

# THE MILITARY STRATEGIES OF SUN TZU: WAR AND MORE

**Coordinator:** James Gould

What do Caesar, Mao, Ho Chi Minh, the U.S. Marines, politicians and Japanese businessmen have in common? Knowing or not, they follow the strategies in *The Art of War*, a book written 2,500 years ago by Sun Tzu, a Chinese warrior philosopher. The study group examines the difference between force and power and how Sun's deceptively simple principles, in large part psychology, enable efficiency in war. We use Sun to analyze victory and defeat in conflicts over the ages from the Roman Empire through the Civil and World Wars to Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq, and devise future strategies against terrorism and ISIS. We also consider Sun's criteria for great generals and civilian leaders and how businessmen and lawyers follow Sun's strategies.

## **Readings:**

Thomas Cleary; Translator; *Sun Tzu The Art of War*; Shambhala Publications, Inc.; 2005; ISBN 978-1-59030-225-5; \$7.99.

A coursepack contains the remainder of the readings. Coursepack estimated cost is less than \$30.

**James** was a patent lawyer litigator. Now he travels, writes, reads, motorcycles, skis, SCUBA dives and enjoys New York's culture, always seeking to learn new things.

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### **Week 1: Force vs. Power, Efficiency of Force and Grand Strategy**

*The Art of War*, pp. i-iii, 1, 14, 18, 34, 60, 62, 67-69, 75, 107-8, 110, 113; *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire*, pp. 195-200; *Strategy*, pp. 366-372

### **Week 2: Generals, Spies and Deception**

*The Art of War*, pp. 11, 16, 29, 51, 53, 72-74, 84-85, 91, 112, 126, 137-8, 151, 165-70; *Mastering the Art of War*, pp. 40-42, 45, 48; *Robert E. Lee on Leadership*, pp. 30-38, 56-66; *Reminiscences of Ho Chi Minh*, pp. 125-129, 150-151, 236-239, 287

### **Week 3: Greek and Roman Strategies**

*The Art of War*, pp. 49, 79, 106; *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire*, pp. 1-5, 30-46, 55-60, 121; *Strategy*, pp. 27-41, 44-58; *War Commentaries of Caesar*, pp. 44-47, 74-77, 114-115, 318-325

### **Week 4: Strategies for Equal Forces: Napoleon and America's Civil War**

*The Art of War*, pp. 25, 27-8, 34, 76, 83, 91-2, 106, 160; *Mastering the Art of War*, p. 75, 98-99; *The Military Maxims of Napoleon*, pp. 15, 56-57, 60-61, 79-80; *Strategy*, pp. 113-129 (Napoleon), 138-155 (Civil War); *Robert E. Lee on Leadership*, pp. 103-124; *Memoirs of W.T. Sherman*, pp. 473, 486, 579-80, 584-585, 626-627, 642-645, 651-654, 658-660; NY Times, "150 Years Later, Wrestling With a Revised View of Sherman's March"

### **Week 5: Clausewitz and His Influence on World War I**

*The Art of War*, pp.34, 80, 93; Karl von Clausewitz Manuscript ~1827, excerpts; *Strategy*, pp. 167-179, 352-359, 348-349

### **Week 6: Equal Forces Continued: World War II and Blitzkrieg**

*The Art of War*, pp. 44, 70, 74, 87, 120-21, 152-3; *Mastering the Art of War*, pp. 59, 90, 96, 101; [civilwarwiki.com](http://civilwarwiki.com), "William Sherman"; *The Rommel Papers*, excerpts; *Strategy*, pp. 344-345, 360-362, 223-236, 293-300 and summarized excerpts

### **Week 7: Defense as Strategy**

*The Art of War*, pp. 54, 56, 58, 82, 87, 142, 147, 157; *Mastering the Art of War*, pp. 59, 90, 101, 103; *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire*, pp. 55-60, 61-80, 88-89, 104, 118-121; 130-154; *Memoirs of W.T. Sherman*, pp. 525-526

### **Week 8: Unequal Forces: Mao, Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan**

*The Art of War*, pp. 21-24, 45-6, 86; *Mastering the Art of War*, pp. 44, 59, 60, Wikipedia, "Strategy and Tactics of Guerrilla Warfare"; [marxist.org](http://marxist.org), "Mao's Tse-Tung's Strategy of Guerrilla Resistance Against Japan"; Center for a New American Security, "Afghan Taliban Intelligence Network Embraces the New"; NY Times Book Review of "Why We Lost, A General's Account of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars"

### **Week 9: Does Superior Technology Always Win?**

*A Study of History*, pp. 323, 330-337; eyewitnesshistory.com, “The Battle of Agincourt, 1415”; 2worldwar2.com, “World War 2 RADAR Technology”; dosits.org, “Sonar in World War II 1941-45”

### **Week 10: The Islamic Threat**

*The Art of War*, pp. 13,15, 17-19, 30, 35-40, 77-78, 83, 89, 93, 98-99, 112, 114, 127, 141, 146; *Mastering the Art of War*, pp. 9, 47; *Strategy*, p. 118; *A Study of History*, pp. 98-99, 168-169, 227-28; The Economist, “Heading Towards Disaster”, “Hope Springs” and “Destroying History’s Treasures”; Time Magazine “The War on ISIS”; Atlantic Magazine, “What Does ISIS Really Want?”; essay by James Gould, “500 Years After”

### **Week 11: Sun Tzu Applied to Non-Military Fields**

*The Art of War*, pp. 6, 8, 49, 51, 75-76, 80; *Mastering the Art of War*, pp. 40, 46, 51, 54; *Strategy*, pp. 16-19; lifehack.org, “Productivity and the Art of War, Applying Sun Tzu’s Strategies to Business”; suntzustrategies.com, “Six Principles of Sun Tzu and the Art of Business”; ABA Litigation Journal, “Litigation and the Art of War”

### **Week 12: What Does This All Teach Us About How to Shape The Future of America in the World?**

*The Art of War*, pp. 102, 135; *Mastering the Art of War*, pp. 9, 21, 52, 72, 93, *The True Believer*, pp. 25-37, 40-57, 67-71; NY Times Book Review of *Knife Fights, A Memoir of Modern War in Theory and Practice*; NY Times Opinion, “When Is A War Over”