

APPENDIX A

A SAMPLE ESSAY FORMAT

CGSC students (including CAS3) are knowledgeable writers. However, OPORD and OPLANs have influenced their writing style. Writing an OPORD and OPLAN is not the same as academic writing. Academic writing consists of taking a position on a topic and crafting the essay to support or refute the topic. The argumentative essay included in this appendix illustrates academic writing. This essay follows the format prescribed in *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Sixth Edition). All CGSC student papers will conform to this standard. Note that the standard allows students to use endnotes or footnotes to document sources.

The sample essay includes a title page. Some instructors do not require a title page. Check with your instructor.

PURPOSE OF WRITING

At CGSC students compose their essays to fulfill specific purposes. Any essay may fall into one of four categories--*narration, description, exposition or argumentation*. Each category supports a different purpose.

Narration tells a story about a series of events. *Description* helps the reader to see, feel and hear what the writer intends. *Exposition* clarifies to the reader what the author knows about a given subject. *Argumentation* is to persuade the reader on the rightness of a particular point of view or a course of action.

Probably the most common form of writing at CGSC is *Argumentation*. *Argumentative* writing, also known as persuasive writing, states a position and supports it. The goal of argumentation is agreement. It seeks to convince an audience that the author's position is valid. Successful argumentative writing has many elements. It exhibits writer credibility, sensitivity to audience values, sound logic, and appropriate evidence. It clearly states the author's position, acknowledges and deals with important evidence for counter-arguments, evokes appropriate emotion, and leads the audience to the author's position. Writers and editors can evaluate argumentative writing with CGSC Form 1009W, Evaluating Writing (Appendix C in CGSC Student Text 22-2, *Writing and Speaking Skills for Leaders at the Organizational Level*).

Mahan and Jomini

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"I have found my Jomini. His name is Mahan." So said Commodore Stephen B. Luce, then president of the Naval War College, in 1885.¹ By so saying Luce introduced the world of naval strategy to Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, who was to remold it over the next decade. In essence, Mahan was to do for naval warfare what Jomini had done some fifty-odd years before for land warfare. In this paper I will briefly show that Mahan deserves to be called "The Jomini of Seapower" by identifying three basic concepts which are common to the theories of both men: unchanging principles of warfare; lines of operation or communication; and the opposing force as the primary objective in warfare.

Both Jomini and Mahan concluded that by detailed study of the history of warfare one is able to deduce certain 'principles of war' which do not change with time. Despite the fact that technological advances force changes in tactics, these underlying principles governing the use of arms remain as valid in the present day as they were during the times of Caesar or Napoleon. Discussing this concept in his writings, Jomini stated: "War is always to be conducted according to the great principles of that art."²

He went on to propose that

there is one great principle underlying all the operations of war--a principle which must be followed in all good combinations. It is embraced in the following maxims:

1. To throw by strategic movements the mass of an army, successively, upon the decisive points of a theater or war, and also upon the communications of the enemy as much as possible without compromising one's own.
2. To maneuver to engage fractions of the hostile army with the bulk of one's forces.
3. On the battlefield, to throw the mass of the forces upon the decisive point, or upon that portion of the hostile line which it is of the first importance to overthrow.
4. To so arrange that these masses shall not only be thrown upon the decisive point, but that they shall engage at the proper times and with energy.³

The modern soldier will recognize in these maxims the modern Principles of Mass, Maneuver and Objectives as we use them today.

Mahan, too, believed that certain principles governing warfare could be deduced by earnest study. "The battles of the past succeeded or failed according as they were fought in conformity with the principles of war."⁴ Although Mahan did not list such specific principles as Jomini, he did write that the

considerations and principles which enter into them [discussions of strategy] belong to the unchangeable, or unchanging, order of things, remaining the same, in cause and effect, from age to age. They belong, as it were, to the Order of Nature . . . whereas tactics, using as its instruments the weapons made by man, shares in the change and progress of the race from generation to generation.⁵

Clearly, both men shared the common belief that warfare, both on land and at sea, was governed by immutable principles which must be followed by the prudent commander if he desired to be successful.

In order to adhere to the principles of war, certain concepts occurred to both Jomini and Mahan which would permit those principles to best be followed. Central to Jomini's writing is the concept of 'lines of operation.' He uses this term to refer to the portion of the army's zone of operation which the forces actually traverse when moving from their base of operation to the battlefield. The concept forms the heart of his military theory.

If the art of war consists in bringing into action upon the decisive point of the theater of operations the greatest possible force, the choice of the line of operations, being the primary means of attaining this end, may be regarded as the fundamental idea in a good plan of a campaign.⁶

Jomini places great importance on the possession of interior lines, or a central position, for he feels this is the strategic position which best affords the commander the ability to mass his forces and attain a significant advantage over his opponent.

Mahan develops an analogous concept which he refers to as 'lines of communication.' He uses the term to refer to the sea lanes between the naval force and its course of supply. He regards these lines of communication "as retaining at least as great an importance in naval war as Jomini believed they had on land."⁷ Similar to Jomini, he perceived that a naval commander who possessed a central position could move to mass his forces at a decisive point more quickly than could his enemy; thus he could utilize his power more effectively in deciding the outcome of the conflict. Consequently, the prudent naval commander should seek to gather his forces and retain them for action in one central position; never should he divide his fleet.

A final common concept which both Jomini and Mahan propose is that the enemy's forces are the ultimate objective in any conflict and must be destroyed in a climactic battle to achieve victory. Jomini believed that "the objective of operations is always the enemy army, and all geographical objectives were

means to that end."⁸ Schooled in the wars of Napoleon, he felt that the role of the general was to maneuver his army so that it could mass at the last possible moment at the decisive point and crush his opponent. He expressed this in his writings by saying that "the offensive army should particularly endeavor to cut up the opposing army by skillfully selecting objective points of maneuver. . . ."⁹ For a commander to focus his attention on anything else was to lose the opportunity for success. Seeking the destruction of the opposing army was the surest and most effective way to victory.

Likewise, Mahan in several of his writings emphasized that "the primary mission of a battle fleet is to engage the enemy's fleet."¹⁰ This was so because once that fleet had been destroyed, the victor would possess control of the sea and be in the position to "drive the enemy's flag from it [the sea], or to allow it to appear only as a fugitive."¹¹ Writing on the subject of the strategy for a naval war, he expressed the concept very succinctly when he wrote:

if the true end [of naval war] is to preponderate over the enemy's navy and so control the sea, then the enemy's ships and fleets are the true objects to be assailed on all occasions If its object is to break up the enemy's power on the sea, cutting off his communications with the rest of his possessions, drying up the sources of his wealth in commerce, and making possible a closure of his ports, then the object of attack must be his organized military forces afloat; in short, his navy.¹²

By pursuing a strategy such as this, the enemy's commerce would disappear, his wealth would dry up, and his ability to wage war would dissipate. Mahan further believed that the quick and decisive victory by fleet action would hasten the ultimate termination of the conflict in favor of the naval victor. Thus, all effort had to be devoted to that end; everything else was only of secondary importance.

In this paper I have briefly examined some aspects of the theories of Baron Antoine de Jomini and Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan regarding land and naval warfare. Jomini developed his theory of land warfare to explain the Napoleonic Wars, while Mahan subsequently developed certain analogous concepts regarding naval warfare to explain British seapower. On developing their thoughts, both men believed that some basic understanding of the nature of warfare could be obtained by the study of military history, and both sought to identify those concepts which could be of use to military commanders of all ages. I have here discussed three such concepts which both held in common. Both men in their theories proposed that certain unchanging principles underlie all of military strategy,

whether it be on land or at sea. Both men in their theories emphasized the importance of lines of operation or communication, and saw the significance of the possession of a central position when engaging an opponent. Both men in their theories believed that the primary objective for an army or navy is the opposing army or navy, for only if that is destroyed can the conflict be brought to a favorable conclusion. Jomini, the interpreter of Napoleon, introduced theoretical order to the chaos of land warfare; Mahan, the evangelist of sea power, did precisely the same thing for naval warfare. As the philosophical successor to Jomini, Alfred Thayer Mahan on all counts deserves his title, "The Jomini of Seapower."

ENDNOTES

1. Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1805*, with an Introduction by Anthony Preston (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1980), 3.
2. Baron de Jomini, *The Art of War*, trans. G. H. Mendell and W. P. Craighill (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1862; reprint as part of the West Point Military Library, ed. Thomas E. Griess and Jay Luvass, Westport: Greenwood Press, n.d.), 13.
3. *Ibid.*, 63.
4. Mahan, 20.
5. *Ibid.*, 67.
6. Jomini, 104.
7. Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), 174.
8. Michael Howard, "Jomini and the Classical Tradition in Military Thought," in *The Theory and Practice of War*, ed. Michael Howard (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965), 17.
9. Jomini, 296.
10. Phillip A. Crowl, "Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian," in *Makers of Modern Strategy*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 458.
11. Mahan, 91.
12. *Ibid.*, 138.

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