

Leaders And Battles The Art Of Military Leadership

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the definitive translation of sun tzu s timeless classic of military strategy art of war sun tzu s art of war is almost certainly the most famous study of strategy ever written this treatise has been credited with influencing some of the most legendary military operations beyond the battlefield people far and wide have long turned to art of war for advice on how to succeed in various competitive situations and companies around the world now make this book required reading for their executives in this translation chinese warfare scholar ralph d sawyer places art of war in its proper historical context outlining several battles that sun tzu either conducted or that may have influenced him and offers an edition that is uniquely accurate and accessible

when a state has claims upon another it may not always be best to enforce them by arms the public interest must be consulted before action the most just war is one which is founded upon undoubted rights and which in addition promises to the state advantages commensurate with the sacrifices required and the hazards incurred unfortunately in our times there are so many doubtful and contested rights that most wars though apparently based upon bequests or wills or marriages are in reality but wars of expediency the question of the succession to the spanish crown under louis xiv was very clear since it was plainly settled by a solemn will and was supported by family ties and by the general consent of the spanish nation yet it was stoutly contested by all europe and produced a general coalition against the legitimate legatee frederick ii while austria and france were at war brought forward an old claim entered silesia in force and seized this province thus doubling the power of prussia this was a stroke of genius and even if he had failed he could not have been much censured for the grandeur and importance of the enterprise justified him in his attempt as far as such attempts can be justified in wars of this nature no rules can be laid down to watch and to profit by every circumstance covers all that can be said offensive movements should be suitable to the end to be attained the most natural step would be to occupy the disputed territory then offensive operations may be carried on according to circumstances and to the respective strength of the parties the object being to secure the cession of the territory by the enemy and the means being to threaten him in the heart of his own country every thing depends upon the alliances the parties may be able to secure with other states and upon their military resources in an offensive movement scrupulous care must be exercised not to arouse the jealousy of any other state which might come to the aid of the enemy it is a part of the duty of a statesman to foresee this chance and to obviate it by making proper explanations and giving proper guarantees to other states a state

attacked by another which renews an old claim rarely yields it without a war it prefers to defend its territory as is always more honorable but it may be advantageous to take the offensive instead of awaiting the attack on the frontiers there are often advantages in a war of invasion there are also advantages in awaiting the enemy upon one's own soil a power with no internal dissensions and under no apprehension of an attack by a third party will always find it advantageous to carry the war upon hostile soil this course will spare its territory from devastation carry on the war at the expense of the enemy excite the ardor of its soldiers and depress the spirits of the adversary nevertheless in a purely military sense it is certain that an army operating in its own territory upon a theater of which all the natural and artificial features are well known where all movements are aided by a knowledge of the country by the favor of the citizens and the aid of the constituted authorities possesses great advantages these plain truths have their application in all descriptions of war but if the principles of strategy are always the same it is different with the political part of war which is modified by the tone of communities by localities and by the characters of men at the head of states and armies the fact of these modifications has been used to prove that war knows no rules military science rests upon principles which can never be safely violated in the presence of an active and skillful enemy while the moral and political part of war presents these variations plans of operations are made as circumstances may demand to execute these plans the great principles of war must be observed for instance the plan of a war against france austria or russia would differ widely from one against the brave but undisciplined bands of turks which cannot be kept in order are not able to maneuver well and possess no steadiness under misfortunes the invasion of silesia by frederick ii and the war of the spanish succession were wars of expediency there are two kinds of wars of expediency first where a powerful state undertakes to acquire natural boundaries for commercial and political reasons secondly to lessen the power of a dangerous rival or to prevent his aggrandizement these last are wars of intervention for a state will rarely singly attack a dangerous rival it will endeavor to form a coalition for that purpose these views belong rather to statesmanship or diplomacy than to war of course in a war an ally is to be desired all other things being equal although a great state will more probably succeed than two weaker states in alliance against it still the alliance is stronger than either separately the ally not only furnishes a contingent of troops but in addition annoys the enemy to a great degree by threatening portions of his frontier which otherwise would have been secure all history teaches that no enemy is so insignificant as to be despised and neglected by any power however formidable to interfere in a contest already begun promises more advantages to a state than war under any other circumstances and the reason is plain the power which interferes throws upon one side of the scale its whole weight and influence it interferes at the most opportune moment when it can make decisive use of its resources there are two kinds of intervention 1 intervention in the internal affairs of neighboring states 2 intervention in external relations whatever may be said as to the moral character of interventions of the first class instances are frequent the romans acquired power by these interferences and the empire of the english india company was assured in a similar manner these interventions are not always successful while russia has added to her power by interference with poland austria on the contrary was almost ruined by her attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of france during the revolution intervention in the external relations of states is more legitimate and perhaps more advantageous it may be doubtful whether a nation has the right to interfere in the internal affairs of another people but it certainly has a right to oppose it when it propagates disorder which may reach the adjoining states there are three reasons for intervention in exterior foreign wars viz 1 by virtue of a treaty which binds to aid 2 to maintain the political equilibrium 3 to avoid certain evil consequences of the war already commenced or to secure certain advantages from the war not to be obtained otherwise history is filled with examples of powers which have fallen by neglect of these principles a state begins to decline when it permits the immoderate aggrandizement of a rival and a secondary power may become the arbiter of nations if it throw its weight into the balance at the proper time in a military view it seems plain that the sudden appearance of a new and large army as a third party in a well contested war must be decisive much will depend upon its geographical position in reference to the armies already in the field for example in the winter of 1807 napoleon crossed the vistula and ventured to the walls of königsberg leaving austria on his rear and having russia in front if austria had launched an army of one hundred thousand men from bohemia upon the oder it is probable that the power of napoleon would have been ended there is every reason to think that his army could not have regained the rhine austria preferred to wait till she could raise four hundred thousand men two years afterward with this force she took the field and was beaten while one hundred thousand men well employed at the proper time would have decided the fate of europe

sun tzu said in the practical art of war the best thing of all is to take the enemy s country whole and intact to shatter and destroy it is not so good so too it is better to capture an army entire than to destroy it and to capture a regiment a detachment or a company entire than to destroy them hence to fight and conquer in all your battles is not supreme excellence supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy s resistance without fighting the art of war iii 1 2 the art of war is a work of chinese antiquity on the art of human conflict it is a widely commentated classic of chinese civilization and has become widely read outside of chinese civilization war was long viewed in imperial china as an important study for government master sun was one of the pinnacles of the art to fully understand the operation of classical china their theory of conflict is worthy of further study this book is a faithful reproduction of the 1910 edition of lionel giles translation of the art of war by master sun as in the original it includes the full text in english and classical chinese along with commentary and analysis of the principles contained these tie into european and asian strategic examples are also provided by the translator the introduction along with full ability to index the chinese is available to the reader this edition seeks to get a clean easy to read copy of the art of war with the original chinese for advanced study

the definitive translation of sun tzu s timeless classic of military strategy art of war art of war is almost certainly the most famous study of strategy ever written and has had an extraordinary influence on the history of warfare the principles sun tzu expounded were utilized brilliantly by such great asian war leaders as mao tse tung giap and yamamoto first translated two hundred years ago by a french missionary sun tzu s art of war has been credited with influencing napoleon the german general staff and even the planning for desert storm many japanese companies make this book required reading for their key executives and increasingly western businesspeople and others are turning to the art of war for inspiration and advice on how to succeed in competitive situations of all kinds unlike most editions of sun tzu currently available many simply retreads of older flawed translations this superb translation makes use of the best available classical chinese manuscripts including the ancient tomb text version discovered by archaeologists at linyi china ralph sawyer an outstanding western scholar of ancient chinese warfare and a successful businessman in his own right places this classic work of strategy in its proper historical context sawyer supplies a portrait of sun tzu s era and outlines several battles of the period that may have either influenced sun tzu or been conducted by him while appreciative of the philosophical richness of the art of war this edition stresses sun tzu s practical origins and presents a translation that is both accurate and accessible

widely regarded as the oldest military treatise in the world this landmark work covers principles of strategy tactics maneuvering communication and supplies the use of terrain fire and the seasons of the year the classification and utilization of spies the treatment of soldiers including captives all have a modern ring to them

this work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important and is part of the knowledge base of civilization as we know it this work is in the public domain in the united states of america and possibly other nations within the united states you may freely copy and distribute this work as no entity individual or corporate has a copyright on the body of the work scholars believe and we concur that this work is important enough to be preserved reproduced and made generally available to the public we appreciate your support of the preservation process and thank you for being an important part of keeping this knowledge alive and relevant

twenty five hundred years ago sun tzu wrote this classic book of military strategy based on chinese warfare and military thought since that time all levels of military have used the teaching on sun tzu to warfare and civilization have adapted these teachings for use in politics business and everyday life the art of war is a book which should be used to gain advantage of opponents in the boardroom and battlefield alike

broadly defined as the grey area between strategy and tactics operational art spans the theory and practice of planning and conducting campaigns and major operations aimed at accomplishing strategic and operational objectives in a given theatre of operations an intermediate link between strategy and tactics has always existed but a distinct concept that encompasses a systematic and deliberate plan of campaign for major operations is a mere two hundred years old based on country specific case studies this book describes how

the concepts that underpin operational art originated how they received practical expression in various campaigns and how they developed over time the point of departure is the campaigns of the god of war napoleon bonaparte the book then proceeds with chapters on the evolution of operational art in prussia germany the soviet union russia the united kingdom united states israel and china the final chapter deals with the future of operational art in irregular warfare theory is critical to refining and improving existing methods of applying operational warfare and its importance cannot be overstated however to be useful theory and its accompanying vocabulary must be combined with a proper examination of historical trends and practical experience the present volume attempts to achieve that combination this book is a project of the oxford leverhulme programme on the changing character of war

translation previously published in the huainanzi new york columbia university press 2010

a manual on the rational planning and conduct of military operations written over two millennia ago in china

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