

Sun Tzu's Art of War
Sun Zi bing fa

STUDY GUIDE
&
Introductory Working Bibliography

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Sun Tzu (Wade-Giles rendering of Chinese characters) or Sun Si (current Pinyin system used in China) probably lived during the Chou/Zhou dynasty at the end of the “Spring and Autumn” era (770-476 BCE) or the beginning of the “Warring States” era (475-221 BCE) – thus, +/- 5th century BCE. The absence of any discussion of mounted cavalry argues for the earlier period. The discovery in 1972 of a copy of Sun Tzu’s “Art of War” (*Sun-zi ping-fa*) in a Han dynasty tomb (140-118 BCE) essentially identical with the current thirteen chapters argues that the “Art of War” as known today is still the authentic and original version. Whether Sun Tzu himself wrote it or, like much of the writing attributed to Aristotle, it was written by his students or disciples remains unknown.

It is difficult to say which of the following is the “best” translation for the simple reason that classical Chinese “characters” are not single “words.” Each character denotes an “idea” and, usually, suggests other “associated ideas.” The Chinese character (兵) translated in the title *Sun Tzu bing fa* as “art” and in chapter one as “organization” has its root in the concept “to flow like water” and managing an irrigation system. It should not be surprising then that Sun Tzu will often refer to organizing a maneuver so that it “flows like water.” See the on-line Chinese/English dictionary character-by-character analysis of the *Sun-zi bing fa* at: <http://www.zhongwen.com>

For the non-classical Chinese reader (and this includes many contemporary Chinese), a very helpful introduction to the problems of both understanding classical Chinese “writing” and associated problems of translation, see the excellent discussion in:

Roger T. Ames & Henry Rosemont, *The Analects of Confucius: a philosophical translation*. NY: Ballantine Books; 1998. ISBN: 0-345-40154-9.

So, how to begin? I suggest one start with the most familiar version and then, for the versions listed in Part I, consult the others as available. Then move on through the versions listed in Part II for an interestingly different perspective.

PART I – translation, text & commentaries into English by native English-speakers.

Sun Tzu on the Art of War, (Lionel Giles, translation & commentary),
(Singapore: Graham Brash (Pte) Ltd., 1993), ISBN 9971-49-107-9
First published in 1910 {and thus in the public domain, and available on the Internet to download} This is the classic and very scholarly first major translation into English. There are many reprints of Giles passing as “new” translations; always check the copyright page. As Giles is widely available and as Giles “numbered” the paragraphs, it is suggested that, like the chapter and verse numbers added to the Bible, Giles be used to footnote the text. (e.g. Chapter Four, paragraph fourteen as IV:14).
See: <http://www.kimsoft.com/polwar.htm>

See, for example:

Sun Tzu: The Art of War, edited and introduction by Dallas Galvin; translated from the Chinese by Lionel Giles, (NY: Barnes & Noble Classics, 2004), ISBN: 1-59308-172-3 *Inexpensive and preserves the Giles chapter & paragraph numbering.*

Sun Tzu - The Art of War, (Samuel B. Griffith, translation & commentary)
(NY: Oxford University Press, 1971), ISBN 0-19-501476-6
Version most familiar to military readers. Brig.Gen. Griffith, USMC forward by B.H. Liddell Hart. 2005 republication has an appendix of Wu Chi's “Art of War” & an excellent, but dated, bibliography.

Sun-Tzu The Art of Warfare, (Roger T. Ames, translation & commentary),
(NY: Ballentine, 1993), ISBN 0-345-36239-X
First English translation incorporating the recently discovered Yin-ch' üeh-shan texts. Full scholarly apparatus. Good section on “shih” -strategic advantage.

Art of War, (Ralph D. Sawyer, translation & commentary)
(CO: Westview, 1994), ISBN 0-8133-1951-X
Excellent introductory material and footnotes, often found with Sun Pin included.
Author's site: <http://www.ralphsawyer.com/work1.htm>

Sun Tzu: The Art of War, (Thomas Cleary, translation & commentary),
(Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1988), ISBN 0-87773-452-6
“philosophical” or “literary” translation; locates work in Taoist canon
Also available in a miniature size edition ISBN: 0-87773-537-9.

The Art of War. The Denma Translation, (The Denma Translation Group, translation & commentary),
(Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2002), ISBN 1-57062-978-1
Accurate translation, informative essays, and insightful commentaries, somewhat literal but capturing the “poetic” quality of the text, from the new texts found in 1972. See
<http://academic.bowdoin.edu/suntzu/> & <http://www.suchns.com/>

Sun-Tzu: The Principles Of Warfare. "The Art Of War," (Sonshi.com, translation and commentary),
(Atlanta, 1999) See: www.sonshi.com

The Art of War. The essential translation of the classic book of life, (John Minford, translation & commentary), (New York: Viking, 2002), ISBN 0-670-03156-9
Extremely concise, yet complete, truer to the original Chinese format.

The Art of War: Sun Zi's Military Methods, (Victor H. Mair, translation), (NY: Columbia University Press, 2007) ISBN: 0231133820.

Fidelity to the original, insightful commentary and reliance on archaeologically recovered manuscripts, makes a great translation. Questions the authorship, asserting that Sun Wu never existed and claims that The Art of War coalesced over a period of around seventy-five years, from the middle of the fourth century to the first quarter of the third century B.C.E.

Part II - translation, text & commentaries into English by native Chinese-speakers.

Sun Tzu: The New Translation, (J.H. Huang, translation & commentary), (NY: William Morrow, 1993), ISBN 0-688-12400-3

Especially detailed discussion of alternate meanings of Chinese characters

The Modern Chinese Interpretation. Sun Tzu's Art of War, (Yuan Shibang, translator; commentary by General Tao Hanshang) (NY: Sterling Publishing Co., 1990, 1987, 2000), ISBN 0-8069-6639-4/0-8069-2789-5 *commentary by professor at Beijing War College, PRC (paperback)*

Or see:

Sun Tzu's Art of War. The Modern Chinese Interpretation, (Yuan Shibang, translator; commentary by General Tao Hanshang), (NY: Sterling Publishing Co., 1987, 2000), ISBN1-4027-1291-X *commentary by professor at Beijing War College, PRC (hardback)*

Sun Zi: The Art of War, (Zhang Huimin, translator, Maj. Gen. Xie Guoliang, commentary), (Beijing, Panda Books, n.d.), ISBN 0-8351-3176-9

Chinese and English text with commentary by Director of the Strategy Research Institute of the Chinese Military Academy & President of the Chinese Sun Zi's Art of War Society.

The Essentials of War: The masterpiece of a strategist in ancient China, (Zhong Qin, transcription & translation), (Beijing: New World Press, 1996), ISBN 7-80005-331-8
Very useful edition as it contains the "modernized" or simplified Chinese characters together with the Romanized Pinyin (to assist pronunciation) and English versions.

The Art of Strategy. A New Translation of Sun Tzu's Classic The Art of War, (R. L. Wing, translation & commentary), (New York: Broadway Books, 2000), ISBN 0-385-23784-7

The book has Chinese on the left and his English translation on the right. There are chapter header commentaries by the author.

Sun Zi: The Art of War & Sun Bin: The Art of War, (Wu Xianlin , Zheng Tian, authors; Wu Rusong, Lin Wusun, editors, Zhang He, editor & translator), (People's China Publishing House, 1999), ISBN 7800655105.

Uses the new 1972 finds. "The first time ever. this amazing military treatise is now available in English. French and German, and together With the original text in classical and modern Chinese" NOT YET SEEN

PART III – translation, text & commentaries in other European languages (does not include translations from an existing English-language version)

French

Sun Tse: L'Art de la guerre, (Texte traduit par Jean-Jacques Amiot)
(Paris: Pocket, 1993) ISBN 2-266-05098-2
Text of the original Père Amiot translation (1772); excellent commentary by contemporary French strategic thinkers, e.g., Gérard Chaliand, Alain Joxe, etc.

Sun Tzu: L'art de la guerre, (Jean Levi, traduction et édition critique),
(Paris: Hachette, 2000), ISBN 2-01-278917-X
Excellent translation & commentary; full scholarly apparatus

Sun Zi – L'Art de la guerre, (Valérie Niquet, traduction et édition critique)
(Paris: Economica, 1999), ISBN 9-782717-838565
Excellent translation with critical apparatus.

L'Art de la guerre de Sunzi & L'art de la guerre de Sun Bin, (Tang Jialong, traduction),
(Pékin: Editions Chine populaire, 1994), ISBN 7-80065-509-1
Chinese and French texts, with commentary, on both Sun Tzu & Sun Bin.

German

Sun Zi über die Kriegskunst & Sun Bin über die Kriegskunst, (Zhong Yingjie, Übersetzer),
(Beijing: Verlag Volkschina, 1994), ISBN 7-80065-508-3
Chinese and German texts, with commentary, on both Sun Tzu & Sun Bin.

Sunzi: die Kunst des Krieges, (Olla, artist, & Thomas Emmrich, Übersetzer),
(Berlin: Wissendurst Verlagsgesellschaft, 1998), ISBN 3-932584-04-X
Irreverent but accurate contemporary German-language version in comic-book format.

Portuguese

Os Treze Momentos: análise da obra de Sun Tzu, (Alberto Mendes Cardosa, translation & commentary)
(Brazil: Biblioteca Do Exército Editoria, 1987), ISBN 85-7011-124-X
Brazilian (Portuguese-language) version. Extensive commentary.

Swedish

Sunzis kr igsko nst (Sun Zi's art of war), (Ooi Kee Beng, translator with Bengt Pettersson), (Stockholm, Sweden: The Operative Institute, Stockholm Military College, in *Acta Series C5*, 1999) ISSN 1403-2120, ISBN 91-87136-53-8.

Or see:

Sunzis kr igsko nst (Sun Zi's art of war), (Ooi Kee Beng, translator with Bengt Pettersson), (Stockholm, Sweden: The Association of Oriental Studies, Stockholm University in *Orientaliska Studiers Skriftserie* nr 28, 1997), ISBN 91-970854-5-6.

Part IV – Illustrated and “comic book” editions. Two reasons to include these: (1) they are very common and widespread in contemporary Asia and, more importantly, (2) Chinese characters usually represent concepts, not “words.” How an artist chooses to “illustrate” an idea is, of course, another form of “translation.”

Sun Zi's Art of War: A Picture Story Book, (Ma Shouliang, *et alia*, eds; Shu Jianhua, translator), (Hangzhou: Zhejiang People's Fine Arts Publishing House, 1995), ISBN 7-5340-0312-1/G-38
A very interesting and informative six volume edition in which each paragraph of the text is illustrated by a major military event or battle in Chinese history, together with maps and historically accurate drawings. Ranges from the dim mythological past to Zheng Chenggong's amphibious assault in 1661 from Jinmin Island (Quemoy) to liberate Taiwan from the Dutch. The text is mainly Giles with some Griffith, but it differs widely in some spots.

Sunzi Speaks. The Art of War. (Brian Bruya, translation), (New York: Doubleday, 1994) ISBN 0-385-47258-7
A “comic book” version from a Taiwanese illustrator, Tsai Chih Chung, but translated by an American.

Asiapac Books PTE Ltd, Singapore (<http://www.asiapacbooks.com/>) publishes an extensive library of Chinese classics in comic book format including Sun Tzu and the other six strategists comprising the “Seven Military Classics.” These include:

The Art of War, (Leong Wen Kang, trans., Tsai Chih Chung, illustrator), ISBN: 9971-985-60-8 *Asian edition of previous cite.*

Sunzi's Art of War, (Sui Yun, trans., Wang Xuanming illustrator), (1998), ISBN: 981-3068-99-X

Six Strategies for War, (Alan Chong, trans., Wang Xuanming illus.), (1993), ISBN 9971-985-99-3, *The T'ai Kung's Six Secret Teachings*

Three Strategies of Huang Shi Gong, (Alan Chong, trans., Wang Xuanming, illus.), (1993), ISBN: 981-3029-14-5, *the Huang Shi Gong San Lue*

The Art of Command: Wei Liao Zi's Strategies of War, (Wang Xuewen, trans., Wang Xuanming, illus.), (2002), ISBN: 981-229-241-1

The Art of Tactics: Winning Strategies of Wu Zi, (Geraldine Chay, trans., Wang Xuanming, illus.), (2002), ISBN: 981-229-277-2

Sima's Rules of War: The Practice of Dynamic Leadership, (Allen Zhuang, trans., Wang Xuanming, illus.), (2000), ISBN: 981-229-162-8 *the Sima Fa*

The Art of Winning: Wisdom of Tang Tai Zong and Duke Li of Wei, (Ho Lai Lin, trans., Wang Xuanming, illus.), (2001), ISBN: 981-229-240-3

Part V – “Applications” and “extensions” of Sun Tzu to various topics. Some are quite insightful, some are superficial.

Sun Tzu: War and Management, Chow-Hou Wee, Khai-Sheang Lee & Bambang Walujo Hidajat, (Singapore: Addison-Wesley, 1991 [USA edition, 1996]), ISBN: 0-201-62859-7 *Application to strategic management and thinking – one of the best in this genre.*

The Art of War for Women, Chin-Ning Chu, (NY: Doubleday, 2007) ISBN: 978-385-51840-6 “*Sun Tzu’s ancient strategies and wisdom for winning at work.*” *Actually quite insightful beyond the implication of the title. See the same author’s:*

Thick Face, Black Heart: The Asian Path to Thriving, Winning and Succeeding, Chin-Ning Chu, (London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1995), ISBN: 1-85788-125-7 *Don’t assume women don’t understand strategy!*

“*Sun Wu’s Art of War*” and *the Art of Business Management*, Li Shijun, Yang Xianju & Qin Jiarui, (trans. from the Chinese by Mou Xudian), (Hong Kong: Hai Feng Publishing Co., Ltd., 1990) ISBN: 962-238-173-1 *Interesting attempt to show Sun Tzu’s ideas as the “Chinese characteristics” permitted by Marxism-Mao Zedong-Thought. e.g. “the proper management of a collective.”*

The Art of War for Executives, Donald G. Krause, (NY: Perigee Books, 1995), ISBN: 0-399-51902-5 *Simplified paraphrase*

Sun Tzu and the Art of Business, Mark McNeilly, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), ISBN: 0-19-509996-6 *Six strategic principles for managers*

Sun Tzu and the Art of Modern Warfare, Mark McNeilly, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), ISBN: 0-19-513340-4 *Quite thoughtful and informed discussion of strategic, operational and tactical applications to modern warfare. Recommended for the military reader.*

Sun Tzu’s The Art of War plus The Ancient Chinese Revealed, (Gary Gagliardi, translation & commentary), (Seattle, WA: Clearbridge Publishing, 1999), ISBN 1-929194-19-6 *A continuing series on Sun Tzu directed toward different audiences; has Chinese characters and literal translation opposite the English. See: www.artofwarplus.com & two entries below.*

Sun Tzu’s The Art of War plus Strategy Against Terror. Ancient Wisdom for Today’s War, (Gary Gagliardi, translation & commentary), (Seattle, WA: Clearbridge Publishing, 2004), ISBN: 1-929194-31-5 *An example of the continuing series on Sun Tzu directed toward different audiences, has Sun Tzu translation on the left with applicability to Global War On Terror in English on the right.*

The Art of War in Sun Tzu’s Own Words, (Gary Gagliardi, translation & commentary), (Seattle, WA: Clearbridge Publishing, 1999), ISBN: 1-929194-00-5 *for the martial artist*

The Art of War, Stephen F. Kaufman, (Boston: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1996), ISBN: 0-8048-3080-0 – *Author is Hanshi 10th Dan – for the martial artist.*

Art of War: Sun Tzu Strategy Card Deck: 54 Winning Strategies (Robert Cantrell, author), (Center For Advantage, 2004) ISBN 0972291482

Novel approach of a strategy card deck as a planning tool, it describes 54 of the most important strategic principles competitors use to win and why the strategies work. According to the website, "Top flight military schools, to include the National Defense University...., use these cards in their training programs. Top businesses and law firms have also adopted the cards for strategy planning and brainstorming." The author also has a book. <http://www.artofwarsuntzu.com/>

Sun Tzu on Management. The Art of War in Contemporary Business Strategy, (Foo Check Teck & Peter Hugh Grinyer, authors), (Singapore: Butterworth-Heinemann Asia, 1994), ISBN 981-00-6799-2 Not so much a translation of Art of War but an analysis of its implementation based on a survey of strategic planning processes in the East Asian region by a Chinese Singaporean. Yes, "they" do use Sun Tzu.

Part VI – Suggested readings on Classical Chinese strategic & military thinking

*The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China, (Ralph D. Sawyer, translator)
(CO: Westview, 1993), ISBN 0-8133-1228-0*

***Essential text.** Contains Sun Tzu and six other classical military writings. Mastery of these seven classics was the basis for promotion in the Confucian / governmental examination system since the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127).*

*Sun Pin - Military Methods, (Ralph D. Sawyer, translation & commentary)
(CO: Westview, 1995), ISBN 0-8133-8888-0*

Elaboration of Art of War by Sun Tzu's "grandson." Excellent introduction and footnotes.

*Sun Pin – The Art of Warfare, (DC. Lau & Roger T. Ames, translation & commentary)
(NY: Ballantine Books, 1996), ISBN 0-345-37991-8*

Elaboration of Art of War by Sun Tzu's "grandson." Excellent introduction and footnotes.

*Mastering the Art of War: Zhuge Liang & Liu Ji, (Thomas Cleary, translation & commentary)
(Boston: Shambhala, 1988), ISBN 0-87773-513-1 [Reissue 2000 ISBN 1-59030-264-8]*

Among the Chinese, Zhuge Liang is as well known as Sun Tzu.

See especially the chapter "The Art of War and the I Ching: Strategy & Change," pp.10-29.

One Hundred Unorthodox Strategies: Battle and Tactics in Chinese Warfare, (Ralph D. Sawyer, translator), (CO: Westview, 1996), ISBN: 0-8133-2861-6

The "Pai-chan Ch'I-lüeh," a 15th century Ming dynasty work attributed to Liu Po-wen. Excellent survey of topic. Pulls together Chinese "operational" thinking.

Reminiscences of an ancient strategist. The mind of Sun Tzu. (Foo Check Teck, author) (Aldershot, UK: Gower, 1997), ISBN 0-566-07970-4

A pseudo-autobiographical diary, written as Sun Zi, which attempts to explain the mind of Sun Tzu. Author also wrote "Sun Tzu on Management."

Chinese Strategists. Beyond Sun Zi's Art of War. (Ooi Kee Beng, trans.), (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish, 2007), ISBN 981-261-371-4

The two Chinese classics in this consist of Wu Zi's "Art of War" and "Conversations with Tang Taizhong," written a thousand years apart. General Wu Zi, who lived in the earlier part of the Warring States period (475-221 BC) never lost a battle in his life, and Emperor Taizong managed to found the long-lasting Tang Dynasty (AD 618-906) that southern Chinese still proudly refer to as the basis of their culture.

Part VII – Introduction to Classical Chinese Thinking

For the Chinese (certainly during Sun Tzu's era and arguably still today) the "universe" is, indeed, a universe, a "one" thing. What "is" is. Neither we humans nor anything else stand "outside" existence. Moreover, everything that "is," is *chi/qi* in constant transformation. While the West might distinguish "matter" from "energy," the Chinese note that "matter" is merely "materialized" or easily observable *qi*, like a stone or military formation, and "energy" is not-yet-materialized *chi/qi*, like Spring and Summer, "spiritual holiness," or the strategic plan in the commander's mind. What "is" is matter/energy (*chi/qi*) in constant, mutually influencing/interacting transformation (*yin/yang*). Thus, the one book that captures this, and continues to baffle the Western mind, is the thousands-year old *I Ching*, the "Book of Changes."

For the Chinese, and Sun Tzu, this means that we humans do not stand "outside" our universe. In contrast to Western epistemology, there is no possibility of a privileged Archimedean "outside" standard by which to observe, judge or understand "reality." For the Chinese, the "state" or "configuration" of the universe - that is, matter/energy (*chi/qi*) in constant, mutually influencing/interacting transformation (*yin/yang*) at any given moment in time is called *Tao/Dao*. "We" "are" in a particular state or condition "now," and "we" "are" in a particular state or condition "then." Thus, "we" "are" best understood as a particular set of relationships at a particular time and place. That the essence of "war" is fundamentally a relationship is, in principle, familiar to any Western strategist. The common Western phrase "system of systems" would probably be translated conceptually into Chinese as "the relationships among the relationships."

Understanding Sun Tzu, then, requires some appreciation of the Classical Chinese "world view." A few suggested books:

François Jullien, *The Propensity of Things. Toward a history of efficacy in China*. (Janet Lloyd, trans.), (NY: Zone Books, 1995) ISBN 0-942299-94-9
The most important book toward understanding Sun Tzu in the context of the Chinese philosophical or metaphysical world view. The author discusses Shih [Sun Tzu's Chapter 5 title, variously translated as disposition, propensity, momentum or situation] in all aspects of Chinese thought. See the book review at:
<http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2006/04/1813794>

Originally published as: François Jullien, *La propension des chose: Pour une histoire de l'efficacité en Chine*, (Editions du Seuil, 1992).

See the same author's *Detour and Access: Strategies of Meaning in China and Greece*, (Sophie Hawkes, trans.), NY: Zone Books, 2000), ISBN 9-781890-951-108

Roger T. Ames, *The Art of Rulership: A Study of Ancient Chinese Political Thought*, (NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), ISBN 0-7914-2062-0

Roger T. Ames & Henry Rosemont, *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation*, (NY: Ballantine Books, 1998), ISBN 0-345-40154-9

Arthur Waley, *Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China*, (first published in 1939 - many editions available)
Classic introduction to major 4th century BCE Chinese philosophies: Taoism, Confucianism, and Realism.

Sebastian De Grazia, (ed.), *Masters of Chinese Political Thought: From the Beginnings to the Han Dynasty*,

(NY: Viking Press, 1973) ISBN 670-00357-3

Selections from the "Six Classics," the "Four Books," Sun Tzu, Lord Shang, and others.

Benjamin Schwartz, *The World of Thought in Ancient China*,

(MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1989), ISBN 0-674961919

Relates Chinese concepts to equivalent Western modes of thinking

Johnston, Alastair Iain, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, (Princeton University Press, 1998), ISBN 0691002398.

Excellent, if controversial, commentaries on the "Seven Military Classics." The book argues that a textual analysis of older Chinese literature, using the "Seven Military Classics," will lead to the conclusion that the Chinese have essentially two distinct mentalities regarding the use of violence. The traditional view, Confucian-Mencian, is of a cultural adversity to the use of force. Johnston claims that this view, while perhaps a valid perspective in Chinese history, is exaggerated in the face of actual historical evidence.

Dennis Bloodworth & Ching Ping, *The Chinese Machiavelli: 3000 years of Chinese statecraft*, (NY: Dell, 1976), ISBN 0-440-31267-1

Title says it all. A fun read demonstrating continuity in strategic thought.

Ralph D. Sawyer, *The Tao of Deception. Unorthodox Warfare in Historic and Modern China*, (NY: Basic Books, 2007), ISBN 0-465-07205-4

The definitive work on ancient military principles and their relevance to the War on Terror, the war in Iraq, and the rise of China as a geopolitical power. The normal American military understanding of deception is trivial compared to the range of Chinese theory and practice building on Sun Tzu's insight that "warfare is the Way of deception."

Ralph D. Sawyer, *The Tao of Spycraft. Intelligence theory and practice in traditional China*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998) ISBN 0-8133-3303-2

Wang Chen, *The Tao of War*, (NY: Barnes & Noble, 2006), ISBN: 0-7607-9095-7

Translation and commentary by Ralph D. Sawyer of the T'ang Dynasty era Wang Chen's interpretation of the Art of War in terms of the Taoist T'ao Te Ching / Dao de Jing.

William H. Mott IV & Jae Chang Kim, *The Philosophy of Chinese Military Culture. Shih vs. Li*, (NY: MacMillian, 2006), ISBN 1-4039-7187-0

Shih, Sun Tzu's key concept in Chapter 5 is explored in detail.

Part VIII - A few selected journal articles on Sun Tzu

Emerson M. S. Niou & Peter C. Ordeshook, "A game-theoretic interpretation of Sun Tzu's Art of War," *Journal of Peace Research*. 1994 May; 31(2):161-174.

Edward O'Dowd & Arthur Waldron, "Sun Tzu for strategists," *Comparative Strategy*. 1991; 10:25-36.

Laure Paquette, "Strategy and Time in Clausewitz's *On War* and in Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*." *Comparative Strategy*. 1991; 10:37-51.

Christopher C. Rand, "Chinese military thought and philosophical Taoism." *Monumenta Serica*. 1979; 34:171-218.

David Lai, "Learning from the Stones: A *Go* approach to mastering China's strategic concept, *shi*," (US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2004).

Benjamin E. Wallacker, "Two concepts in early Chinese military thought," *Language*. 1966; 42(2):295-299. (reviews possible meanings of "orthodox" & "unorthodox.")

Arthur Waldron, "The Art of Shi," *The New Republic*. 1997: June 23, pp. 36-41.
A review of *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*.

Carnes Lord, "A Note on Sun Tzu," *Comparative Strategy* 2000; 19(4): 301-8.

Caleb M. Bartley, "The Art of Terrorism: What Sun Tzu Can Teach Us about International Terrorism," *Comparative Strategy* 2005; 24(3): 237-51.

Kenny Ratledge, "Football According to Sun Tzu," *Coach & Athletic Director* 2003: 72(10): 24-27.

Chester W. Richards, "A Swift, Elusive Sword: What if Sun Tzu and John Boyd did a National Defense Review?" DC: Center for Defense Information, 2001:1-84. See:
www.cdi.org/mrp/swift_elusive_sword.pdf

Douglas M. McCready, "Learning from Sun Tzu," *Military Review* 2003:May-June: 85-88.

Ralph D. Sawyer, "Chinese Strategic Power: Myths, Intent, and Projections." *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*. 2007; 9(2): 1-63.

Ralph D. Sawyer, "Chinese Warfare. The Paradox of the Unlearned Lesson," *American Diplomacy* 1999: 13, on line:
http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/AD_Issues/amdipl_13/china_sawyer.html

Readers of this Website are encouraged to submit additional journal references.

Part IXa-Sun Tzu websites (as urls come and go, some of these may disappear)

<http://www.chinapage.com/sunzi-e.html#01> Giles translation and Chinese text

<http://artofwar.thetao.info/china/text.htm> Giles translation and Chinese text

<http://classics.mit.edu/Tzu/artwar.html> Giles translation, easily downloadable

<http://www.kimsoft.com/polwar.htm> Giles translation, with Chinese generals' comments

<http://www.sonshi.com/learn.html> Sonshi translation, with forum for comments. Billed as largest Sun Tzu website

<http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/132> Giles translation, EBook download

<http://www.artofwarplus.com/> Gary Gagliardi's site, which publishes many different directed editions of Art of War. He has critiques of all the other translations on his site.

<http://www.afpc.asso.fr/wengu/wg/wengu.php?l=Sunzi&no=0> French (Association Francaise des Professeurs de Chinois) site with both Giles and Amoit translations with commentaries on the same page with Chinese original

<http://www.zhongwen.com/bingfa.htm> Chinese characters with dictionary, English mirror

<http://www.artofwarsuntzu.com/> Robert Cantrell's site

<http://academic.bowdoin.edu/suntzu/> The Denma Group site. Also, see <http://www.suchns.com/>

<http://www.yellowbridge.com/onlinelit/artofwar.php> *The complete text of the Art of War presented with side-by-side translation. The English text is from Giles. Chinese names transliterated from original Wade-Giles form to pinyin form. Site also has Analects of Confucius, Yi Jing [I Ching], Daoist Classics, Dao De Jing [Tao Te Ching].*

<http://www.west-meet-east.com/edusuntsu1.htm#stind> Interesting English translation of unknown author on webpage dedicated to "West Meets East"

<http://www.artofwarsuntzu.com/suntzuandhollywood.htm> "Sun Tzu and Hollywood." How Sun Tzu's Art of War has appeared on the big and small screen.

<http://www.ralphsawyer.com/work1.htm> Ralph Sawyer's site

Part IXb-Sun Tzu podcasts

<http://librivox.org/bookfeeds/the-art-of-war-by-sun-tzu.xml> Giles translation

Part X – A new set of challenges: The Thirty-Six Stratagems

The first reference to the **Thirty-six Stratagems** is the phrase "Of the 36 stratagems, running away is the best option" which appeared in the official *History of the Southern Qi* published about 1,500 years ago. Numerous "one liners" quoting one or another of the 36 stratagems appear throughout Chinese literature. The first known copy of which there is a printed version of an edition prepared about 300 years ago was discovered in 1941 in a flea market at Chengdu, Sichuan Province. It was reprinted in 1941 and is the basis for current editions.

The organization of the extant versions are: thirty-six sections, each of which consists of the "stratagem" {almost always composed of only four characters; sometimes only three} and a very brief elaboration. Some contemporary editions follow this very terse core with illustrations from Chinese history or cross references to Sun Tzu and the other military classics. Most importantly, however, the brief "elaboration" in the original text almost always contains a reference to the most important Chinese book, the *I Ching* or "Book of Changes." Unfortunately for us Westerners, unless the editor of a contemporary edition points

out the reference to the *I Ching*, we'll miss it. For the Chinese, it works like "hypertext." That is, the "stratagem" captures the "essence" of the concept; the "elaboration" (itself very brief) points to further "development potential" in the "Book of Changes." The Book of Changes itself is intricately interconnected, cross-referenced and self-referential. One follows the "conceptual trail" ever deeper with increased insight, connections, and hopefully, to unanticipated "a-ha" illumination.

So, for further explorations of Chinese strategic, operational and tactical thinking:

Laurence J. Brahm, *Negotiating in China: 36 strategies*. (Singapore: Reed Academic Publishing Asia; 1995), ISBN: 981-00-6606-6.

Gao Yuan, *Lure the tiger out of the mountains: the thirty-six stratagems of ancient China*, (New York: Simon & Schuster; 1991), ISBN: 0-671-69489-8.

François Kircher, *Les trente-six stratagèmes: traité secret de stratégie chinoise*, (Paris: Payot & Rivages; 1995), ISBN: 2-86930-905-8.

Ma Xiaochun, *The thirty-six stratagems applied to Go*. (CA: Yutopian Enterprises; 1996), ISBN: 0-9641847-7-X.

Carl-Albrecht Seyschab, "The 36 stratagems: orthodoxy against heterodoxy," C.A. Seyschab, A. Sievers, & S. Szykiewicz, editors. *Society, Culture, and Patterns of Behaviour*. Bad Honnef: Horlemann Verlag Unkel; 1990;(3/4): pp. 97-155. ISBN: 3-927905-15-1. *The most scholarly treatment*.

Sun Haichen, *The wiles of war: 36 military strategies from ancient China*, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press; 1993), ISBN: 7-119-01399-8.

Stefan H. Verstappen, *The thirty-six strategies of ancient China*, (San Francisco: China Books; 1999), ISBN: 0-8351-2642-0.

Secret art of war: thirty-six stratagems, (Koh Kok Kiang & Liu Yi, trans., Wang Xuanming, illus.), (Singapore: Asiapac; 1992.), ISBN: 9971-985-94-2. *One of the Asiapac comic books*.

Harro von Senger, *The 36 Stratagems for Business*, (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish, 2006). ISBN: 1-904879-46-2

Douglas S. Tung & Kenneth Tung, *More than 36 Stratagems: a systematic classification based on basic behaviors*, (Victoria, Canada: Trafford, 2005), ISBN: 141200674-0

Part XI – A Course Syllabus / Outline

Instructors and teachers who may wish to develop a thirteen to fifteen session class on Sun Tzu are free to adopt or adapt the following syllabus used at the USAF Air War College as an elective course.

AIR WAR COLLEGE

THE ART OF WAR

Sun Tzu, The "Seven Military Classics" and Unconventional Strategic Thought

Prof. George J. Stein
Department of Warfighting

INTRODUCTION

This seminar will examine strategic thinking primarily through the examination of several major works of classical Chinese strategy known collectively as *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* and the *Thirty-six Stratagems*. Special attention will be given to the one of these works best known in the West, Sun Tzu's *Art of War*. None of us are experts on China. None of us should expect to become experts on traditional Chinese strategic thought through one elective. Again, the purpose of the seminar is to examine an approach to strategic thinking primarily through reading and discussing a body of literature that is different. We are studying classical Chinese writings because they are unfamiliar, difficult and, ultimately, evocative of new, creative and distinctive strategic thinking.

During a period of exile in 1513, Machiavelli wrote to his friend Francesco Vettori describing how he spent his evenings. At the end of the letter, he noted that he had just finished writing a "little book" which we know as *The Prince*. We might consider approaching *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* in the same spirit.

In the evening I return to my house and enter my study; and at the door I take off the day's clothing, covered with mud and dust, and put on garments regal and courtly; and re clothed appropriately, I enter the ancient courts of men of antiquity where, affectionately received, I partake of that food which alone is mine and for which I was born, where I am not too timid to speak with them and ask them the reasons for their actions; and they in their courtesy answer me; and for four hours of time I feel no weariness, I forget every trouble, I do not fear poverty, death does not dismay me; I give myself over entirely to them.

OBJECTIVE

To analyze the intellectual, military and strategic heritage of classic China as the foundation for comparative evaluation and understanding of contemporary security issues and to support the AWC Core in Strategy and Warfighting.

DESIRED LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of this course, the class member will be able to:

1. Outline and demonstrate familiarity with the major elements of each "Military Classic" examined in the course, their unique and common strategic perspectives, and the comparative insight each might provide for contemporary issues of aerospace power.
2. Analyze, with some depth, the relationship between the strategic approach of Sun Tzu's *Art of War* and contemporary strategic thought.

3. Provide a developed reflection on the strategic approach of Sun Tzu through a written interlinear commentary on the *Art of War* and an oral presentation of the relationship (if any) between the *Art of War* and the employment of aerospace power.

TEXT MATERIALS - REQUIRED

The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China, (Ralph D. Sawyer, translator)
(CO: Westview, 1993), ISBN 0-8133-1228-0

Sun-Tzu – The Art of Warfare, (Roger Ames, translator)
(NY: Ballantine Books, 1993), ISBN 0-345-36239-X

Sun Tzu - The Art of War, (Samuel B. Griffith, translator)
(NY: Oxford University Press, 1971), ISBN 0-19-501476-6

The Art of War: a new translation, (The Denma Translation Group)
(Boston & London: Shambhala, 2001), ISBN 1-57062-552-2

Johnston, Alastair Iain, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*,
(NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), ISBN 0-691-02996-2

Six Strategies for War, (translator Alan Chong, illustrated by Wang Xuanming),
(Singapore: Asiapac Books, 1993), ISBN 9971-985-99-3

The Thirty-Six Stratagems, (Liu Yi, translator; illustrated by Wang Xuanming; illustrations translated by Kok Kok Kiang)
(Singapore: Asiapac Books, 1992), ISBN 9971-985-94-2

Other material distributed as needed.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course requirements (and basis for grade) in include:

- regular attendance, positive contribution to the seminar discussions, (30%),
- and an interlinear commentary on the *Art of War*. {for an example and model of “interlinear commentary” see: *Sun Tzu - The Art of War*, (Samuel B. Griffith, translator), (NY: Oxford University Press, 1971)}. (50%) Oral presentation: (20%)

Another requirement is a certain patience with yourself (and the course) on the subject of translations from Chinese to English. We will all suffer a bit of confusion to discover that, for example, the “T’ ai Kung’s Six Secret Teachings” is also “Tai Gong Liu Tao,” and that the T’ ai Kung (or Tai Gong) is also known as Jiang Shang, Lü Shang, Chiang Shang, or Jiang Tai Gong.

If the four translations of *Sun Zi Bing Fa* we will use in the seminar are not enough, an additional English language translation available on the WWW is:

Sun Tzu on the Art of War, (Lionel Giles, translation & commentary),
See: <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/artofwar.htm>

For a Chinese / English version of *Sun Zi Bing Fa* which carefully explains **each character of the text** from the original primitive meaning of the glyph (or character) to its connotations and implied meanings,

See: <http://zhongwen.com/bingfa.htm>

For Chinese text, English translation and extended commentary by the Denma Group translators,

See: <http://academic.bowdoin.edu/suntzu>

SYLLABUS & READING ASSIGNMENTS

*Please read the assignments **before** the class meeting*

SEMINAR ONE

“Chinese Strategic Culture and the *Parabellum* Paradigm,” Johnston, pp.61-72.

Recommended Reading

“Strategic Culture as Context,” in: Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy*, pp.129-151.

“Some Questions of Methodology,” Johnston, pp.32-49.

SEMINAR TWO

“The T’ ai Kung’s Six Secret Teachings,” in: Sawyer, *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*, pp.23-105.

Recommended Reading

Tai Gong Liu Tao, “Chinese Strategic Culture and the *Parabellum* Paradigm,” Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, pp.87-91.

Six Strategies for War, (illustrator, Wang Xuanming; translated by Alan Chong).

SEMINAR THREE

“Metaphysics, With Reference to Language,” “Language, With Reference to Metaphysics,” & “Classical Chinese. How Does It Mean?,” Ames, Roger T. & Henry Rosemont, *The Analects of Confucius: a philosophical translation*, (NY: Ballantine Books, 1998), pp.20-44.

Recommended Reading

“Chinese Strategic Culture and Grand Strategic Preferences,” Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, pp.109-123, 135-154.

SEMINAR FOUR

“The Thirty-Six Stratagems,” (Stein) – **handout**

Seyschab, C., “The 36 Stratagems: orthodoxy against heterodoxy,” *Society, Culture and Patterns of Behavior*, (Bad Honnef: Horlemann Verlag, 1990), pp. 97-155.

The Thirty-Six Stratagems, (Liu Yi, translator; illustrated by Wang Xuanming; illustrations translated by Kok Kok Kiang)

SEMINAR FIVE

“Introduction,” *Sun Tzu - the Art of War*, (Griffith), pp.1-56.

Jullien, François, “Potential is Born of Disposition in Military Strategy,” *The Propensity of Things: toward a history of efficacy in China*, (NY: Zone Books, 1995), pp.25-38.

Strongly Recommended Reading

Jullien, François, “Position as the Determining Factor in Politics,” & “A Logic of Manipulation,” *The Propensity of Things: toward a history of efficacy in China*, (NY: Zone Books, 1995), pp.39-57 & 59-71.

Recommended Reading

Sun Zi Bing Fa, “Chinese Strategic Culture and the *Parabellum* Paradigm,” Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, pp.93-105.

SEMINAR SIX

“Analysis of *Sun-Tzu: The Art of Warfare*,” *Sun-Tzu - The Art of Warfare*, (Ames), pp.39-96.

“Three Essays,” pp.63-123, & “About the Translation,” pp.225-229, *The Art of War: a new translation*, (Denma).

SEMINAR SEVEN

“Estimates,” pp.63-71, & “Waging War,” pp.72-76, *Sun Tzu - the Art of War*, (Griffith).

“Initial Estimations,” pp.157-159, & “Waging War,” pp.159-160, *Art of War*, (Sawyer - *Seven Classics*).

“On Assessments,” pp.103-105, & “On Waging Battle,” pp.107-109, *Sun-Tzu - The Art of Warfare*, (Ames).

“Appraisals,” pp.3-5, & “Doing Battle,” pp.6-8, *The Art of War: a new translation*, (Denma).

Recommended Reading

“Appraisals,” pp.127-134, & “Doing Battle,” pp.135-139, *The Art of War: a new translation*, (Denma).

SEMINAR EIGHT

“Offensive Strategy,” pp.77-84, & “Dispositions,” pp.85-89, (Griffith)

“Planning Offensives,” pp.160-162, & “Military Dispositions,” pp.163-164, (Sawyer).

“Planning the Attack,” pp.111-113, & “Strategic Positions,” pp.115-116, (Ames).

“Strategy of Attack,” pp.9-12, & “Form,” pp.13-15, *The Art of War: a new translation*, (Denma).

Recommended Reading

“Strategy of Attack,” pp.141-145, & “Form,” pp.146-150, *The Art of War: a new translation*, (Denma).

SEMINAR NINE

“Energy,” pp.90-95, & “Weaknesses and Strengths,” pp.96-101, (Griffith).

“Strategic Military Power,” pp.164-166, & “Vacuity and Substance,” pp.166-168, (Sawyer).

“Strategic Advantage,” pp.119-121, & “Weak Points and Strong Points,” pp.123-127, (Ames).

“Shih,” pp.16-19, & “The Solid and Empty,” pp.20-24, *The Art of War: a new translation*, (Denma).

Recommended Reading

“Shih,” pp.151-157, & “The Solid and Empty,” pp.159-165, *The Art of War: a new translation*, (Denma).

SEMINAR TEN

“Manœuvre,” pp.102-110, & “The Nine Variables,” pp.111-115, (Griffith)

“Military Combat,” pp.168-171, & “Nine Changes,” pp.171-172, (Sawyer).

“Armed Contest,” pp.129-132, & “Adapting to the Nine Contingencies,” pp.135-136, (Ames).

“The Army Contending,” pp.25-29, & “The Nine Transformations,” pp.30-32, (Denma).

Recommended Reading

“The Army Contending,” pp.166-173, & “The Nine Transformations,” pp.174-177, (Denma).

SEMINAR ELEVEN

“Marches,” pp.116-123, “Terrain,” pp.124-129, & “The Nine Varieties of Ground,” pp.130-140, (Griffith)

“Maneuvering the Army,” pp.172-175, & “Configurations of Terrain,” pp.175-177, & “Nine Terrains,” pp.178-183, (Sawyer).

“Deploying the Army,” pp.139-144, “The Terrain,” pp.147-151, & “The Nine Kinds of Terrain,” pp.153-162, (Ames).

“Moving the Army,” pp.33-39, “Forms of the Earth,” pp.40-44, & “The Nine Grounds,” pp.45-54, (Denma).

Recommended Reading

“Moving the Army,” pp.178-187, “Forms of the Earth,” pp.188-196, & “The Nine Grounds,” pp.197-212, (Denma).

SEMINAR TWELVE

“Attack by Fire,” pp.141-143 & “Employment of Secret Agents,” pp.144-149, (Griffith).

“Incendiary Attacks,” pp.183-184, & “Employing Spies,” pp.184-186, (Sawyer).

“Incendiary Attack,” pp.165-166, & “Using Spies,” pp.169-171, (Ames).

“Attack by Fire,” pp.55-57, & “Employing Spies,” pp.58-61, (Denma).

Recommended Reading

“Attack by Fire,” pp.213-217, & “Employing Spies,” pp.218-224, (Denma).

SEMINAR THIRTEEN

“Questions and Replies between T’ang T’ai-tsung and Li Wei-kung,” in: *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*, pp.311-360.

Tang Tai Zong Li Wei Gong Wen Dui, “Chinese Strategic Culture and the *Parabellum* Paradigm,” Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*, pp.91-93.

SEMINARS FOURTEEN & FIFTEEN

Student Commentaries on Sun Tzu’s *Art of War*
