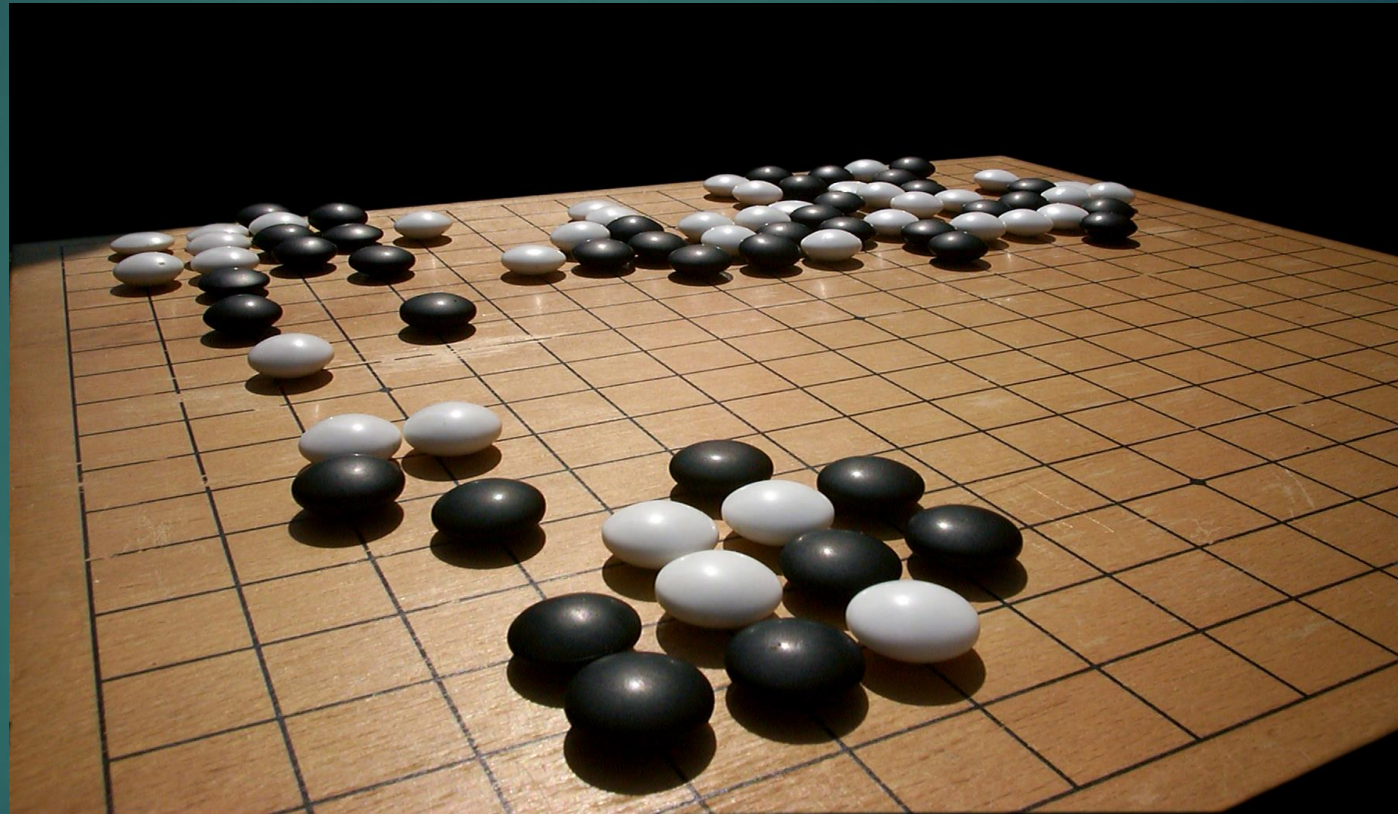




Weiqi

OBSERVATIONS FROM A DECADE GAMING WITH THE CHINESE

Weiqi is the Chinese name for the traditional game of positional strategy commonly known in English by its Japanese name: 'Go'



What qualifies me to give this talk?

- ▶ Steering group member and scenario writer for a bilateral, Track II/Track I.5 crisis management effort ongoing since 2005.
- ▶ Principal designer for several additional non-governmental, bilateral crisis management games.
- ▶ Relationships with people in the PLA and PRC national security system who were able to answer questions.

This Talk is Not About

- ▶ Live Exercises
- ▶ Commercial Gaming
- ▶ Ground-Up Use of Gaming for Education in the PRC PME System

An Exercise is not a Wargame

- ▶ Exercises are about the real time movement of military assets to train and test readiness and capability – wargames are about the process of decision making (Peter Perla, (1990) “The Art of Wargaming.” Naval Institute Press, Annapolis. pp. 273-280)
- ▶ The PLA is good at exercises – indeed, PLA exercises are expanding in size and scope, and serving as surrogates for a force lacking actual experience.
- ▶ The PLA is increasingly participating in bi-and-multi-lateral exercises:
 - ▶ With Russia in the Med. Circa 2015; in the ECS and Sea of Japan
 - ▶ With Russia and other Shanghai Cooperation Organization members in Central Asia
 - ▶ With India
 - ▶ With Australia
 - ▶ Cobra Gold 2013
 - ▶ RIMPAC 2014

Headed to “Blue Whale”

CCTV NEWS

CNTV



MILITARY DRILL
China begins exercises in East China Sea

CHINA 24



01:09 / 02:37

450K

Commercial gaming thrives

- ▶ A whole talk at could be devoted to the robust popular culture offerings sponsored by the PLA in video games and 'war fiction.'



The PLA Says Wargaming is Important

- ▶ Some discussion of PLA wargaming has been allowed in the press in the last few years.
- ▶ 'Wargaming' has become part of several PME curricula since ~2008 (Tom has homework)
- ▶ Cyber-gaming for training and education has received considerable emphasis in PLA doctrine (see Dean Cheng in 'War on the Rocks'
<http://warontherocks.com/2015/02/the-peoples-liberation-army-on-wargaming/>)

Chinese Pol-Mil Wargaming Culture

- ▶ The PLA is not as practiced in, or open about, 'full spectrum' wargaming (full spectrum = DIMEFIL/PEMESII)
- ▶ There is a small literature in Chinese – mostly about other people's wargames
- ▶ Track II efforts closest we have come to seeing Chinese wargaming (that I know of); These efforts connect to very specialized parts of the PRC national security apparatus, for example, CFISS (中国国际战略研究基金会), or CICIR (中国现代国际关系研究院).
- ▶ These efforts are politically sensitive in Beijing, and participation varies depending on the climate

I. Structural Features

- ▶ Few PLA (or other) wargames are full spectrum
 - ▶ Most are purely kinetic
 - ▶ Most are operational, not strategic
- ▶ Silos pervade – even ‘full spectrum’ games typically exclude civilian and law enforcement officials [SOA anecdote]
- ▶ By implication, the audience/customer for the analytic product is likely to be almost always military, except at the highest level, and for the most important games
- ▶ Who Red-Teams?
 - SMEs from inside the Chinese PME system, mostly
 - ▶ Academy of Military Science (军事科学研究院)
 - ▶ National Defense University (中国人民解放军国防大学)

For example...



Maj. General Zhu Chenghu, NDU



Maj. General Yao Yunzhu, AMS

II. Behavioral Features

- ▶ Philosophical principles play a large role – they are as important to discuss and agree on as policy positions
- ▶ Strong adherence to the principle of never taking the first shot
- ▶ ‘Perspective driven reality’: application of moral judgment to pragmatic behaviors – the “how dare they?” factor
- ▶ Selective interpretation/application of legal standards and international norms
 - ▶ IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES IN MARITIME LEGAL STANCES

Behavioral Features

- ▶ Persistent, high level of mistrust towards U.S. intentions, other regional actors intentions
- ▶ Poor understanding of alliance relationships, both in terms of structural/technical features, and underlying dynamics
- ▶ Persistent myths about U.S. signaling through force posture
- ▶ Silos have observable negative effects on quality of participation:
 - ▶ Lack of inter-service technical knowledge
 - ▶ Lack of well understood and practiced interagency and civ-mil coordination – people don't stay in their lanes, or their lanes are poorly defined

III. Changes over time

- ▶ Less criticism of scenario 'realism' based on preconceived notions of acceptable behavior
- ▶ Less reference to maxims
 - ▶ *Tao guang yang hui* (韬光养晦) ~ "Hide brightness, nourish obscurity"
 - ▶ *Youli, youli, youjie* (有理有利有节) ~ "On just grounds, to our advantage, with restraint"
- ▶ Less 'self-adjudication'
- ▶ Increasing frankness in expressing concerns over U.S. foreign policy and increased concern for finding a common vocabulary of crisis management with other regional actors

IV. Takeaways:

- ▶ The overall PRC national security apparatus is not focused on carrying out the kind of 'wargaming at its best' that is aimed for in the U.S. and elsewhere
- ▶ Those parts of the PLA which are interested in improving this are avidly seeking best practices and methodological insights to improve and inform
- ▶ The learning curve is steep, and lined with pitfalls created by broader lack of transparency, quality scholarship, and access to knowledge about other nation's priorities and national security mechanisms – but they are climbing it nonetheless
- ▶ Even the best red-teaming leaves important insight gaps compared to having the real red team (pun intended)...