Taiwan's opposition party Democratic Progressive Party's (DPP) stunning victory in the local body elections in November 2014 has emboldened the DPP. If it wins the Presidential election in January 2016, Cross-Strait relations will enter a challenging phase.[191]

Separately, the Hong Kong protests have, understandably, not found place in the White Paper as it was an internal issue of no military dimension. However, the Hong Kong protests underline a new potential area of political concern for China. Incidentally, Fravel infers that the Western Pacific also seems to come under China's strategic direction, though he is uncertain 'whether the South China Sea has become part of primary strategic direction' or whether it is still the Taiwan Strait that 'is the primary strategic campaign direction'. However, this author would argue that, in the light of the scale and diversity of security concerns, the entire East Coast from the East China Sea to the South China Sea via the Taiwan Strait remains the principal strategic direction for China.[192]

As for Party-Military relations, the anti-corruption purges in the PLA need to be followed carefully. They have been an important dimension of Xi Jinping's anti-corruption drive. Xi launched this drive first in the Party after becoming the General-Secretary of the Party in October 2012. Later, he extended it to the official machinery of the State after becoming the President, in March 2013. As per the author's own reading of media sources, since January 2014, 17 senior PLA officers have been investigated. These include one General, four Lieutenant-Generals and 10 Major-Generals. Since January 2013, the PLA has scrutinised the financial conduct of more than 4,024 officers of the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and above, including 82 Generals. More than 200 officials have been found guilty of corruption of various degrees, and have been punished by dismissals, demotion, poor evaluation, and reprimands. In the course of the scrutiny, PLA auditors found 216 instances (which the English version of the official agency *Xinhua*

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[191]   Prashant Kumar Singh, 'Can Taiwan Talk 'Political' with the Mainland?', *Strategic Analysis*, 39 (3), May-June 2015: pp. 254-273.

[192]   M. Taylor Fravel, no. 183.

describes as 'clues') where corruption was suspected. Following the investigation of these cases, more than 60 officials faced a 'formal investigation' (which seems to imply prosecution), and around 160 PLA personnel received 'internal' (that is, departmental) punishment. The official media claims that the number of 'clues' investigated in the period after January 2013 has been higher than the total number of 'clues' investigated in the preceding three decades.[193]

While there may be an earnest desire to make the PLA corruption free, there are strong indications of there being a factional dimension to the anti-corruption drive in the PLA. The large scale purge of senior military officials in the Chengdu military region of China is noteworthy in this regard. The case of the fallen communist leader Bo Xi Lai, who was seen as challenger to Xi Jinping, reportedly had considerable support among the military commanders in the region. Incidentally, there were media reports about Zhou Yongkang — the fallen security czar who has been expelled from the Party and prosecuted for corruption— and Bo being on the same side of the political alignment within the Communist Party. The PLA's intrusion into the Indian side of border before Premier Li Keqiang's India visit in 2013, and later during President Xi Jinping's India visit in 2014, have also been understood as the handiwork of factional politics. It has been speculated that some of the officers responsible for the intrusions were purged under corruption charges. However, nothing can be said with certainty on this count. Cleaning the promotion system in the military and eradicating corruption are also considered as an equally important motivation behind Xi's anti-corruption drive in the PLA. That corruption has compromised PLA's combat worthiness is a widely shared concern among both retired and in-service officers. The drive seems to be the result of the combination of both factional politics as well as higher professional causes.[194]

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[193] The information contained in this paragraph is based on the author's perusal of various media sources.

[194] This section draws on the author's interactions with various scholars and officials in India and Taiwan over a period of time. He benefitted particularly by his discussions with scholars during his stay in Taiwan from September to December 2014.

The drive should be understood as being the most important episode in Party-Military relations in recent decades. So far, President Xi has asserted his agenda in the army. Tentatively, it could be argued that the drive will further reduce the PLA's role in politics, and push it towards greater professionalism under the Party's authority. The implications of this in terms of military strategy need to be followed closely. It has been speculated that China's nationalistic assertion under Xi Jinping in the East China Sea has been fuelled, in some measure, by factional politics. It is also believed that factional politics also created the situation leading to the protests in Hong Kong in 2014 in support of universal suffrage and the right to contest elections. In such a scenario, the military's role in politics is likely to increase, though not institutionally but as a nationalist pressure group. Factional politics being aligned with the PLA may enhance the element of offence in Chinese military strategy in times to come.

In conclusion, it seems clear that, under Xi Jinping, China's military strategy is to build a military that is both professional as well as committed to the Party's authority, and is capable of both defending China's interests globally and asserting its primacy in the regions surrounding China.

Conclusion

The gradual evolution of China's military strategy and 'preparation for military struggle' (PMS) corresponds to its trajectory of becoming a global power from an inward-looking weak and poor country. Its military strategy has correspondingly evolved from being a retreat-based defensive strategy to a strategy of limited offense, though Strategic Defence/Active Defence has remained the normative template all along. The present stage of this evolution is the PLA's preparation for global outreach. As of now, going global is about developing capabilities to support the PLA's global presence. Whether these capabilities will pave the way for the PLA becoming an expeditionary force will depend on many factors. The nature of China's global interests, the ideological orientation of the regime at home, China's place in the international power structure, and the international community's acceptance of it to be the global leader, will determine whether the PLA will become an expeditionary force.

China's PMS, or the 'basic point' of its military strategy — or military doctrine in Western terms — has changed from being the retreat-oriented mobile and guerrilla Three Stage Warfare to one of defending its borders as well as to looking beyond its borders. In other words, it has also begun visualising military conflicts at the border and in the close maritime regions. More importantly, military strategy — which was once land and infantry-centric — has become oriented towards the sea. Similarly, the PMS has also been geared towards the sea. The latest National Defence White Paper (2014) clearly emphasizes that navy has a priority in China's military strategy and the PMS. Thus far, China has focussed on denying access to the enemy in its immediate waters. However, the latest White Paper has extended the scope by bringing the protection of overseas assets in the ambit of the military strategy.

The two latest 'basic points' of China's military strategy — first Limited War under High Technological Conditions and then Local/Limited

War under Informationised Conditions — have been defined in terms of technological modernisation as a framework for the PLA modernisation. Informationisation has provided a common language to the PLA across the spectrum. The 'basic point' in the 2014 Military Strategy White Paper pushes informationisation further by declaring 'winning local informationised war' as the basic point. In the light of this intensification of the 'basic point', China's capability acquisition and training programme need to be followed carefully. Chinese military capabilities have persistently moved towards matching the PMS or doctrinal expositions. Its conventional capabilities seem strong enough to execute War Zone Campaigns on the land borders, and carry out offshore active defence by denying the adversary access to its immediate waters. However, so far, China's possession of asymmetric warfare capabilities and its ability to deploy them under Informationised War is a subject of speculation. Both the pronouncements on military training available in public documents and the information available about its military exercises indicate that the training is more or less in line with the PMS.

The changing contours of China's military strategy and the PMS have been displaying an absorbing interplay of ideology and domestic politics with a focus on Party-Army relations, and China's external threat assessment shaped by international power as perceived by China. In this interplay, the combat lessons learnt from the PLA's own wars and the wars of other foreign militaries, have also provided contributory inputs. In the course of the evolution of the military strategy and the PMS, changes in the leadership's attitude towards technology and the role of geography also come out very clearly. Technological inferiority and China's vast geography indeed played determining factors in Mao's military strategy and war visualisation before and after 1949. Geography and technology in China's military strategy and doctrine have played their role in the post-Mao period too, albeit in a different manner and with a different focus.

The factional nature of Party-Military relations was the cause of the politicisation of military strategy and doctrine in the 1960s. Later, in the post-Mao era, the disentanglement of military from Party affairs contributed to the military strategy and the PMS becoming more

professional, and less rhetorical. This trend has continued since then. At present, we are witnessing a political intervention by President Xi Jinping in military affairs. So far, this intervention has been aimed at making the Chinese military more professional. The post-Mao era has seen a bargain between the Party and the PLA leadership, in which the Party has persuaded the PLA to withdraw from politics and become professional and in return, the leadership has supported its defence modernisation. At present, under Xi Jinping, the political leadership appears to be punishing sections of the PLA for their active involvement in political affairs and seems to be enforcing strict professional discipline.

Separately, Hu Jintao simultaneously stepped down from the posts of Party General-Secretary and the CMC Chairman at the 18th Party Congress in 2012. And, Xi Jinping assumed two offices at the same time. This has further stabilised the Party-Army relationship in favour of the Party. The combined representation of the PLA and the PLA Police Force (PLAPF) in the current Central Committee of the Party is 17.28 per cent. Its representation in the Central Committee is similar to that of other groups and institutions. The military's intervention in politics and foreign affairs has been understood as being largely insignificant. Nevertheless, the military remains a powerful bureaucratic lobby that aggressively competes for budgetary allocations. Besides, as part of its historical legacy, the PLA still continues to be part of China's political and Party structures — through the two Central Military Commissions (CMC) of the State and the Party — and its representation in the Central Committee.

As part of the legacy, the military still tends to see itself as having a political role, especially when it comes to questions such as Taiwan's unification with Mainland China. The PLA's role in the Taiwan Strait Missile Crisis in 1995-96 is widely referred to in this regard. China has seen the rise of nationalism as the new State-sponsored ideology after the Tiananmen Square episode in 1989. This has reflected in China's military strategy too. China's military strategy of People's War — ideologically based on Marxism-Leninism—has moved towards nationalism. The commemoration of the war with Japan in the 1930s and 1940s, and the glorification of China's military struggle in the past

have been important elements in appealing to nationalist sentiments in China from the 1990s onwards.[195]

At present, a strong military is part of Xi Jinping's Chinese dream. How much influence the PLA exerts on foreign policy is a different subject of enquiry. However, the military contributing to nationalist appeals — either institutionally or through the writings of retired Generals and officials — cannot be discounted. It has been reported that Xi Jinping's assertive policy towards Japan and in the South China Sea has been shaped, to some extent, by the factional pressures of politics. In the context of such factional politics, a direct or indirect role of the military cannot be ruled out.

China's threat assessment has come full circle. In the 1950s, the US was recognised as the principal opponent. Then, there were indications that both the US and the USSR were the strategic opponents. Later, the USSR became the strategic opponent. In the 1990s, the US again began to emerge as the principal opponent. Now, in the context of its Asia Rebalancing strategy, the US is finally an unambiguous strategic opponent. In this evolution of threat assessment, Japan has appeared as the strategic opponent too, long after the end of the Second World War.

Notwithstanding the war with India in 1962, the southern border with India in the Himalayas has never been the principal strategic direction. India has been mentioned in its military strategy only marginally — either as the ally of the USSR or, at present, the reference to external powers in the South China Sea might be applicable to India as well. The southern border has not appeared as the major source of military concern in Chinese public documents on military strategy. The threat assessment that had predominant ideological interpretations in 1950s and 1960s has gradually become relatively ideology-neutral and national interest-driven. Equally important is the diversification of the sources of threat. The threat assessment has evolved to cover non-traditional

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[195] Zheng Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation: Historical Memory in Chinese Politics and Foreign Relations*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2012.

security issues as well, as China's global interests are mainly economic and institutional in nature.

Geography was a decisive factor in Mao's Protracted War strategy and the Three Stage Warfare doctrine. It was self-servingly treated almost as an article of faith in the People's War doctrine under Lin Biao's factional use of Mao's thoughts. This treatment of geography as a determining factor in strategy and the PMS became irrelevant in the evolution of Chinese military strategy and the PMS. However, geography in terms of China's vulnerabilities in the far sea lanes remains relevant, and pushes China for a blue- water navy, foreign naval access points, and possibly foreign naval bases too. The debate on technology in China's military strategy was, for a long period, ideology and politics-driven. In the post-Gulf War I phase, this debate of late, has presented itself more in terms of the professional requirement of the military. For example, a Chinese aircraft carrier versus the missile debate (though techno-nationalism can also be attributed as being the ideology behind China's search for aircraft carriers).

As for combat experiences, they have been subject to pre-existing ideological and political choices of the political and military leadership. Despite Peng Dehuai's efforts, the lessons of the Korean War produced no lasting strategic changes. In fact, the lessons from the 1962 War with India were interpreted in a manner that they contributed to the further politicisation of the military as also a doctrinal reversal. It is difficult to say anything conclusive about the lessons learnt from the China-Vietnam War in 1979. Many of the lessons are later scholarly interpretations. The 1991 Gulf War indeed played a significant role in teaching the importance of technology and professionalism. However, this was when Jiang Zemin was pushing for professionalism in the military and for Party-Military separation, and the military was willing to oblige the political leadership in return for a full endorsement of defence modernisation.

As for Mao's legacy, his Strategic Defence/Active Defence military strategy continues to be the ideological framework. However, the old precept of 'gaining mastery by striking only after the enemy has struck' requires a fresh look. As the aforementioned discussion on the RMA and informationised war has revealed, the notion of 'striking first'

(akin to pre-emption) has acquired different dimensions. In this cyber age, security and defence have moved far beyond traditional notions of military security and defence. Distinctions such as war and peace, military and civil, government and private, border and interior, and national and foreign have blurred. Considering the covert, fluid and virtual nature of Informationised War, it is very difficult to judge who and where the aggressor is. As China's White Paper on Military Strategy (2014) has stated, winning informationised wars and becoming capable to seize 'the strategic initiative in military competition' are China's objectives; China's directive of Strategic Defence needs to be critically looked at.[196]

Similarly, deterrence under Informationised War is also an equally complex issue as successful network deterrence is inherently offensive; it requires intrusive capabilities, thus making it escalatory at the very first instance. These complex issues challenge the claim that Chinese strategy is inherently a strategy of Strategic Defence. Besides, as discussed earlier, the use of phrase '[seizing] strategic initiative in military conflict' in the 2014 Military Strategy White Paper, calls the strategy of Strategic Defence into question. The present strategy or the PMS does not clarify whether the strategic initiative will be seized in political or military contexts. Mao's People's War has been underlined as the framework for civil-military integration for military strategic purposes. Although this theme is not new, it might be argued that considering Xi Jinping's evoking of Mao's tenets (such as Mass Line), the People's War doctrine would become the guiding template for civil-military integration for the purpose of capability enhancement of PLA. Thus, People's War continues to be relevant in terms of the relationship between society, the Party, and the army in China.

Finally, the present stage of the evolution leaves no doubt that China has global aspirations which are in sync with its assertive postures in the maritime regions where it has maritime territorial disputes. In the light of its declared ambitions in the 2014 Paper, its capabilities and training programmes need to be carefully monitored. Training is important because the Chinese PMS is untested in the absence of combat

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[196] See references in no. 132 and no. 139.

experiences. The last combat experience it had was in the 1979 in the war with Vietnam. In addition, on a larger note, what needs to followed constantly is the nature of China's overseas interests, the military's alignment with domestic politics, and China's international strategic manoeuvres to find clues about how far Chinese political assertion will translate into military assertion. This monitoring will also be able to point out whether and how China's global aspiration for the PLA will turn into global ambition. Will the PMS that is defined in terms of Informationisation, get a new framework in terms of China's global interests? As of now, China's focus is on winning local Informationised Wars. However, the evolution suggests that in the course of a not so distant future, dominating – if not winning – the Informationised Wars in distant geographical areas, most likely maritime, would become the new 'basic point' or the PMS in China's military strategy.

Table 1: Joint Exercise and Training with Foreign Armed Forces

Time	Name	Participants	Venue
2014			
January	'Cobra Gold'	Multinational exercise	Thailand
April	'Maritime Cooperation 2014'	Bangladesh, Singapore, Brunei, Pakistan, India and Indonesia	China
March	'Komodo'	17 countries	Indonesia
April	'Peace Angel 2014'	China and Pakistan	Pakistan
May	'Shaheen (Eagle)-3'	China and Pakistan	Pakistan
May	'Maritime Cooperation 2014'	Russia	China
May	Navy Exercise	Nigeria	Gulf of Guinea
June	Navy Exercise	Cameroon	Gulf of Guinea
Jun-July	RIMPEC	23 countries	US
July	'Aviadarts-2014'	Russia and Belarus	Russia
Aug	'Peace Mission-2014'	SCO countries	China
October	'Exercise Kowari'	US and Australia	Australia
October	'Beyond 2014'	Tanzania	Tanzania
October	'Sharp Knife Airborne-2014'	Indonesia	China
November	'Cooperation-2014'	Singapore	China
November	'Hand-in-Hand-2014'	India	India
December	'Military Skills Competition'	Pakistan, Germany, Japan, and Brazil	China
December	'China-US Navy Drill'	China and US	Gulf of Aden
December	'Peace and Friendship 2014'	China and Malaysia	Malaysia
2013			
July 5-12	'Joint Sea'	China and Russia	Peter the Great Bay at Vladivostok
July 27-August 15	'Peace Mission-2013'	Joint Anti-Terrorism Exercise by SCO Member States	Chelyabinsk, Russia
August 24-25 (minor variation possible)	China-US Anti-piracy Drill	China and US	Gulf of Aden

November 4-14	China-India Joint Military Exercise	China and India	Chengdu Military Region, China
2012			
April 22-27	'Maritime Cooperation-2012'	China and Russia	Waters off the Yellow Sea near Qingdao, Shandong province , China
May 11-25	'Blue Strike-2012'	China-Thailand Marine Training Exercise	Zhanjiang and Shanwei, Guangdong Province, China
June7-14	'Peace Mission-2012'	Joint SCO Anti-Terrorism Exercise	Khujand, Tajikistan
July 3-15	'Sharp Knife-2012'	China-Indonesia Special Forces Training	Jinan, Shandong Province, China
Sept. 17	China-US Joint Anti-Piracy Drill	China and US	Central and western waters, Gulf of Aden
Sept. 10-25	'Cormorant Strike-2012'	Joint Exercises of Special Forces	Eastern coast, Sri Lanka
Oct. 29-31	'Cooperation Spirit-2012'	China, Australia and New Zealand Exercise on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief	Brisbane, Australia
Nov. 16-30	Anti-Terrorism Training of Special Forces	China and Jordan	Amman, Jordan
Nov. 26-Dec. 7	'Divine Eagle-2012'	China-Belarus Airborne Troops Training	Xiaogan, Hubei Province, China
Nov. 20-Dec. 19	Training of Special Forces	China and Colombia	Bogota, Colombia
Nov. 29-30	Joint Humanitarian-Assistance and Disaster-Relief Tabletop Exercise	China and US	Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China
2011			
March 5-30	'Shaheen-1'	China-Pakistan Air Force Joint Training	Pakistan
March 8-12	'Peace-11'	Multinational Naval Exercise	Waters off Karachi, Pakistan
June 5-17	'Sharp Knife-2011'	China-Indonesia Special Forces Joint Training	Bandung, Indonesia
July 5-15	'Divine Eagle-2011'	China-Belarus Airborne Troops Joint Training	Baranovichi, Belarus
Oct.14-Nov. 13	Joint SOF Training	China and Venezuela	Venezuela
Nov.14-27	'Friendship-2011'	China-Pakistan Anti-Terrorism Training	Pakistan
Nov. 28-Dec. 1	'Cooperation Spirit-2011'	China-Australia Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Actual-Troop Exercise	Dujiangyan, Sichuan Province, China

2010			
July 1-11	'Friendship-2010'	China-Pakistan Joint Anti-terrorism Training	Qingtongxia, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, China
September 9-25	'Peace Mission-2010'	Joint SCO Anti- terrorism Military Exercise	Matybulak, Kazakhstan
September 23, 29	Joint Maritime Search-and-Rescue Exercise and Joint Training of Marines on Basic Tasks	China and Australia	Qingdao, Shandong Province, Zhanjiang, Guangdong Province, China
September 24	Joint Maritime Manoeuvre Exercise	China and Australia	Waters off Sydney, Australia
October 6-20	'Strike-2010', 3rd Joint Anti-terrorism Training of the Special Forces	China and Thailand	Guilin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China
October 7	Joint Maritime Exercise and Training	China and Australia	Waters off the Coast of Darwin
October 26-November 14	'Blue Strike-2010'	First China-Thailand Marine Joint Training	Sattahip, Thailand
November 1-14	'Friendship Operation-2010'	China- Romania Joint Military Training of Mountain Troops	Kunming, Yunnan Province, China
November 7-14	First China-Turkey Joint Army SOF Unit Training	China and Turkey	Turkey
November 18-26	'Cooperation-2010'	China-Singapore Joint Anti-terrorism Training	Singapore
November 23-30	'Peace Angel-2010'	China-Peru Joint Humanitarian Medical Rescue Operation	Peru
2009			
March 5-14	'Peace-09'	Multinational Maritime Exercise	The Arabian Sea
June 17-30	'Peace Angel-2009'	China-Gabon Joint Humanitarian Medical Rescue Operation	Ogooue-lvindo Province, Gabon
June 18-26	'Cooperation-2009'	China-Singapore Joint Anti-terrorism Training Exercise	Guilin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

June 26-July 4	'Peacekeeping Mission-2009'	China- Mongolia Joint Peacekeeping Exercise	Beijing, China
July 22-26	'Peace Mission-2009'	China-Russia Joint Anti-terrorism Military Exercise	Khabarovsk (Russia), Taonan, Jilin Province, China
September 10-26	'Friendship Operation-2009'	China- Romania Joint Military Training of Mountain Troops	Brad, Romania
2008			
December 5-14	'Hand-in-Hand 2007'	China-India Joint Counter Terrorism Training	Belgaum, India
July 9-31	'Strike 2008'	China-Thailand Joint Army Training in Special Operations	Chiang Mai, Thailand
2007			
December 19-27	'Hand-in-Hand 2007'	China-India Joint Counter Terrorism Training	Kunming, China
October 2-3	Joint Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise	China, Australia and New Zealand	The Tasman Sea
August 9-17	'Peace Mission 2007'	Joint SCO Military Anti-Terrorism Exercise	Xinjiang, China; Chelyabinsk, Russia
July 15-31	'Strike 2007'	China-Thailand Joint Army Training in Special Operations	Guangzhou, China
May 11-23	Second Multilateral Maritime Exercise of WPNS		Waters Off Singapore
March 6-13	'Aman 2007', Joint Maritime Military Exercise		The Arabian Gulf
2006			
December 11-18	Joint Counter-Terrorism Exercise	Russia and Pakistan	Abbottabad, Pakistan
November 18-19	Joint Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise (Phase II)	China and US	South China Sea, China
September 22-23	Joint Counter-Terrorism Exercise	Russia and Tajikistan	Hatlon Prefecture, Tajikistan
September 20	Joint Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise (Phase I)	China and US	Sea Area Adjacent to the Port of San Diego, US
2005			
December 13	Joint Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise	China and Thailand	Sea Area Adjacent to the Port of Sattahip, Thailand

December 1	Joint Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise	China and India	Sea Area Adjacent to the Port of Cochin
November 24	Joint Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise	China and Pakistan	Sea Area Adjacent to the Port of Karachi
November 17-25	Joint Military Exercise	China and Russia	Vladivostok, Russia; Shandong, China
2004			
October 10	Joint Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise	China and Australia	Qingdao
August 6	Joint Counter Terrorism Exercise	China and Pakistan	Xinjiang
20 June	Joint Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise	China and UK	Qingdao
March 16	Joint Maritime Search-and-Rescue Exercise	China and France	Qingdao
2003			
November 14	Joint Maritime Search-and-Rescue Exercise	China and India	Shanghai
October 21	Joint Maritime Search-and-Rescue Exercise	China and Pakistan	Shanghai
August 6-12	Counter Terrorism Exercise	Multilateral SCO Exercise	Border area of Kazakhstan and China

Source: The information for the year 2014 is drawn from Naval Jagota, 'The Developments in the Chinese Armed Forces in 2014', in Prashant Kumar Singh (ed.), *China Yearbook 2014*, Magnum Books, New Delhi: 2014, p. 72; the information for the year 2013 has been complied by the author from open sources; the information from 2003 to 2012 is from China's various Defence White Papers.

Table 2: Participation of China's Armed Forces in International Disaster Relief and Rescue

Time	Country	Reason	Aid	Value (RMB)	Mission/Taskforce
March 2012	Japan	Tsunami	Tents, mineral water and rubber gloves	30 million	Joined the CISAR team in rescue efforts
April 2011	Tunisia	Turmoil	Medicine, food and tents	30 million	
July 2011	Libya	Civil War	Medicine, food and tents	50 million	
Sept. 2011	Pakistan	Flood	Tents	30 million	Sent PLAAF aircraft to transport relief materials
Oct. 2011	Pakistan	Flood			Sent a medical assistance team
Oct. 2011	Thailand	Flood	Life rafts and water-purifying equipment	85 million	
Oct. 2011	Thailand	Flood	Life rafts, diesel generator sets and emergency lamps	9.55 million	Sent PLAAF aircraft to transport relief materials
Oct. 2011	Cambodia	Flood	Medicine and bedding	50 million	
Nov. 2012	Cuba	Hurricane	Medicine, tents, terry blankets, water-purifying equipment and generators	17 million	
August 2010	Pakistan	flood	tents, towelling coverlets, water purification equipment, generators, medicine	110	The CISAR team, a PLA medical team, and a helicopter rescue formation were sent to Pakistan to conduct rescue operations.
August 2010	Russia	forest fire	fire-fighting equipment	20	
March 2010	Chile	earthquake	tents, towelling coverlets, water purification equipment, generators	US$2 million	
January 2010	Mongolia	snow disaster	grain, food, generators, cotton-padded quilts	10	
January 2010	Haiti	earthquake	tents, water purification equipment, medicine	30	The Chinese International Search and Rescue (CISAR) team, a PLA medical care and epidemic prevention team were sent to Haiti to conduct rescue operations.
May 2009	Mexico	swine flu	medicine	27	
May 2009	Pakistan	refugees	medicine, tents, towelling coverlets,	30	

Source: The information is drawn from China's various Defence White Papers.

Table 3: China's Participation in UN Peacekeeping Operations (till 31 December 2012)

UN Peacekeeping Mission	Acronym	Time Frame	Number of Troops		Number of Military Observers and Staff Officers	
			Current	Total	Current	Total
UN Truce Supervision Organization	UNTSO	April 1990 to present			4	108
UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission	UNIKOM	April 1991 to October 2003				164
UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara	MINURSO	September 1991 to present			10	352
UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia	UNTAC	December 1991 to September 1993		800		97
UN Operation in Mozambique	ONUMOZ	June 1993 to December 1994				20
UN Observer Mission in Liberia	UNOMIL	November 1993 to September1997				33
UN Special Mission to Afghanistan	UNSMA	May 1998 to January 2000				2
UN Mission in Sierra Leone	UNAMSIL	August 1998 to December 2005				37
UN Department of Peacekeeping operations	UNDPKO	February 1999 to present			2	18
UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea	UNMEE	October 2000 to June 2010		2,180		116
UN Mission in Liberia	UNMIL	October 2003 to present	558	7,812	8	98
UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire	UNOCI	March 2004 to present			6	58
UN Operation in Burundi	ONUB	June 2004 to September 2006				6

UN Mission in the Sudan	UNMIS	April2005 to July 2011		3,480		135
UN Interim Force in Lebanon	UNIFIL	March 2006 to present	335	3,197	8	58
UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste	UNMIT	Oct.2006 to Nov.2012				15
UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone	UNIOSIL	Feb.2007 to Feb.2008				1
AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur	UNAMID	November 2007 to present	315	2,205	8	42
UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	MONUSCO	July 2010 to present	218	1,090	16	47
UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus	UNFICYP	February 2011 to present			3	5
UN Interim Security Force for ABYEI	UNISFA	July 2011 to October 2011				2
UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan	UNMISS	July 2011 to present	338	676	13	13
UN Supervision Mission in Syria	UNSMIS	April 2012 to August 2012				9
Total			1,764	21,440	78	1,485

Source: The information is drawn from China's various Defence White Papers.

Appendix 1: Safeguarding the Security of International SLOCs

To fulfill China's international obligations, the Chinese Navy carries out regular escort missions in the Gulf of Aden and the waters off Somalia. It conducts exchanges and cooperation with other escort forces to jointly safeguard the security of the international *Sea Lines of Communication* (SLOCs). As of December 2012, Chinese navy task groups have provided protection for four World Food Programme (WFP) ships and 2,455 foreign ships, accounting for 49 per cent of the total of escorted ships. They helped four foreign ships, recovered four ships released from captivity, and saved 20 foreign ships from pursuit by pirates. Chinese navy escort task forces have maintained smooth communication with other navies in the areas of joint escort, information sharing, coordination, and liaison. They have conducted joint escorts with their Russian counterparts, carried out joint anti-piracy drills with naval ships of the ROK, Pakistan and the US, and coordinated with the EU to protect WFP ships. It has exchanged boarding visits of commanders with task forces from the EU, NATO, the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), the ROK, Japan, and Singapore. It has exchanged officers for onboard observations with the navy of the Netherlands. China takes an active part in the conferences of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) and 'Shared Awareness and Deconfliction' (SHADE) meetings on international merchant shipping protection. Since January 2012, independent deployers such as China, India, and Japan have strengthened their convoy coordination. They have adjusted their escort schedules on a quarterly basis, optimised available assets, and thereby enhanced escort efficiency. China, as the reference country for the first round of convoy coordination, submitted its escort timetable for the first quarter of 2012 in good time. India and Japan's escort task forces adjusted their convoy arrangements accordingly, thereby formulating a well-scheduled escort timetable. The ROK joined these efforts in the fourth quarter of 2012.

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