

SUN ZI STUDIES IN THE UNITED STATES

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INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that in the 1980s and 1990s American scholars, business people and military officers have become more aware of Sun Zi's Art of War. Phrases and axioms from Sun Zi's text have also gradually moved into the popular imagination through some well-placed lines in movies, by comments from famous sports figures, and in other arenas of popular culture. For instance, Gordon Gecko, the evil protagonist businessman in the popular 1980s movie "Wall Street", quoted Sun Zi in the movie. The famous National Basketball Association coach Pat Riley quotes Sun Zi in his book The Winner Within: A Life Plan for Team Players (1993).

However, it is also true that the serious study and research of Sun Zi is very underdeveloped in the United States, especially in comparison with Sun Zi studies in China and Japan. This chapter provides a brief examination of the state of Sun Zi studies in the United States. It begins by describing the major English-language translations of Sun Zi in the United States. It then goes on to summarize the status of Sun Zi studies in the US academic community, in business education and training, and in the US military.

TRANSLATIONS

The publication of scholarly translations of the Sun Zi text by major American publishing houses has remained relatively constant over the 1990s. As Figure 1 shows, there has been no major surge in new translations or new book-length analyses of the text. The annual production of books on Sun Zi has remained relatively constant.

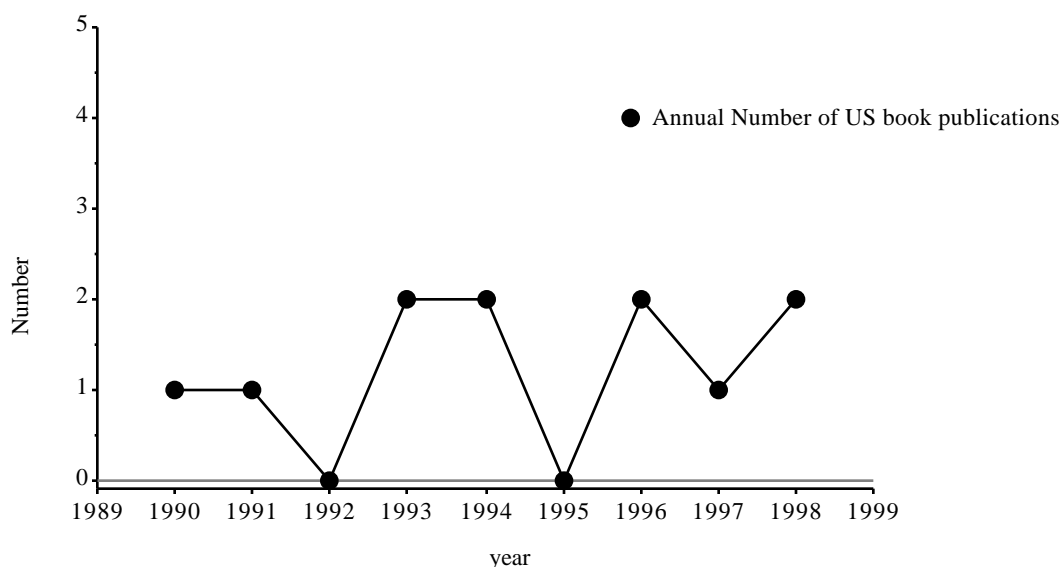


Figure 1. Annual U.S. Publication of Translations of, and Books About, Sun Zi.

As of the late 1990s, there are five main translations of Sun Zi used by American academics, business people and/or military officers. The first is Samuel Griffiths translation, first published in 1963, and reprinted over the past 25 years.¹ Griffiths, a retired U.S. Marine general at the time he translated Sun Zi, used the *Song Ben Shi Yi Jia Zhu Sun Zi* (宋本十一家注孙子) version as his basic text. Indeed, the value of Griffiths translation is that he provides translations from historical commentators on the text. This allows readers to examine the nuanced

¹ Samuel B. Griffith, *Sun Tzu: The Art of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963)

differences in how particular passages were interpreted at different points in Chinese history. The other value to the text is the forward by the famous British strategist, Basil Liddell Hart. Hart used Sun Zi to justify his critique of Clausewitz for his over-emphasis on the so-called 'direct' approach, defined as the massive application of military power at the enemy's 'center of gravity'. Liddell Hart blamed Clausewitzian thinking for the disastrous violence of the First World War (subsequent defenders of Clausewitz accuse Liddell Hart of misreading the German strategists and for mistakingly playing up differences between Clausewitz and Sun Zi). While Griffiths' translation is easy to read, as Chinese scholars have pointed out much of the information the translations provides about the Sun Zi text itself and about its impact on Chinese military thought is out of date. New research on the Griffiths text has focused on the relationship between the historical context of his translation. Griffiths saw his text as a tool for influencing senior US military and political leaders about how to deal with revolutionary warfare in the Third World. According to one scholar who has examined Griffiths papers and letters, Griffiths asked that the publisher of his translation distribute copies to top leaders in the Department of Defense, Department of State and the White House, as well as key journalists and opinion-makers. The goal was to warn US strategic decisionmakers about the methods that China, North Vietnam and other revolutionary states were using to threaten United States interests.² Griffiths assumed that Sun Zi was a key influence on Mao Zedong's military thought, and that Mao was a key inspiration for revolutionary guerilla war movements in the Third World.

The Griffiths translation was the primary one available to American readers from the early 1960s through to the late 1980s. Since then, with the publication of

² I thank Ed O'Dowd for this information about Griffiths.

two other major translations (see below), the Griffiths text is no longer the main translation used in the academic community or in the US military education system.

In the 1980s, two new translations appeared in US bookstores. One was edited by the well-known fiction writer James Clavell and was published in 1983.³ This version has little scholarly value, however, as it is simply a re-publication of Lionel Giles 1910 version, with a few minor footnotes and comments. The introduction claims, rather hyperbolically, that the text should be required reading for US military officers because were they to internalize Sun Zi's teachings they would be able to avoid costly conflicts in the future. A second translation that appeared in the 1980s was done by Thomas Cleary.⁴ Cleary, a translator of many other texts from the Buddhist and Daoist traditions, stresses the defensive, even Daoist, nature of Sun Zi's text. This translation, however, is highly controversial among Sinologists, some of whom believe he takes too many liberties with the original text, injecting meanings that are not justified by the original Chinese language. Neither the Clavell nor the Cleary translations is taken very seriously by Sinologists, and for the most part neither translation is used in the US military education system.

In the 1990s two new major translations appeared, one by Ralph Sawyer, a Hong Kong based businessperson, and one by Roger Ames, a philosophy professor at the University of Hawaii.⁵ Sawyer first published a translation of Sun Zi as part of the first English translation of the entire Seven Military Classics (*Wu Jing Qi Shu*) in 1993. This was followed in 1994 by a separate translation of the Sun Zi text alone. The Sawyer text focuses on Sun Zi as a manual for military strategy and operations. Thus it provides a fairly extensive discussion of the patterns in warfare, strategy, tactics and weapons from the Shang dynasty through

³ James Clavell ed., The Art of War: Sun Tzu (New York: Delacort, 1983)

⁴ Thomas Cleary, translator, The Art of War: Sun Tzu (Boston: Shambala Press, 1988)

to the Warring States period. Sawyer provides extensive footnotes to pre-modern and modern specialists on Sun Zi in order to establish the historical accuracy of the text and its references to warfare of the Warring States period. In particular he relies on the research work of Professor Li Ling from Peking University and Professor Wu Rusong from the Academy of Military Sciences. In his translation, Sawyer also examines a range of earlier annotations and commentaries. He relies heavily on the Ming dynasty commentator, Liu Yin's Wu Jing Qi Shu Zhijie (明本武经七书直解) and on the retired Guomindang general Wei Rulin's Sun Zi Bing Fa Da Quan (孙子兵法大全). Because Sawyer tends to focus on the operational side of the text -- how it was used historically, what it says about historical warfare in ancient China, and what advice it provides practitioners of warfare -- his translation is used in many of the institutions in the US military education system.

The Ames text focuses more on the differences between Chinese and Western philosophical traditions and how the Sun Zi text can be treated as a text on philosophy. He notes that he is interested in the “cultural presuppositions” that are needed to understand Sun Zi from “its own world view”. Ames argues that military philosophy was a common topic in many of the works on political philosophy in ancient China and thus should be seen as a part of process of developing a distinctive Chinese philosophy, not as a separate field of military thought. Ames takes on a question that few Western specialists have asked, namely why is there such a rich tradition of military philosophy in an allegedly anti-militarist culture?⁶ He suggests that military action provides a metaphor for all other types of human behavior, and that in Chinese tradition military action was “applied

⁵ Ralph Sawyer, translator, The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993) and Ralph Sawyer, translator, Sun Tzu: The Art of War (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994) and Roger Ames, translator, Sun Tzu The Art of War (New York, Ballantine Books, 1993)

⁶ Ames p.40

philosophy”. His basic argument is that in both civil and military action the consummate actor is one whose character tries to achieve order through harmonizing himself with changing circumstances. In contrast to Western assumptions that there are two worlds -- a perfect, predestined, independent world that will be created through purposeful action, a teleology -- ancient Chinese philosophy assumed that order already existed in things, and was not imposed on things. The Dao was not a teleology, but a recognition of the completeness of existing reality. Harmony arose from “personal cultivation and refinement” whether in the civil or military arenas.

Ames provides an extensive discussion of several key concepts in the Sun Zi text which, he argues, reflects this philosophical tradition: the concept of *yin* 因, or to act in accord with the enemy, a “responsiveness to one’s context”⁷; the concept of *shi* 勢, which he translates as “strategic advantage” where all situations can be turned to one’s advantage through manipulating self and adversary, shaping the environment according to the concept of yin. Shi relies on genius, not just military skill, since no situation is ever the same.⁸

The Ames text is unique in that it makes explicit use of the Yin Que Shan manuscript, and the Ma Wang Dui scripts. He also introduces readers to the evidence concerning the identities of Sun Wu and Sun Bin. Like Sawyer’s text it also uses a number of historical and contemporary commentaries. While Sawyer relies on Liu Yin’s commentaries, Ames relies heavily on Wu Jiulong’s text for interpretations of key passages.⁹

⁷ Ibid., p.83

⁸ Ibid., p. 71-80, 8

⁹ Wu Jiulong, Sun Zi Jiao Shi (孙子校释)(Beijing, Academy of Military Sciences Press, 1990)

SUN ZI STUDIES IN THE THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY¹⁰

Sun Zi studies are limited to a small community of Sinologists, historians and philosophers in the U.S. There has been relatively little direct research on ancient Chinese military thought, still less on Sun Zi specifically. For example, there were no articles devoted to the study of Sun Zi's thought in the 1980s and 1990s issues of the premier journal on pre-modern China, the Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, and there were only a couple of articles on ancient Chinese military thought. A search of the index of articles for another high-profile journal, The Journal of Asian Studies also shows no articles specifically about Sun Zi, nor indeed about ancient Chinese military thought in general.¹¹

There have been at about 5 major PhD dissertations on ancient Chinese military thought since the 1970s that all, in one way or another, discuss Sun Zi. One by Christopher Rand, focused on six different 'schools' within 'militarist' (*bingjia* 兵家) thought up to the Han Dynasty.¹² In particular he traces the historical evolution of the 'wen' (文) versus 'wu' (武) debate in statecraft. He extends this analysis up to the Tang Dynasty as well to see how this debate evolved in an era of very different military technology and military strategic challenges. In particular he identifies and expands on what he calls the 'metaphysical' school of military affairs in the Tang, the school which stressed the metaphysical qualities (*qi* 气) of an

¹⁰ I would like to thank Professor David Graff, Professor Kidder Smith and Dr. Peter Lorge for their assessments of the state of Sun Zi studies in the US academic Sinological community.

¹¹ There was one article by Benjamin E. Wallacker, "Studies in Medieval Chinese Siegecraft: The Siege of Yu-pi, A.D. 546" Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. 28, No. 4. (Aug., 1969), pp. 789-802. However, this article barely mentions the role of Sun Zi's military thought on siegecraft in this period.

¹² Christopher Rand, The Role of Military Thought in Early Chinese Intellectual History (PhD, Harvard University, 1977).

ideal general.¹³ Another, by Robin Yates, focused on theory and practice of siege defense in ancient China, based on an analysis of the writings of Mo Zi and his disciples.¹⁴ Another by Edmund Balmforth provided the first English-language translation and analysis of Sun Bin's work on strategy.¹⁵ Alastair Iain Johnston's dissertation analyzed the Seven Military Classics (武经七书) to determine what influence they had on Ming strategy towards the Mongols.¹⁶ Likewise, David Graff analyzed the effect of ancient Chinese military thought on the ways of warfare during the Tang dynasty. He found that practical experience was more likely a better source of strategic ideas than Warring States period texts.¹⁷

In addition to these dissertations there have been a small number of specialized books published on topics relating to ancient Chinese military thought. In his book, Sanctioned Violence in Early China, Mark Lewis examined the role of 'sanctioned violence' in the political transitions from the Spring and Autumn to the Warring States period. He shows how sanctioned violence evolved from a highly ritualistic and symbolic use of hunting, limited engagements among warrior aristocrats evolved into larger-scale 'interstate' conflicts involving mass soldiers commanded by more or less professional officers. Lewis is the first US scholar to extract and

¹³ See Christopher Rand, "Li Ch'uan And Chinese Military Thought" Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies 39:1 (1979).

¹⁴ See Robin Yates, The City Under Siege: Technology and Organization as Seen in the Reconstructed Text of the Military Chapters of Mo-Tzu (PhD, History, Harvard University, 1980). See also Robin Yates, "The Moists on Warfare: Technology, Technique, and Justification" Journal of the American Academy of Religion 46:3 (1980); and Robin Yates, "New Light on Ancient Chinese Military Texts: Notes on their Nature and Evolution and the Development of Military Specialization in Warring States China" T'oung Pao Vol.74 (1988).

¹⁵ Edmund Balmforth, A Chinese Military Strategist of the Warring States Period: Sun Bin (PhD, Rutgers University, 1979)

¹⁶ Alastair Iain Johnston An Inquiry into Strategic Culture: The Parabellum Paradigm and Strategic Choice in the Ming Dynasty (PhD, Political Science Department, the University of Michigan, 1993)

¹⁷ See David Graff Early Tang Generalship and the Textual Tradition (PhD, History Department, Princeton University, 1995)

examine the concept of *quan bian*, and its impact on military thought and practice in early China.¹⁸

In his book, Cultural Realism, Alastair Iain Johnston examined the role of strategic culture in strategic decision making during Ming conflicts with the Mongols. He analyzed the ‘deep structure’ of the Seven Military Classics to see whether there was a consistent preference ranking among offensive, defensive and accomodationist grand strategies across these texts. He then asked whether these preference rankings had any effect on strategic choice in the Ming dynasty. His conclusions challenged the traditional view that ancient Chinese military thought stressed defensiveness and even an anti-militarism.¹⁹ Instead, he argued, these texts embodied certain realpolitik axioms, similar to those in Western strategic thought, and that their influence was seen in the fact that Ming strategists generally preferred, when material conditions allowed them, offensive strategies to deal with the Mongol threat.²⁰ Johnston argues that the traditional Confucian view of China’s own strategic traditions underestimate the degree to which the offensive use of military force was advocated in traditional Chinese thought and practice. This argument is controversial and at the moment is a minority interpretation of Sun Zi and other ancient Chinese military thinkers.

But together this research does not constitute a coherent body of work, nor are the authors addressing similar issues. Indeed there is little direct debate over the Sun Zi text because there has been so little written on the topic in the Sinological community. The research in the 1980s through 1990s has generally not focused on

¹⁸ Mark Lewis, The Role of Sanctioned Violence in Early China (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1990).

¹⁹ This traditional view of China’s anti-militarist tradition is found in John Fairbank, “Varieties of the Chinese Military Experience” in Frank Kiernan and John K. Fairbank eds., Chinese Ways in Warfare (1969); Edward Boylan, “The Chinese Cultural Style of Warfare” Comparative Strategy 3:4 (1982); and Jonathan Adelman and Shih Chih-yu, Symbolic Warfare: The Chinese Use of Force 1840-1980 (Taibei, 1993).

the intellectual or philosophical content of ancient Chinese military thought. Rather it has tended to focus on on military history and operations (Tang, Song and Ming strategy).²¹ In the 1990s, a group of historians and scholars of Chinese philosophy set up a Chinese Military History Group. But Sun Zi's military thought is not the primary focus of this group. The underdeveloped nature of Sun Zi studies in the scholarly community is underscored by the fact that there been no major scholarly conferences in the US focused on Sun Zi's text in the 1980s or 1990s.

There is the potential for a major debate over the Sun Zi text as a pragmatic source of more or less universal ideas for military strategists versus its status as a uniquely Chinese philosophical text on violence. The lines of such a debate are evidenced in the differences between the approach to the text taken by Ralph Sawyer and by Michael Handel (see below) on the one hand and Roger Ames on the other. However, this potential faultline in Sun Zi studies has not really developed into a full-blown academic debate. There are simply too few people in the academic world working on these issues, and too little is at stake currently in terms of intellectual development for scholars to stake a position one way or the other.

SUN ZI AND THE BUSINESS WORLD

There has been an increase in the popular attention paid to Sun Zi and business over the 1980s and 1990s. Mostly Sun Zi is treated as a source of ideas about how to understand market opportunities. One author, Bernard A. Boar models his book,

²⁰ Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History (Princeton University Press, 1995).

The Art of Strategic Planning for Information Technology on the Sun Zi text.²²

Boar argues that “The majority of aspiring strategists would be much better off studying the teachings of Sun Zi and Machiavelli than most teachers of business or information management strategy.”

In most cases, however, the application of Sun Zi to business tends to be somewhat faddish and shallow, the reduction of the text to easy-to-remember aphorisms and platitudes. While many business people have read the text, it is not the subject of study in major US business schools. In contrast to the US military education system, the US business education system evidently does not find much concrete value in the text as a source of instruction for future business leaders. Top American business schools put a great deal of emphasis on training in accounting, economics, statistics, and organizational sociology.²³ The adaptation of strategy from war studies to business is not seen as a particularly important part of professional business education, and there are no courses devoted to the discussion of Sun Zi’s application to business in the major schools. There are, for instance, no specific courses devoted to Sun Zi and business taught at the Harvard School of Business or at MIT’s Sloan School of Management.

A handful of business entrepreneurs offer short-term training programs, books, and cassette tapes that apply Sun Zi in a facile way to some aspect of business. The

²¹ See, for instance, the PhD dissertations written by David Graff and Paul Forage, and Tsang Shui-lung, War and Peace in Northern China: Violence and Strategy in Flux, 960-1104 A.D. (University of Arizona History PhD, 1998).

²² Bernard Boar, The Art of Strategic Planning for Information Technology (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1993)

²³ See for example the list of required courses for the MBA at Stanford Business School at the following web address: <http://www-gsb.stanford.edu/academics/catalog/mbareq.html>; the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania and its Department of Management MBA courses at: <http://www-management.wharton.upenn.edu/Gcourses.htm>; and Harvard University Business School curriculum list at: <http://www.hbs.edu/mba/curriculum.html>.

objective is almost always to make money by charging for these services.²⁴ Typical of the application of Sun Zi to business is the consulting service provided by Jim Hight, a former financial consultant to the Merrill Lynch company.²⁵ Hight defines the ‘enemy’ in markets as other “participants”, such as firms and companies. He uses quotations from the Clavell, Griffiths and Sawyer translations of Sun Zi. His approach is to move through the Sun Zi text translating each major line or concept into an analogical example for financial managers. For instance, in reference to Sun Zi’s comment in chapter one on the importance of *‘xian sheng er hou zhan’* (先胜而后战), Hight draws from this the parallel advice in business: “Always manage within the context of a written strategic plan that has been prepared from an objective analysis of market information. The plan should include very specific guidelines for money management, trade selection, risk control, and profit taking.” In reference to Sun Zi’s famous dictum that “deception is the essence of war”, Hight states: “Although, as individual portfolio managers and risk managers, we have limited ability to deceive and manipulate the markets, however, we can minimize the opportunity for other market participants to impair our success by keeping our strategies and tactics to ourselves. Allow strategies and tactics to become apparent only when results have been secured and if disclosure enables rational and gainful business development efforts, or when regulatory reporting requirements necessitate.” As another example, concerning the concept of flexibility in Sun Zi’s chapter 5, where the commander is urged to change operations as strategic circumstances change, Hight notes in a rather vague way: “The way to capitalize on the endless opportunities created by ever-changing market conditions, is to become engaged as a part of a well thought out trading plan and be flexible in

²⁴ For typical examples of such books and training programs see, Sun Tzu's Art of War for Traders and Investors by Dean Lundell, a vice-president of Merrill Lynch Capital Markets, (<http://www.artofwar.com/index.html>); and Sun Tzu and the Art of Business: Six Strategic Principles for Managers by Mark McNeilly, a strategist at IBM (<http://cazmedia.com/suntzu/>).

adapting to conditions within the context of the plan. In so doing we will become a part of the markets' energy flow and, thereby, continually improve our ability to successfully understand and utilize market conditions to our advantage.” The advice is, like the Sun Zi text itself, general enough to be very hard to apply specifically in practice.

Interestingly enough, the application of metaphors from war and conflict to business introduces two tensions into the ‘ethics’ of business. The first is that in the Sun Zi text there is no developed concept of a ‘just war’. For Sun Zi the ‘ends justify the means’. Using warfare metaphors, particularly from the Sun Zi text, raises questions about whether Sun Zi-influenced business practices would be unrestrained by business and societal ethics. The second, and related, tension is between market economics conceived as a search for win-win, non-zero sum solutions to contractual problems on the one hand, and economics conceived as a zero-sum war where the objective is the defeat of all adversaries and competitors on the other. In the US the use of Sun Zi as a guide to business often seems to promote this latter view of economics.

SUN ZI IN THE U.S. MILITARY²⁶

Not surprisingly, the sector of US society that has paid the most attention to the Sun Zi text has been the US military. The evidence for the impact of the text on US military education, and on military doctrine and operations is especially clear, however.

²⁵ See the web page address: <http://www.strategies-tactics.com/suntzu.htm>

²⁶ I am grateful for the excellent research assistance for this section provided by Jeff Panton

Sun Zi in the U.S. Professional Military Education system²⁷

It is clear that US military officers have become more aware of the Sun Zi text over the 1980s and 1990s. Put differently, most officers who move through the major military education institutions in the different service branches will at some point in their education read or study at least some part of the Sun Zi text. Below I describe the status of Sun Zi in the curricula of different educational institutions in the US military.

National Defense University/National War College

Sun Zi's text was introduced formally into the National War College curriculum in 1984. In that year, in response to a reevaluation of the ways in which to prepare senior military officers as strategic thinkers that began in 1981, the Department of Military Strategy at the National War College published an 883 page collection of articles and excerpts on strategy. The book, entitled The Art and Practice of Military Strategy formed the core text on strategy for senior military officers at National War College from the mid 1980s through to the early 1990s. It was then replaced by a "professional library" of books on strategy that were required reading for students in the core strategy course.

The textbook was divided into three parts: thinking about strategy; fundamental strategic concepts; and the practice of strategy. Sun Zi was introduced in part two, along with the writings of Clausewitz, Mahan, Liddel Hart, Corbett, Douhet, Beaufre, Gorshkov, and Sokolovskiy. These strategists were listed more or less in chronological order in the textbook, not in order of importance in the US military

²⁷ I would like to thank the following people for providing information on the use of Sun Zi in the US professional military education system: Paul Godwin, Andrew Wilson, Thomas Nimick, Larry Wortzel, Robert Neilson, and Russ Howard.

education system.²⁸ Moreover, only excerpts of the texts were provided. Thus, unless students read outside of the course text, they were introduced in this textbook only to Sun Zi's first chapter -- a small, though important, part of the Art of War. The excerpt came from Griffiths' translation of Sun Zi.

The purpose of this second section of the textbook was to introduce students to different historical views on the broadest levels of strategy -- what is the political objective of military power? what are the key the military objectives in the use of force? how should military power be employed strategically? The introduction to these selections, written by Samuel B. Gardiner, briefly explored some of the differences and similarities between Sun Zi and the other texts. He noted, for instance that for Sun Zi and for Liddell Hart the military objective was the enemy's will, while for Clausewitz the objective was the enemy's center of gravity. As for military strategy, Gardiner noted that each of the authors tended to focus on a different 'method' of strategy. Sun Zi tended to stress the indirect approach as superior to the direct attack on enemy forces. Mahan tended to stress the importance of control of the sea, while Douhet stressed enemy industrial and population centers as targets of attack. Historical differences in military technology and in the role of the economy and population in warfare helped explain these differences.

In the early 1990s this textbook was replaced by a "professional library", a list of complete texts that formed the core readings for the basic strategy course. The primary text in this library is Peter Paret's Makers of Modern Strategy.²⁹ This book does not contain any specific discussion of Sun Zi. It focuses exclusively on Western strategists. However, the list of required texts does include a complete version of Sun Zi's 13 chapters, replacing the excerpt of Chapter 1 in the Art and Practice of Military Strategy. As of 1996, the Griffiths version has been replaced by

²⁸See George Edward Thibault, ed., The Art and Practice of Military Strategy (Washington, National Defense University, 1984).

Sawyer's translation as the primary translation of Sun Zi in the core course on strategy.

Since at least the mid 1980s, then, students at the National War College have had at least some exposure to Sun Zi. In the core course on strategy Sun Zi was formally discussed in one seminar out of 14 over the entire semester.³⁰ The seminar is Euro-centric, and has been organized chronologically, beginning with the Napoleonic wars. The seminar on Sun Zi has traditionally come after the seminar and readings on the First World War by way of a discussion of Liddell Hart's critique of military strategy during the war. That is to say, Sun Zi's ideas were, in sense, first introduced to modern Western strategists through Liddell Hart, whose own views constituted a backlash to what he saw as Clausewitzian influenced warfare in the early 20th century. There has been no specialized, separate course offered at the NWC that focuses exclusively on Sun Zi. Rather the discussions of Sun Zi have always been in the context of comparison with Clausewitz and Liddell Hart, and whether or not there are alternatives in military strategy to the use of violence to achieve military ends. Thus, the lectures on Sun Zi have tended to focus less on the traditional topics of deception or "winning without fighting", and more on the difficulties of controlling the battlefield, the need for flexible adaptation to changing strategic conditions, and the relationship of the commander to the rulers.

In addition to the course study of Sun Zi, the Information Resources and Management College at the National Defense University has, since the mid 1990s, run an annual essay competition called the "Sun Zi and Information Warfare" essay competition. The competition is designed to stimulate research on definitions of information warfare, the implications for doctrine and operations, the implications for organizational relationships between government and private industry, the

²⁹ Peter Paret, Makers of Modern Strategy (1986).

vulnerability of national information structures, among other topics. So far this competition has led to the publication of one set of winning essays entitled Sun Zi and Information Warfare.³¹

Army War College

At the Army War College Sun Zi is introduced to students in at least three courses -- an advanced course on the Chinese military, a course on regional security in Asia, and in a required course on Strategic Theory. Ames's translation is the preferred text in the first course, while Griffiths is used in the latter two courses. Students are also recommended to read Michael Handel's comparison of Clausewitz, Jomini and Sun Zi in this last course, and sections of Alastair Iain Johnston's study of the Seven Military Classics. The required Strategic Theory begins with a study of Clausewitz in traditional and contemporary military theory. It then moves on to one lesson on "Sun Zi, Mao and Asian Military Thought" (about 3 hours of instruction). The lesson focuses on core concepts such as deception, the indirect approach, speed of operations, and the possibilities of defeating the enemy without resort to force. The lesson also compares Clausewitz and Sun Zi. Here the lesson relies on Michael Handel's analysis, stressing that most of the differences are due to different level of analysis in the texts, but that at the operational level both texts share views on the ideal type of war, on the role of military genius, and on the fact that in war there are no fixed operational rules. In addition, the lesson compares Sun Zi and Mao's views on guerilla warfare. Sun Zi's influence is seen in Mao's emphasis on speed, mobility, deception, surprise and striking only when victory is assured. The main differences between Sun Zi and Mao, according to this course,

³⁰ I thank Professor Paul Godwin, recently retired from teaching at the National War College, for providing information about how Sun Zi is taught at the National War College.

³¹ Robert Neilson, ed., Sun Tzu and Information Warfare (Washington DC, National Defense University, 1997).

is that Mao accepted the value of protracted war, and that, in contrast to Sun Zi's emphasis on defeating the enemy without using force, Mao believed ultimately that class enemies could best be destroyed with military power.

The United States Military Academy (Westpoint)

At Westpoint there are two courses in which Sun Zi is studied. Both courses are taught in the Department of History. One is a course on the "History of Asian Warfare", with China and Japan being the key states under study. Sun Zi is used mainly as a primary source on how warfare operated in ancient China. The course uses Sawyer's translation because the book provides more information on the weapons and tactics of warfare in the Warring States period than do other translations. In other words, Sun Zi text is not approached primarily as a work on the philosophy of war but on the history of warfare. One central study question in the course is: Did Sun Zi ever know defeat? That is, while the Sun Zi text focuses in many respects on how wars are won, did the text have much to say about why armies and states are defeated? The course stresses the similarities between Chinese and Western concepts of warfare.

A second course is entitled "War and its Theorists". This course also uses Sawyer's translation, and examines Sun Zi as one theorist in a body of global military theory (the other authors studied are Clausewitz, Jomini, Mahan, Fuller, Liddell Hart, Bernard Brodie). The themes of the course emphasize theorists' views on the fundamental nature of war, the relative strength of the offense and the defense, and the relative balance of material and moral factors in military outcomes.

Air University/Air War College

The Air War College introduces Sun Zi to airforce officers through a core course in the Department of Strategy, Doctrine and Airpower. The first section of

the course examines theorists of war, including Sun Zi, Clausewitz, Jomini, Mahan, and Corbett. Another teaching unit at the Air University, the School of Advanced Airpower Studies offers a course in the foundation of military theory in which Sun Zi is studied, along with Clausewitz, Jomini, Du Picq, Fuller, Liddell Hart, Tukhachevski, Mahan, Corbett, and Mao. The Sawyer translation is used in this course. The course begins by moving chronologically through major theorists of war, beginning with Sun Zi. Only one seminar is devoted to Sun Zi, however, followed by four seminars on Clausewitz. Sun Zi is mentioned later in the course, however, as a source of ideas for Mao Zedong's concepts of revolutionary war, and in a seminar on the role of deception in warfare.³²

Naval War College

In the 1980s and 1990s Sun Zi has been taught as part of a core required course on strategy. As in the rest of the US professional military education system, the primary strategic thinker is Clausewitz, with Sun Zi introduced for comparative purposes. One of the key secondary sources for the course is Michael Handel's Masters of War. This text proceeds from the argument that, for the most part, the similarities between the two strategists outweigh the differences. Indeed, Handel explicitly states, "Ultimately the logic and rational of war are universal and there is no such thing as an exclusively 'Western' or 'Eastern' approach to politics and strategy".³³ He lists a number of similarities between Clausewitz and Sun Zi: Both texts agree that politics and political leaders ultimate should decide what the political purposes of war should be; both agree war is a dangerous activity and the decision to go to war must not be taken lightly; both recognize that once war breaks out the military commander should be left relatively free to make military decisions without

³² See the course syllabus, "Course 600: Foundations of Military Theory" at the School of Advanced Airpower Studies webpage: <http://www.au.af.mil/au/saas/curric/600syl.doc>

the interference of political leaders; both recognize that once in a war, strategists should try to fight a short and decisive war, applying numerical superiority at key points of engagement; both recognize that defeating an enemy's morale or spirit can be a more effective way to win (though Clausewitz believes this possibility is rare in practice); and both believe, on balance, that the defense is superior to the offense.³⁴ According to Handel, the differences that exist -- for instance, Sun Zi's stress on deception and on first defeating the enemy's strategy -- are primarily due to the fact that the texts operate on different levels of analysis. Sun Zi begins at the highest political/strategic levels before force has been used. Clausewitz is more of a manual on the use of force once the political decision to use violence has been made. At this lower level, Handel finds quite a bit of agreement between the two texts on how best to employ violence. He also argues that much of the advice in Sun Zi is practical, common sense or vague, and thus is of limited value to a practitioner on the battlefield. He suggests as well, somewhat in contrast to this, that some of Sun Zi's advice is impractical because it doesn't take into account the possibility that the adversary is also an expert in deception, maneuver and the indirect approach. If both sides are experts in the indirect approach then neither side will, in the end, engage the other.

In this core strategy course there is usually one lecture in the semester devoted exclusively to Sun Zi that addresses some of the themes raised in Handel's book. The lecture typically puts Sun Zi in a comparative and historical context, comparing the core arguments with Clausewitz, and examining the specific historical circumstance of the Warring States period to explain some of the elements of Sun Zi's comments on how to fight wars. In this sense Sun Zi's text is an advertisement for his skills as he tried to convince different political rulers of the value of his ideas

³³ Michael Handel, *Masters of War* p..3

³⁴ Ibid., pp51, 74, 78, 89-92, 95

and services. The lecture focuses as well on the stress on minimal effort for maximal political/military gain, with a discussion of the preference ranking of strategies for defeating the enemy (*shang bing fa mou qi ci fa jiao....上兵伐谋其次伐交...*). But, in line with the comparison with Clausewitz, the lecture also discusses Sun Zi's view on actual warfighting. Here, consistent with Handel's views, the similarities between the two texts outweigh the differences: keep the enemy off balance, control the initiative, understand where the enemy's most vulnerable point is and how to strike it; attack swiftly and decisively.

The preferred translation in recent years has been Sawyer, though the most recent lectures have noted Ames' translation when discussing Sun Zi's ideas on defeating the enemy without resort to violence.³⁵ The Griffiths translation is apparently no longer used in the Naval War College courses.

More recently, the Naval War College has set up an elective course devoted specifically to Sun Zi. This may be the first course in the US professional military education system to be exclusively focused on Sun Zi's Art of War. The course is divided into three major sections: The first focuses on the historical significance of the text, its relevance for contemporary strategy, and its relationship to a universal logic of war and to concepts that people often consider to be more unique to Asian approaches to strategy. The second section discusses the style of writing, some of the historical commentaries on the text, the internal coherence, logic and axioms of the text. The third section puts Sun Zi in historical context, with a focus on the politics, strategy, tactics and technology of warfare from the Chou Dynasty to the Warring States period.

³⁵ Ames, for instance, notes that "*quan guo wei shang*" (全国为上) can mean to keep one's own state intact while attacking then enemy. Most translations, however, hold that the phrase refers to the enemy's state.

United States Marine Corp War College³⁶

Of all the professional military schools, Sun Zi's role in the curriculum is probably greatest at the US Marine Corp War College, an institution set up in 1990 by then Commandant, Alfred Gray. The study of Sun Zi was incorporated into a required course on "War, Policy and Strategy". Like the other professional military establishments, the study of Sun Zi in this course is incorporated into a section of the course that compares Sun Zi with Clausewitz. General Tao Hanzhang's version of Sun Zi was used as of the mid 1990s in this course along with Michael Handel's comparison of Sun Zi and Clausewitz. The texts are compared with respect to questions about the role of the commander, surprise, victory, war and policy, maneuver, intelligence etc.

Sun Zi is also on the curriculum of the Command and Staff College Nonresident Program (open to officers and Department of Defense civilian personnel from outside the Marines). A course on "Theory and Nature of Warfare" requires that students read Griffiths translation of Sun Zi, with specific attention to the relationship between politics and war, the relevance of the text in conditions of modern high-tech warfare, the relationship between Sun Zi and revolutionary warfare. A similar class is offered in the Residents Program at the Command and Staff College. However, the key theme in this class is to underscore the continuing relevance of Clausewitz to modern warfare, and the similarities, rather than the differences, between Clausewitz and Sun Zi.

Staff Sargeants in the Staff Non-Commissioned Officer Academy at the Marine War College are also required to read Sun Zi. It is on a list of recommended readings for students in the Basic School, a training program for newly commissioned Marine Lieutenants. Sun Zi is not required in the Amphibious

³⁶ Much of this information comes from Harry David Candela, Sun Zi's The art of War in United States Marine Corps Officer Education. (MA Thesis, Regent University, 1998)

Warfare School, however, nor is it part of the curriculum at the Officer Candidate School.

A range of translations are used in the Marines educational system. Unique to the Marines, the Command and Staff College even uses an English translation of PLA General Tao Hanzhang's version of Sun Zi. As of the mid 1990s this version was used in the "War, Policy and Strategy Course". The Commandant's Marine Corps Professional Reading List list includes both the Griffith and Cleary translations as well.

As a general rule, Sun Zi studies in the US military education system are limited to a small number of courses on the history of military thought or on Asian military thought and practice, or to sections of core courses on strategic theory. Some of these courses are relatively new, having been set up in the 1990s. Usually Sun Zi is introduced as a comparison text with Clausewitz. Generally the similarities between Clausewitz and Sun Zi are emphasized more than the differences. Clausewitz is, however, overwhelmingly the most important text used in the US military education system. The interest in Sun Zi has been more or less constant over the past decade. The Marine Corps is, perhaps, an exception to this general situation. That is, relatively speaking, there has been no great upsurge in the interest in or exposure to Sun Zi over the 1990s.

Military Doctrine and Operations

While the role of Sun Zi's Art of War in the US professional military education system is relatively easy to trace, Sun Zi's influence on the theory and practice of US military operations is difficult to determine. General George Patton apparently

studies the text in the 1940s.³⁷ American operational doctrine in the 1980s and 1990s has increasingly stressed concepts such as mobility, flexibility, rapid decision etc., -- all of which are concepts found in Sun Zi. As a general rule, however, the major doctrinal innovations in the 1980s and 1990, such as AirLand Battle, are not directly influenced by the the Sun Zi text. Rather these concepts are born primarily from the operational requirements of maneuver in a high-tech environment in ways that minimize casualties and prevent the aggressor from capturing the military initiative. Most of these concepts developed out of the operational problems of dealing with a Soviet conventional invasion of Western Europe in the 1980s. In the 1990s, these concepts have evolved from the operational requirements (and possibilities) of decentralized, small-scale high tech conventional conflicts in the Third World, including in urban areas. With the end of the Cold War and the draw down of US forces forward deployed abroad, the US military will be configured to project power while based, primarily, in the US.³⁸ This requires having a capacity to project smaller, more flexible concentrations of force quickly. Sometimes a quote from Sun Zi is used to summarize the principles behind these concepts, but for the most part Sun Zi is not the inspiration for these concepts.

For most ordinary American soldiers exposure to Sun Zi comes from the short axioms, aphorisms, and platitudes that often head a chapter in the US military field manuals. For example, FM 7-98, concerning low intensity conflict, heads each chapter with a quote from Sun Zi. Chapter 1 quotes the Griffiths version of Sun Zi, “For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill”. Chapter 3 on “Combatting Terrorism” cites Sun Zi’s sentence “kill one, frighten ten thousand”. FM 17-95, on

³⁷ Steve E. Dietrich , ‘The Professional Reading of General George S. Patton’ . The Journal of Military History, Vol. 53, No. 4. (Oct., 1989), pp. 387-418.

mechanized cavalry operations begins chapter 3 on Reconnaissance Operations with a quote from Sun Zi “Those who do not know the conditions of mountains and forests, hazardous defiles, marshes, and swamps, cannot conduct the march of an army”. And TC 1-115 a training circular for medium helicopter battalions has a discussion on mobility and surprise, where Sun Zi is cited on the importance of speed in warfare.³⁹

These citations from Sun Zi provide short and pithy summaries of the key points in the relevant portions of the field manuals. But they do not by themselves indicate that the Sun Zi text influences the drafting of the field manuals. Indeed, the primary document on Army Doctrine in the post-cold war period, FM 100-5, doesn’t refer to Sun Zi at all in its chapters on the fundamentals of offense.⁴⁰ Neither does the key Army follow-on document on future warfare, Force 21 Operations.⁴¹ Nor does a key document on Operational Art produced as part of the Joint Chief’s Joint Doctrine project. Indeed, much of this latter document has a distinctly Clausewitzian flavor. As it notes in one section: “The intent of simultaneity and depth is to bring force to bear on the opponent’s entire structure in a near simultaneous manner that is within the decisionmaking cycle of the opponent. The goal is to overwhelm and cripple enemy capabilities and enemy will to resist.”⁴² The document refers as well to attacking the enemy’s center of gravity, also a Clausewitzian notion. Even in a discussion of ‘indirect and direct’ attack methods, the document recommends that forces should generally try to attack enemy centers of gravity directly.⁴³

³⁸ See, for instance, Field Manual 71-100 “Division Operations” (August 1996). “Introduction”

³⁹ Field Manual 7-98 “Operations in a Low Intensity Conflict” (October 1992); Field Manual 17-95, “Cavalry Operations” (December 1996); Training Circular 1-115 (September 1988).

⁴⁰ Field Manual 100-5 “Operations” (June 1993)

⁴¹ Training and Doctrine Pamphlet 525-5, “Force XXI Operations” (August 1994).

⁴² Joint Chiefs of Staff, J-7 Operational Plans and Interoperability Directorate, Joint Doctrine: Joint Force Employment: Operational Art (1999?) p.13

⁴³ *Ibid*, p.33

US Airforce doctrine, similarly, is in general not informed by Sun Zi's concepts. The primary doctrinal document, Airforce Basic Doctrine Document 1, does not include any statements or quotes from Sun Zi, though Sun Zi is mentioned in the suggested reading list. Rather, consonant with the Airforce emphasis on three dimensional maneuver, the document stresses that air and space power is best used in an offensive fashion to destroy enemy power. The document has a distinctly Clausewitzian flavor to it, with its characterization of war as an instrument of national policy, as being shaped by the 'fog of war' and hence a chaotic, hard to control phenomenon, and as a clash of wills.⁴⁴

The one service where Sun Zi's concepts may have specifically informed the development of operational doctrine is in the Marines. It appears that much of the influence of Sun Zi in the Marines today is due to General Alfred Gray's command. Gray was the Commandant who chose Sun Zi as the book of the year for Marine officers in 1989.⁴⁵ His reasoning appeared to be that Sun Zi could provide insights into the concept of maneuver warfare, the basic operational doctrine of the Marine Corps in the post-Cold War period. When he set up the Marine Corps War College he also directed the writing of two key manuals, one on "Warfighting" (FMFM 1) and one on "Campaigning" (FMFM 1-1).⁴⁶ As the study material for the Command and Staff College Resident Program indicates, some of Sun Zi's ideas were incorporated into both documents.⁴⁷ The most prominent influence appeared to be

⁴⁴ Airforce Basic Doctrine Document 1. (ABDD 1) (September 1997) p.14. There are proponents of Sun Zi in the Airforce however. See for instance the concept of the "enemy as a system" developed in Colonel John Warden's "Enemy as a System," Airpower Journal, Spring, 1995. One Airforce officer who interviewed Warden in the process of writing his thesis for the School of Advanced Airpower Studies noted that Warden believed Sun Zi was more relevant than Clausewitz when it came to understanding the enemy as a complex system. See Robert Pellegrini, The Links Between Science and Philosophy and Military Theory: Understanding the Past; Implications for the Future. (Maxwell Airforce Base, Air University, School of Advanced Airpower Studies, June 1995) p. 85

⁴⁵ See Los Angeles Times February 18, 1991 p.A1.

⁴⁶ Fleet Marine Force Manual 1 (1989) and Fleet Marine Force Manual 1-1 (1989)

⁴⁷ Candela, p.122.

in the relationship between maneuver warfare and victory. Violent destruction of the enemy is not the goal of maneuver warfare, but rather the goal is the dissolution of the enemy's will to fight, what the manual calls "moral dislocation". One passage in particular seems to express the flavor of Sun Zi. "By studying our enemy we will attempt to appreciate his perceptions. Through deception we will try to shape his expectations. Then we will dislocate them by striking at an unexpected time and place."⁴⁸ The FMFM-1 also conceives of preplanning in ways that echo Sun Zi's concept of "*xian sheng er hou zhan*" (先胜而后战). "Before anything else, we must conceive our vision of how we intend to win."⁴⁹

Despite its apparent incorporation of elements of Sun Zi, however, the study guide for the manual prepared at the Command and Staff College notes that, "Warfighting [FMFM-1] is primarily a Clausewitzian document, heavily spiced with Sun Tzu."⁵⁰ Most of the lead quotes in chapters are from Clausewitz, followed in some cases with quotes from Sun Zi. Proportionately footnotes to Clausewitz outnumber references to Sun Zi by 9:1.⁵¹

In 1997 the new Commandant, General Krulak, ordered a rewriting of FMFM 1 and FMFM 1-1. These manuals were superseded by Marine Corp Doctrinal Publication 1, "Warfighting" (MCDP 1) and Marine Corp Doctrinal Publication 1-2, "Campaigning" (MCDP 1-2).⁵² Interestingly, the authors of MCDP 1 and MCDP 1-2 were even more Clausewitzian in their philosophy than the authors of FMFM 1 and FMFM 1-1. (In fact, one of the authors of MCDP 1-2, Christopher Bassford, formerly a professor at the US Marine Corps Command and Staff College, is an avowed Clausewitzian, and runs an internet web page devoted to the study of

⁴⁸ FMFM 1 "Warfighting" p.61

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 66

⁵⁰ Candela, p.161

⁵¹ Ibid., p.266.

⁵² Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1 "Warfighting" (June 1997); Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1-2 "Campaigning" (August 1997).

Clausewitz.⁵³) Indeed, the first footnote in MCDP 1 states: “[Clausewitz] is arguably the definitive treatment of the nature and theory of war. All Marine officers should consider this book essential reading.”⁵⁴ MCDP 1 begins with using Clausewitz to define ‘war’, and then uses Clausewitzian terms like ‘friction’ and ‘fog of war’ to describe the key features of warfare that make it so difficult to control. The manual goes on to note, as with Clausewitz, that war involves the use of violence or its credible threat to bend the will of the opponent. “Violence is an essential element of war, and its immediate result is bloodshed, destruction, and suffering. While the magnitude of violence may vary with the object and means of war, the violent essence of war will never change. Any study of war that neglects this basic truth is misleading and incomplete.”⁵⁵ Likewise, in MCDP 1-2 the Clausewitzian goal of attacking the enemy’s ‘center of gravity’ is core to the concept of campaigning. MCDP 1 does cite Sun Zi when it discusses maneuver warfare, in particular the importance of speed, operational opportunism, and the ability to understand how the enemy views the military situation.⁵⁶ And MCDP 1-2 notes, perhaps in recognition of the ‘truths’ in both Clausewitz and Sun Zi, that the Marines should be prepared to use strategies of annihilation (the imposition of one’s will on the enemy through the destruction of its forces) and strategies of erosion (the use of power to deter or compel the enemy to accept political negotiations).⁵⁷ MCDP 1-2, like Clausewitz, downplays the role of deception in achieving surprising -- it notes that deception is only one of three sources of surprise (the others being deliberate ambiguity and stealth), and the most difficult to implement.⁵⁸ In general, however, the Marine Corp doctrinal manuals in the late 1990s seem to

⁵³ See the web address: <http://www.clausewitz.com/CWZHOME/CWZBASE.htm>

⁵⁴ MCDP 1, footnote 1.

⁵⁵ Ibid., chapter 1. This sentence is referenced by a citation to Clausewitz.

⁵⁶ Ibid., chapter 4.

⁵⁷ MCDP 1-2 chapter 2.

⁵⁸ Ibid., chapter 4.

place somewhat less emphasis on Sun Zi than the manuals of the early 1990s. In part this is a function of the personal preferences of the Marine Commandant and the authors of the manuals themselves.

While an argument can be made that Sun Zi has had a measurable influence on conventional doctrine, particular in the Marines, the impact of Sun Zi and nuclear doctrine is almost non-existent. Some scholars have noted that a couple of American strategic experts, such as John Collins of the National Defense University, have linked deterrence theory with Sun Zi's concept of 不战而屈人之兵. However, as a number of histories of US nuclear doctrine show, there is a vast difference between what US strategic thinkers have written about deterrence and how the US military has implemented its plans for strategic nuclear warfare. During the Cold War US nuclear weapons planners generally stressed (as expressed in various Single Integrated Operational Plans for the use of nuclear weapons in warfare (SIOPs) that the US had to use as much nuclear destructive power as possible early in a crisis to destroy the Soviet Union.⁵⁹ There was a distinctly pre-emptive flavor to these operational plans. In general deterrence theorists had little direct impact on the operational plans to use nuclear weapons. Often differences within the US service branches over deterrence force postures were driven by bureaucratic and organizational interests. In the late 1950s, for example, the US Navy was the earliest proponent of 'minimum deterrence' based on retaliation against enemy cities (countervalue deterrence) because such a strategy would assign a key role to the navy's SLBM force. The Air Force opposed this strategy and advocated larger-scale countervalue targeting because this posture would leave nuclear deterrence in the Air Force's hands.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ See David Allen Rosenberg, "The Origins of Overkill: Nuclear Weapons and American Strategy, 1945-1960" *International Security* 7:4 (Spring 1988) pp.3-71.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p.56-57.

Even the public and debates over deterrence theory in US academic and government circles during the Cold War, however, was not especially influenced by Sun Zi's ideas. The debate tended to focus on two basic schools of thought -- mutually assured destruction and nuclear warfighting. The former emphasized that deterrence stability rested on a mutual ability to inflict unacceptable damage, mostly through the threat to attack enemy population and industrial centers. The latter emphasized that deterrence stability rests on a credible ability to inflict military damage on the otherside at any level of escalation, so that the other side (in this case the USSR) could not achieve any militarily valuable outcome. The logic and assumptions of the arguments for both schools, however, did not come from the Sun Zi. Indeed, the major theorists of deterrence were either specialists in European history, political sciences, or were mathematicians and game theorists. As Robert Osgood puts it, deterrence theorizing was influenced by economists and their rational choice models of decision making or by political realists who incorporated Clausewitzian notions of tying force to political ends into their theorizing about deterrence.⁶¹ None of the major names in US deterrence theorizing -- Bernard Brodie, Henry Kissinger, Robert Osgood, Albert Wolshetter, Enthoven, Fred Ikle, among others -- were influenced by Sun Zi. None of the major formative works on deterrence theory in the US cites the Sun Zi text. Thus, although deterrence theory seeks, broadly speaking, to use the threat of force to prevent the use of force, and thus is consistent with Sun Zi's notion of 不战而屈人之兵, Sun Zi's concepts did not influence US deterrence thought. Indeed, the notion of 不战而屈人之兵 really only describes one school of thought -- the warfighting school of deterrence. The concept of 不战而屈人之兵 is a theory of unidirectional deterrence: one's own ability to use military power to destroy what the adversary values deters the

⁶¹ See Robert Osgood, The Nuclear Dilemma in American Strategic Thought (Westview Press,

other side from acting. If one's own side is constrained, or deterred, or self-deterred from acting, then deterrence fails. But the mutually assured destruction school of deterrence posited a concept of mutual deterrence, where both sides could not act aggressively for fear of setting off a sequence of events that might rapidly escalate to nuclear war. Thus, in the case of the mutually assured destruction concept of deterrence, Sun Zi's concept of unidirectional deterrence doesn't apply.

In summary, the influence of Sun Zi on US military thought and practice is hard to determine. Compared to earlier decades, the 1980s and 1990s have seen an increase in attention paid to Sun Zi in the US military education system. However, Sun Zi is studied in comparison with Clausewitz. Often instructors emphasize the similarities between Western and Eastern strategic traditions and the universality of certain principles of strategy. Or they use the Sun Zi text to provide historical information on the practice of military power in ancient China. Clausewitz remains the primary theorist of warfare for US military officers, though Sun Zi is usually considered the second most important source of strategic thinking.

CONCLUSION

In general, awareness of Sun Zi and the text has not developed in the US because of widespread indepth awareness of the book or its wealth of strategic axioms. Rather most people who have been exposed to the name and text have come to it through short one or two sentence axioms, aphorisms, and phrases that get repeated in popular business books and military manuals. The scholarly community researching Sun Zi or Sun Zi-related topics is still very small. The impact on military education is greater than its impact in any other arena -- whether academics or business or government. Even here, however, Sun Zi is almost

invariably introduced in a comparison with Clausewitz, and Clausewitz's arguments are considered the baseline or starting point of education in strategy. We can only hope that in the new millenium increased exchanges between US scholars and military officials and Sun Zi specialists in China will encourage greater interest and expertise in Sun Zi in the US such that, perhaps, in the future US specialists will make greater contributions to the history, philosophy, and practical application of Sun Zi's Art of War.