

SEC Seminar n°1 Spring Series 2026

Title: *Sun Tzu: Metaphors and Strategic Thought in Contemporary Culture*

Subtitle: *The Art of War”, Using Mind Maps.*

Introduction

The upcoming seminar will explore a unique and thought-provoking perspective on one of history’s most influential strategic texts: *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu. Drawing on interdisciplinary research that combines computer science, logic, and historical analysis, the session will present how modern tools—specifically mind-mapping techniques—can uncover the underlying structures of this ancient work.

This presentation will share the results of a research project carried out by **Peter van Emde Boas**, Emeritus Professor at the Institute for Logic, Languages and Computation, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands and **Ghica van Emde Boas** a retired Software Architect. The research is a collaboration between the University of Amsterdam and Tsinghua University in Beijing. The mind-mapping work has been published in *Analyzing the Logic of Sun Tzu in “The Art of War”, Using Mind Maps.*

Through this approach, the seminar reveals that many of Sun Tzu’s statements are not meant to be interpreted literally, but rather as abstract models expressed through metaphors, oppositions, and structured reasoning patterns. These insights allow the principles of *The Art of War* to be applied far beyond ancient warfare, including modern military thinking, organizational strategy, and business environments.

The seminar will be introduced by **Saskia Bos**, "art historian/curator" - board member of SEC Netherlands and member of the SEC International Executive Council- and presented by Ghica van Emde Boas, a former IBM software architect who pioneered the mind-map methodology used in this research, together with Prof. Peter van Emde Boas. They bring a rare combination of technical rigor and conceptual clarity to the interpretation of classical texts.

Participants can expect a series of engaging examples demonstrating how ancient strategic metaphors continue to resonate in contemporary contexts.