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Masters of War: History's Greatest Strategic Thinkers

Course Guidebook

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Professor Andrew R. Wilson is Professor of Strategy and Policy at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. He received a B.A. in East Asian Studies from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and earned a Ph.D. in History and East Asian Languages from Harvard University. His dissertation involved archival research in mainland China, Taiwan, and the Philippines and was funded by Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships.

Fluent in modern Mandarin, Professor Wilson also reads classical Chinese. At the Naval War College, he lectures on Asian military history, the classics of strategic theory, Chinese military modernization, and Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*. During his 15 years in Newport, he has won several awards for teaching and service. Prior to joining the Naval War College faculty in 1998, he taught Chinese history at Wellesley College and at Harvard University, where he was awarded the Derek C. Bok Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching. He also has taught at Salve Regina University and has given guest lectures at many other colleges and universities.

Professor Wilson is the author of numerous articles on the Chinese diaspora, Chinese military history, Chinese sea power, and Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*. His books include *Ambition and Identity: Chinese Merchant Elites in Colonial Manila, 1880–1916*; *The Chinese in the Caribbean*; *China's Future Nuclear Submarine Force*; and *War, Virtual War, and Society: The Challenge to Communities*. At present, he is completing a new translation of Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* and a maritime history of premodern China. In addition to his teaching duties, Professor Wilson is a founding member of the Naval War College's Asia-Pacific Studies Group and its China Maritime Studies Institute.

Professor Wilson appeared in a documentary on The History Channel and has been interviewed on National Public Radio. He has lectured on military history, strategic theory, and international security in nearly two dozen countries and on six continents. In the United States, he has been invited to speak at the National War College, the National Defense University, the U.S. Naval Academy, the Naval Postgraduate School, and the Air War College. In addition, Professor Wilson has contributed to the curricula of military colleges in Ecuador, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Ethiopia, and Uganda.

Professor Wilson's other Great Course is entitled *The Art of War*. ■

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Acknowledgment

This course, *Masters of War*, borrows its title and takes its inspiration from the pathbreaking work of comparative strategic analysis pioneered by my late colleague Michael I. Handel. It is my honor to dedicate this course to Michael's memory and to his legacy. ■

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this course are those of the professor and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Department of Defense, or the U.S. government. ■

Masters of War: History's Greatest Strategic Thinkers

Scope:

The Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz wrote, "In the whole range of human activities, war most closely resembles a game of cards." Clausewitz did not mean that war was a game; rather, he knew that war was so fraught with chance that it was much more like a game of poker than a mathematical equation. Poker is a game of chance, but it is equally a game of skill. In war, the skill most essential to improving the odds of success is crafting good strategy, which hinges on objective strategic analysis. And the best way to hone one's skills in strategic analysis is to study the classics of strategic theory and to test their utility across a range of historical and contemporary cases. This is why the classics of strategic theory are still taught in preeminent security studies programs, such as those at Yale, MIT, and Georgetown University, institutions that produce the elite of our civilian strategists. The classics are also required reading for the elite of the world's militaries at staff colleges around the globe. That our professional military and senior civilians are students of the strategic classics should come as little surprise. What is surprising is that al-Qaeda is equally interested in enhancing strategic literacy. Its members obviously study Mao Tse-tung on guerilla war, but they also read Sun Tzu and Clausewitz. For al-Qaeda, good strategy is the only way that the weak can prevail over the strong.

Although warfare has changed immeasurably over the course of human history, the classics of strategic thought endure. From the hoplites and triremes of ancient Greece to the Special Forces and UAVs in today's Afghanistan, strategy has remained a question of using the means at our disposal to compel an enemy to bend to our political will. As such, the greatest works of strategic theory deal primarily with the human contest of wills that takes place within the machine of warfare. *Masters of War* offers a concise and rigorous overview of the greatest students of war, from the ancient classics of Thucydides and Sun Tzu to the Renaissance genius of Machiavelli and the 19th-century philosopher-soldiers Jomini and Clausewitz. We will also learn about the strategic specialists, including Alfred Thayer Mahan and Julian

Corbett on naval warfare; the air-power theorists of the 20th century; and the masters of insurgency and counterinsurgency war, including Mao Tse-tung, David Galula, and Roger Trinquier. We will place each theorist within his unique historical and strategic circumstances, show how his insights apply over a range of historical cases, and evaluate his contemporary influence. In the process, we will begin to discern the complements and contradictions within and among the classics of strategic thought. In the final section of the course, we move from specific theorists to more general subjects, including the strategic challenges of terrorism and counterterrorism, the role of morality in war, and the future of strategic thought.

To judge the depth and sophistication of a strategic theory, we need to see the theorist in the context of his time. In other words, how appropriate were his prescriptions to the problems of his own age? With the exception of the most recent works of strategic theory, none of the classics we will cover was written for a 21st-century audience; thus, before we try to gauge just how applicable they are in the contemporary world, it is a good idea to try to understand who these classics were written for and what alternative theories, or ways of war, they were written against. Moreover, many of the classics of strategy were written in response to dramatic institutional, social, and technological changes that were transforming war, including the introduction of gunpowder, the French *levée en masse*, the steam battleship, air power, and nuclear weapons. Situating these thinkers within their contemporary "revolutions" in military affairs will make us better educated consumers of the strategic literature of today's high-tech world.

Our criteria for greatness in the realm of strategic thought will not be based on the military success of our theorist but on the depth and sophistication of his analysis and on his enduring influence. We will test each theorist with a discussion of strategy in action—historical cases that exemplify the strengths and limitations of these classics. For example, when we examine Sun Tzu on espionage, we will also look at the greatest intelligence coup in military history, Operation Fortitude. With Jomini and Clausewitz, we will look at the campaigns of Napoleon Bonaparte. When we visit the sea-power theorists, we will ship out to Trafalgar, Tsushima, Guadalcanal, and Leyte Gulf. With our insurgents and counterinsurgents, we will look at China, Algeria, Vietnam, and Iraq. With the terrorists and counterterrorists, it will

be the IRA and al-Qaeda. We will have plenty of historical practice against which to test these theories

This course is more than just a survey of the history of strategic thought. Our masters of war have stamina and have made substantial and enduring contributions to the maturation of strategic thought. We will, therefore, remain watchful of how these classics continue to influence strategic debates today. This course will have an insidious effect on the way you think about policy, strategy, and war. By the end of the last lecture, you will never again be able to watch the nightly news or read the daily paper without thinking about Thucydides, or Machiavelli, or Mao. ■

Why Strategy Matters

Lecture 1

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor may have been a military masterpiece, but it was a catastrophically bad strategic choice, and in the end, bad strategy brilliantly executed is still bad strategy. The example of Pearl Harbor emphasizes an important truth: There is a significant element of chance in war, and success requires the development of skills that can enhance the odds in one's favor. As we'll learn throughout this course, military prowess matters, but the skill that is most essential to improving the odds in war is strategic analysis.

Introduction to Strategic Analysis

- Strategic analysis involves objectively weighing the risks and rewards of different courses of action—thinking through the chains of cause and effect in each action before making a move. The best way to develop skills in strategic analysis is to study the classics of strategic theory and test their utility across a range of historical cases.

- In this course, we'll look at these classics of strategic theory—such works as Sun Tzu's *Art of War* and Clausewitz's *On War*—and apply those "masters of war" to historical case studies and contemporary security challenges. This approach is similar to that used in the preeminent security studies programs in the United States and by the best and brightest military minds of our time.
    - The work of the Prussian general and military thinker Carl von Clausewitz played a significant role in what became the Weinberger-Powell doctrine, a set of political and military preconditions conceived as a litmus test for committing U.S. troops to foreign wars.

    - Donald Rumsfeld repeatedly invoked Clausewitz and Sun Tzu during his tenure as secretary of defense. And Rumsfeld's deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, a leading architect of the Iraq War, regularly endorsed Thucydides as a guide to strategy in the 21st century.

Defining Strategy

- The term "strategy" derives from the Greek word *strategos*: the elected post of general in classical Athens. The idea that Athenian generals—or *strategoi*—were also politicians is the critical piece of this concept.
    - The term "political general" is laden with negative connotations, but at the highest level of command, a general must be political, that is, he or she must appreciate the idea that war is a means to a political end.

    - We can define strategy, then, as the process by which political purpose is translated into military action.

- Effective strategy also demands constant management, reassessment, and adaptation, largely because war is interactive—the enemy gets a vote. The nature of the military profession is not, however, always conducive to producing dynamic and adaptable strategic thinkers.
    - Most of an officer's career is consumed with the demands of the tactical and operational levels of war. Most officers don't have much time to ponder the strategic and political implications of what they're doing. But at the highest levels of command, deep thinking is exactly what is needed.

    - This is not a new dilemma. In the 1800s, Clausewitz pointed out that the very things that made someone a fine junior officer could actually handicap his strategic judgment. All that emphasis on drill and repetition and the belief in right and wrong answers can stifle strategic imagination. Doctrine and method provide clarity and predictability, but strategy is the realm of fog, friction, and chance.

    - Clausewitz's successors in the German armies of World War I and World War II didn't understand the difference. They had mastered the science and doctrine of warfare but not the art of strategy. As a result, they regularly mistook tactical and

operational brilliance for strategic wisdom. Japan was guilty of this at Pearl Harbor and so was the U.S. military in Vietnam.

Contrasting Patton and Eisenhower

- To clarify the distinction between strategic and operational thinking and to illustrate the connection between politics and war, let's draw a contrast between Patton and Eisenhower.

- Patton had a genius for war, but his genius was best suited to the operational level of war: commanding battles and leading campaigns, that is, subsets of the larger strategy.

- Eisenhower, on the other hand, had few of the warrior credentials of Patton. Instead, he was considered the finest staff officer in the U.S. Army. His genius is evident in the way he managed the Allied coalition and the intense personalities of Churchill, Montgomery, and Patton.

- If the roles were reversed—with Eisenhower in operational command and the bombastic Patton in charge of strategy—the Allied campaign after Normandy would have played out very differently and not for the better.

- Tactics and operations are about winning battles and campaigns; strategy is about winning wars, and as we saw in Vietnam, the former does not necessarily translate to the latter.

The Civil-Military Nexus

- Strategy evolves out of a dialogue between the political leadership and the military leadership, or what we might call the civil-military nexus. This is a tough relationship to make work. Military officers might be too "in the weeds" tactically, doctrinally, or operationally to think strategically. Political leaders might be too deferential to the senior military or feel themselves too ill-informed on military matters to offer their strategic input.

- The Athenians didn't have this problem: Their generals were also politicians and instinctively saw the connections between politics and war. But in the United States, where the civilian and the military are too often seen as discrete spheres, we need to appreciate the interconnection. It is the duty of the politicians to constantly play a role in crafting, implementing, and adjusting strategy.

- Wasn't civilian meddling in the conduct of the Vietnam War responsible for its loss? As we'll see, the complete opposite was the case. Civilians didn't meddle enough in the critical strategic choices in Vietnam.

- Franklin Roosevelt's planning for Operation Torch, the Allied landings in Axis-occupied North Africa, offers another example of this principle.
    - Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall opposed the operation. He thought it would be a dangerous diversion of resources from the primary theater of the war, Western Europe, and that the operation would delay the invasion of France. These were strategically valid points, but FDR overruled Marshall based on larger strategic considerations.

    - To FDR, action in 1942 was critical to supporting America's allies, chiefly the British. Invading North Africa also demonstrated U.S. credibility to the Soviets; would convince the American people that the Europe-first strategy was feasible; and would serve to prepare the untested U.S. military for the more daunting tasks of liberating France and toppling the Nazi regime.

    - In FDR's reasoning, we see that strategy is not only the process by which political purpose is translated into military action, but it is also the process of seizing opportunities in the midst of war to link unanticipated military opportunities to desired political outcomes.

Considerations in Strategic Theory

- As we've said, the nature of any war is largely defined by its political purpose, and the strategy must be geared toward those ends. The political purpose might be as simple as seizing some piece of territory or forcing some form of modest political concession, or it might be broad and complex, as in the case of forcing a regime change.

- Great strategic theory recognizes three common truths: (1) War is a dynamic realm of chance, uncertainty, and interaction; (2) war serves a political purpose; and (3) the military is a subordinate instrument of policy.

- There are no formulas that, if followed to the letter, will lead to success in war. Beware of any theory that claims to be a step-by-step science of strategy.

- Strategic theory also involves net assessment, an objective analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each belligerent with an eye toward identifying how these relative attributes might interact in a war. In addition to counting tanks or missiles, such an assessment must look at intangibles, such as the genius of the enemy's military commanders or the unique nature of the enemy's society.

- Another question we should ask about strategic theory is: Does it offer lessons about leadership, especially strategic leadership? We've already seen that the United States in World War II needed different types of leaders at different levels of the war—FDR, Marshall, Eisenhower, and Patton—and that was just in one war. As much as war can take many forms, so, too, can leadership in war.

- It's also important to look at how a strategic theory addresses the theme of how and why a war ends. An end to hostilities is obviously desirable in that it stops the bloodshed, but it should also result in a better state of peace for the victor.

- Finally, we should ask whether a theory is sufficiently grounded in history, because thinking historically accustoms the mind to critical analysis—to applying theoretical concepts to actual events.

Who Are Our Masters of War?

- Paradoxically, some of the great works of strategic theory come to us not from the victors of war but from the vanquished.
    - For example, Thucydides wrote his *History of the Peloponnesian War* after being cashiered for failing to defend the city of Amphipolis. Clausewitz was a POW for a year after the Prussian disasters of 1806. And Mao did some of his best work in a cave after the Long March.

    - Our criteria for greatness in the realm of strategic thought will not be based on military success but, rather, on the depth and sophistication of the analysis and on its enduring influence.

- We will fill our course with discussions of strategy in action, with historical cases that exemplify the strengths and limitations of each of the classics we will explore.
    - For example, when we examine the *Sunzi* on espionage, we will also look at the greatest intelligence coup in military history, Operation Fortitude.

    - With the naval theorists Alfred Thayer Mahan and Sir Julian Corbett, we will sail off to Cape Trafalgar, Tsushima Strait, and Leyte Gulf. With Mao and revolutionary war, it will be China, Vietnam, and even al-Qaeda.

- Finally, many of the classics of strategy were written in response to dramatic institutional, social, and technological changes that transformed war, such as the gunpowder revolution, the French *levée en masse*, the steam battleship, airpower, and nuclear weapons. We need to understand these contexts before we try to gauge how applicable the work is in the contemporary world.

- Warfare has changed immeasurably over the course of human history, yet the classics of strategic thought endure. The greatest works of strategic theory are primarily about the human contest of wills that takes place within the larger machine of warfare. In the next lecture, we'll begin with Thucydides's tale of the Peloponnesian War, one of the Western world's great works of history and its first classic of strategic thought.

Suggested Reading

Earle, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy*.

Handel, *Masters of War*.

Heuser, *The Evolution of Strategy*.

Murray, Bernstein, and Knox, eds., *The Making of Strategy*.

Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*.

Questions to Consider

1. Why is it important to have senior military officers who think strategically?

2. Give a one-sentence definition of military strategy. What distinguishes strategy from the tactical and operational levels of war?

Thucydides on Strategy

Lecture 2

Thucydides's *History of the Peloponnesian War* is a gift that keeps on giving. It can be read as a window onto ancient Greek culture, a primer on international relations, or a chronicle of war and strategy. In this first of two lectures on Thucydides, we will look at the elements of his narrative that best exemplify the criteria of theoretical brilliance we laid out in Lecture 1: the use of history in the process of critical analysis, the recognition that war serves a political purpose, examination of the lessons of leadership, and more.

The Origins of the Peloponnesian War

- Thucydides identifies three immediate causes of the Peloponnesian War: (1) Athenian support of Corcyra in its war against Corinth, a Spartan ally; (2) economic sanctions imposed by Athens on the city of Megara, also a Spartan ally; and (3) the attack launched by Athens on the city of Potidea, a former Corinthian colony.

- Sparta used these events as pretexts for declaring war on Athens, but Thucydides viewed these three crises more as catalysts for war. The truest cause was the growth of the power of Athens and the alarm it inspired in Sparta. Thucydides thus uses the origins of this war to give us one of the most succinct appraisals of what motivates states to seek empire: the lethal trifecta of fear, honor, and interest.

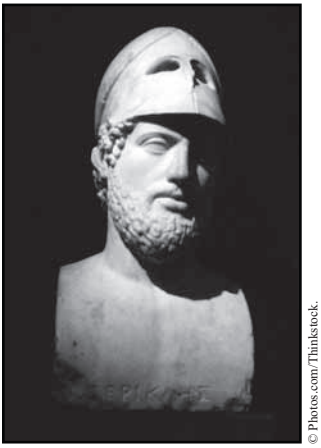
- Thucydides also tells us that the different motivations that Sparta and Athens had for going to war directly influenced their radically different political objectives.
    - Sparta was highly militarized but also deeply reluctant to go to war; it went to war only for objectives of great value.

    - As a sea power with a large and often unruly maritime empire, Athens was regularly engaged in small wars of imperial policing.

- Sparta's political objective was unlimited: "Free the Greeks," in other words, dismantle the Athenian Empire and liberate Greek city-states from Athenian domination.

- For Pericles, the leading general of Athens, the goal was limited: Restore the status quo ante bellum and get back to the business of dominating the Greek world through commerce and cultural imperialism.

- Pericles underestimated how scared and serious the Spartans were. He assumed that if Athens could hold out for a few years, then the Spartans would grow frustrated and return to the peace table.



The strategy of Pericles in the Peloponnesian War was designed to frustrate the Spartans to the point that they would sue for peace and accept Athenian domination of the Aegean.

Net Assessment

- To determine which of these objectives would exercise the greatest influence on the nature of the war, we need to gauge the strengths and weaknesses of each side, determine the relative values of the political objectives, and gauge the capacity of each belligerent to compel the other to do its political will.

- In Thucydides, the initial net assessments are contained in the speeches of the Athenian statesman Pericles and the Spartan king Archidamus.

- Pericles is more optimistic in appraising Athenian strengths, especially in terms of time and money. But he also gives us great insights into what he sees as Sparta's fundamental weakness, its economy. In particular, the Spartans depended on the helots, a

conquered people, to provide the agricultural surplus that allowed them to maintain the only standing army in Greece, but the helots presented a constant threat of revolt.

- In contrast to the optimism of Pericles, the speech of King Archidamus predicts the difficulties of defeating Athens. For him, Athens was everything that Sparta wasn't: dynamic, expansive, rich, and seagoing. Archidamus believed that his countrymen had grossly underestimated how much pain the Athenians could bear. But the basis of Athenian power, its maritime empire, was also a vulnerability.
    - Athens was a democracy, but it demanded tribute from its allies to provide a collective defense and to maintain the largest fleet in Greece. The fact that Pericles spent the allied contributions on public works projects and festivals antagonized Athens' allies.

    - Further, Athenian power was dependent on market access. Athens exported wine and olive oil and imported timber and grain, and it needed silver to keep the empire liquid. To Archidamus, the only hope of freeing the Greeks lay in dismantling Athens' political economy. To do that, Sparta needed a fleet, and building one would take a long time and a good deal of allied assistance.

- Using the voices of Pericles and Archidamus, Thucydides masterfully lays out a series of questions that must be asked and objectively answered so that a strategist can confidently claim to know the enemy and himself.

Leadership

- Thucydides gives us numerous profiles in leadership: good, bad and middling. He rates Pericles highly. The statesman was blessed with the qualities of intellect, self-sacrifice, determination, and restraint. He had a workable strategy, and he was eloquent enough to convince the Athenians of the wisdom of his strategy.

- Later Athenian statesmen, among them Alcibiades and Nicias, fell short as leaders in the eyes of Thucydides.
    - Thucydides's portrait of Alcibiades is a fascinating study in contrasts. Like Pericles, he was intelligent, determined, and eloquent, but he was also vain, self-serving, and impetuous. His strategic proposals were brilliant, but they often served the best interests of Alcibiades, not Athens.

    - Nicias, the archrival of Alcibiades, had all the restraint and self-sacrifice of Pericles, but none of his imagination or eloquence. His opposition to Alcibiades's ambitious plans for the Sicilian expedition backfired; he became a victim of his own rhetorical sleight-of-hand and ended up as commander of the expedition.

Interaction and Adaptation

- Thucydides gives us a rich chronicle of strategic adaptation and innovation, highlighting the fact that strategic decision points often arise from chance or luck.

- The first stroke of luck in the Peloponnesian War was extremely bad for Athens. The city was ravaged by a plague that killed between a quarter and a third of its population. Among the victims was Pericles, and his death divided the citizens on the issue of war.

- Fate intervened again in the spring of 425, when a detachment of Athenians was forced ashore by a storm at the town of Pylos on the coast of the Peloponnese. Pylos was the homeland of Sparta's helots, and the Spartans feared the Athenian occupation there would incite a helot revolt.
    - A regiment of Spartan hoplites sent to oust the Athenians became trapped on the small island of Sphacteria. The Athenian demagogue Cleon defeated the Spartans there and took more than a hundred prisoners.

    - Desperate to get their warriors back, the Spartans offered terms, and it looked like the Athenians would achieve their

initial political objectives using a slightly modified form of Pericles's strategy.

- Thucydides shows us, however, the natural tendency to overreach in moments of success. Cleon demanded even greater concessions from the Spartans, prompting one of their most innovative adaptations of the war: the plan of Brasidas to capture the city of Amphipolis, an Athenian ally and critical hub for trade.

- In taking Amphipolis, Brasidas scored a psychological blow against the Athenian Empire and threatened some of its crucial commodities. The result was an almost total inversion of initial policies and strategies. Cleon, the Athenian, became the advocate of the direct approach and an unlimited objective, while Brasidas, the Spartan, executed an indirect strategy in the hopes of a negotiated settlement.

- The two men met at the battle of Amphipolis, and both were killed. With the two most strident hawks out of the way, cooler heads in Athens and Sparta prevailed, and they hammered out a peace.

The Peace

- As noted in Lecture 1, a great strategic theory addresses the how and why of ending wars. Thucydides shows us just how difficult it is to make peace in the first place and how hard it is to make peace last.

- During the plague, the Athenians sought terms, but the Spartans had little incentive to negotiate with a reeling Athens.

- After Cleon's victory at Pylos, it was the Spartans' turn to seek terms, but Cleon demanded too many concessions.

- After Amphipolis, both sides were bloodied and exhausted, but both sides also had leverage: Athens still has Spartan POWs and

Brasidas's men still occupied Amphipolis. This is almost the ideal circumstance for a negotiated settlement: exhaustion and leverage on both sides at the same time.

- The Peace of Nicias might have lasted were it not for two factors: Brasidas's men refused to give up Amphipolis, and many in Sparta and Athens viewed the peace more as a strategic pause than a permanent settlement.

Social and Moral Implications of War

- In the next lecture, we'll look at the decision of the citizens of Athens to destroy the city of Melos in 416 B.C. From that point forward, the democratic system in Athens, the source of its strength, began to implode. By the end of the war with Sparta, the Athenians were at war with themselves.

- Even the Spartans were spiritually and culturally challenged by this protracted conflict. True to Archidamus's prediction at the beginning, this war was bequeathed to another generation and Sparta was changed forever.

- In the process of defeating Athens, Sparta's frailties and systemic flaws were exacerbated, in particular its helot problem and its excessively stringent eugenics program. In victory, Sparta was fundamentally weakened as a great power.

Lessons for the Elephant

- Most people read Thucydides from the Athenian perspective. His injunctions seem primarily about how a rambunctious democracy can avoid self-defeating behavior in the course of a protracted conflict. At the same time, Sparta's ultimate victory gives us a glimpse into how a land power can exploit its strengths and compensate for its weaknesses.

- Victory over the Athenians took decades and required the Spartans to build a navy, cultivate creative and audacious admirals, and

guarantee Persian financial support. That process fundamentally transformed Sparta but also weakened it fatally.

- From 412 onward, the Spartans cobbled together a large fleet, built and manned largely by Spartan allies and paid for by the Persians but commanded by Spartans. This fleet compounded Athenian overstretch and strained Athens' maritime lines of supply.

- The admiral Lysander understood the stress that Athens was under and sought to increase it. He initially avoided battle with the Athenian fleet but seized every opportunity to nibble away at the empire.

- When Lysander finally struck, at Aegospotami in 405, he bested the Athenian fleet and won a war that had lasted 27 years.

- Sparta's hegemony was undone shortly afterward by its replacement of democratic regimes with oligarchic tyrannies and the mobilization of Persia against it.

- In the final analysis, Sparta's command of the seas was built on shaky foundations. Sparta had its fair share of brilliant admirals, but it lacked the commercial dynamism, the seamanship, and the shipbuilding capabilities that Athens enjoyed at the height of its power.

Suggested Reading

Hanson, *A War Like No Other*.

Kagan, *The Peloponnesian War*.

Plutarch, "Alcibiades" and "Lysander" in *The Rise and Fall of Athens*.

Strassler, ed., *The Landmark Thucydides*.

Strauss, "Sparta's Maritime Moment."

Questions to Consider

1. According to Thucydides, what were the causes of the Peloponnesian War? Do you agree that these causes are timeless?

2. What best explains Athens' ultimate defeat: Spartan strategy or Athenian mistakes?

Thucydides as a Possession for All Time

Lecture 3

In this lecture, we will look at two vignettes from Thucydides's *History*, the Sicilian expedition of 415 to 413 B.C. and the Melian Dialogue of 416. We will also look at two contrasting interpretations of each vignette to gain an understanding of why this rich and ancient text still influences conflicting sides of contemporary debates about policy and strategy.

Background on the Sicilian Expedition

- In 421 B.C., the Athenians and the Spartans had concluded a peace treaty, but to the Athenian politician Alcibiades, the idea of peaceful coexistence with an unbroken Sparta was unrealistic. Only a major blow at Sparta's great hoplite army could shatter its grip over its Peloponnesian allies, and Alcibiades had a plan for achieving this objective.

- He cobbled together an alliance of Athens, Argos, and some other states to meet the Spartans in a battle at Mantinea (418 B.C.) that, it was believed, would break the Greek stalemate. Nicias opposed the scheme, and in the end, Athens committed only a small force, resulting in an indecisive battle.

- In 416 B.C., a delegation from allies in Sicily arrived in Athens to beg for aid against the rising power of two city-states: Selinus and Syracuse. These were both Dorian cities, which meant they had something of a cultural bond with Sparta and a potential hostility to Ionian Athens. Humbling Selinus and Syracuse presented another opportunity for Alcibiades to break the stalemate and lead a grand campaign.

- A campaign to Sicily had a number of elements in its favor, primarily the fact that its cities were fabulously wealthy. Further, the city of Segesta, in the western part of Sicily, was an ally of Athens and claimed it would cover the costs of the expedition. Syracuse,

the strongest power in Sicily, would be inclined to side with Sparta in a war against Athens, and it was a major sea power. Athens saw value in a preventive war to check the rise of this potential naval competitor.

- Alcibiades lobbied hard for an expedition of 60 triremes to sail to Sicily, recruit allies, and either intimidate or beat Syracuse into submission.
  - The plan passed easily, and a shared command was selected that included both the bold Alcibiades and the prudent Nicias.

  - At a later assembly, Nicias spoke out against the intemperance of the expedition, but in 415, Athens sent more than 130 triremes and several thousand hoplites to Sicily. A second deployment of an additional 73 triremes and 5,000 more hoplites followed in 414.

  - By September 413, all of the hoplites were either dead or prisoners, and the triremes were either sunk or captured by the Syracusans and their Peloponnesian allies.

Conflicting Viewpoints

- The results in Sicily were a catastrophic combination of excessive caution and excessive bravado. Prudence and audacity are both necessary in war, but in the case of Sicily, the pendulum swung dangerously back and forth between these two virtues. An expedition boldly conceived by Alcibiades but cautiously executed by Nicias was the worst of all possible combinations.

- Thucydides's account of the Athenian disaster at Sicily is the richest, most detailed, and most dramatic section of his *History*.
  - Thucydides's take is that post-Pericles Athens was ruled by the mob and manipulated by political hacks, such as Alcibiades. Despite the claims of supporting allies in Sicily, the true objective was the outright conquest of the island.

- Machiavelli agreed with Thucydides's critique of Athenian depravity. According to him, ancient Athens had become imbalanced. Democracy is good, but it must be balanced with elements of oligarchy: a powerful elite, such as the Roman Senate, and an executive element, such as Sparta's kings or Rome's consuls.

- The most prominent contemporary students of Thucydides challenge his account. According to the eminent Yale historian Donald Kagan, the Sicilian expedition was not an example of democracy out of control. Rather, it was a prudent, reasonable, and fairly low-risk strategy of imperial policing that was disastrously bungled by the cowardly and disingenuous Nicias.

- Sicily has become a test case for determining when it is a good idea to open or contest a new theater in an ongoing struggle, with several factors weighing both in favor of and against the expedition. The same questions that we ask about Sicily can also be applied to Vietnam and the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Was our democracy deranged, or was Iraq a good idea poorly executed?

The Melian Dialogue

- If Sicily is the military and strategic highpoint of Thucydides's *History*, then the Melian Dialogue is the moral and spiritual low point.

- In 416 B.C., the island of Melos was viewed as critical to Athens; its neutrality was considered more of an aid to Sparta than to Athens, and a potential Spartan ally in the Aegean was a potential liability for Athens. Thus, Athens sent a large force to Melos to present an ultimatum: submit to Athens and pay tribute or be destroyed.

- Thucydides's account of the negotiations between the Athenians and the Melians is one of the highlights of the *History*. The Melians appeal to justice, but justice, according to the Athenians matters only in disputes between states of equal power. In all other relations, the strong do what they will and the weak suffer what they must.

- The Melians decided to resist the Athenian force, but the city was eventually taken, all the men were killed, and all the women and children were sold into slavery. The city was then repopulated with Athenian colonists.

Interpreting the Melos Incident

- Two schools of political science have fixated on the Melian dialogue: the realists and the neoconservatives.

- In general, political realists view international relations as a state of anarchy, a realm of conflict and competition where calculations of relative power and self-interest almost invariably trump morality or justice.
  - Many of Thucydides's most important disciples, including Thomas Hobbes, Machiavelli, and the influential political scientist Hans Morgenthau, see an implicit endorsement of the realist perspective in his *History*, particularly in the Melian Dialogue.

  - Melos was technically neutral, but there were hints that it might have been aiding Sparta. Given this fact, the Athenian political demands seem fairly reasonable: If Melos became an Athenian ally, it could retain control of its domestic politics and enjoy the benefits of Athenian protection and free trade in the Aegean.

  - Further, the Athenians believed they couldn't back down from Melos precisely because of its weakness. If the Melians weren't punished for their defiance, dozens of other subject cities might be emboldened to revolt against Athens. We see here parallels to the Cold War and the domino theory.

- Neoconservatives have a radically different take on the Melian Dialogue. Leo Strauss, a political philosopher at the University of Chicago, saw a mirror for understanding the past, present, and future of America in the rise and fall of Athens.

- In the decades after the Persian wars, Athens was a great force for good in the Greek world; it spread democracy and prosperity and held the barbaric Persians at bay.

- Over time, however, Athens lost its way. Its great democracy was undermined by selfishness, moral depravity, and self-serving politicians. Its foreign policy became morally bankrupt, and its empire became a tyranny. The Melian Dialogue represents the depth of this tyrannical depravity.

- The fact that the Athenians disdained morality and justice in favor of self-interest shouldn't be taken as an endorsement of realism but as an indictment of naked self-interest divorced from morality. Brutish imperialism de-legitimized a once just and good empire and began to drive Athens' natural allies into the camp of its blood enemies.

- From a neoconservative perspective, what this meant for Athens—and what it potentially means for the United States—is that a foreign policy based on pure realism, a foreign policy based on cold-blooded calculations of relative power, undermines the power and legitimacy of a hard-won empire.

- This is not an indictment of the Athenian Empire then or of American hegemony now. To neoconservatives, the root of the disparity between the earlier good Athens and the evil Athens on display at Melos lay in the moral collapse of the Athenian democracy. Athens' empire collapsed because its foreign policy had become immoral. Its foreign policy was immoral because its internal politics had become immoral.

- Neoconservatives are concerned that a similar moral collapse may threaten the greatness of the United States on the world stage. What this means for war and strategy is that war can be just and can enhance a nation's power, but only if its purpose and conduct conform to the nation's core values.

Suggested Reading

Hale, *Lords of the Sea*.

Kagan, *The Peace of Nicias and the Sicilian Expedition*.

———, *Thucydides: The Reinvention of History*.

Strassler, ed., *The Landmark Thucydides*, Books V–VII.

Strauss, "Thucydides: The Meaning of Political History."

Walling, "Thucydides on Democratic Politics and Civil-Military Relations."

Questions to Consider

1. Was the Sicilian expedition a sound strategic choice? If so, why? If not, why not?

2. Which interpretation of Thucydides do you find most persuasive: the realist interpretation or the neoconservative interpretation? Why?

Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*

Lecture 4

Sun Tzu's *Art of War* is the world's most widely read and most frequently quoted (and misquoted) work of strategic theory. As one of the great books on leadership, it is required reading in military academies and business schools. Interestingly, the name of the book is not *The Art of War* but more accurately translated as *Master Sun's Military Methods*. More than a book about war, it is, thus, about the totality of the military as an institution and an instrument. In this lecture, we'll examine the history of the book, discuss the basic elements of its theory on the use of the military, and explore how a "superior general" might put this theory into practice.

What Is the *Sunzi*?

- The standard version of the *Sunzi* comprises 13 essays attributed to Master Sun. Given that they purport to be the words of a master, they appear to be statements of truth, free from the extensive supporting analysis and historical examples that we will see in Clausewitz and Machiavelli.

- Because the *Sunzi* is written in a terse style, individual passages read as discrete pearls of wisdom that are easily divorced from the rest of the text. For example: "The Supreme Excellence is to achieve victory without resort to battle."

- The *Sunzi* is a coherent and intellectually challenging strategic theory. The arguments build to a rhetorical crescendo; the language is consistent and purposeful; and the author mercilessly pushes a theoretical agenda.

History behind the *Sunzi*

- The *Sunzi* begins: "Master Sun said: 'The use of the military is the greatest affair of the state. It is the terrain of life and death, the path of survival and ruin. It must be studied.'" This statement

is obvious from a 21st-century perspective, but why did the author feel obligated to make such a statement and to make it his opening salvo?

- The Zhou kingdom (1100–256 B.C.) consisted of several hundred feudal states that declared their loyalty to the Zhou king as the universal sovereign. From the 8th century onward, the authority of the king was buttressed by the growing military power of neighboring dukes, who came to be called hegemons.

- The first hegemon of the northern state of Qi implemented a series of institutional reforms that transformed Qi from a loose confederation of clans into a bureaucratically managed autocracy. In the process, the duke dramatically increased Qi's military power, which he used to defend the northern frontier and control the ambitious Chinese states to the south.

- Along with these institutional innovations came changes in the nature of war. In the 7th century, war was seasonal and highly ritualized, and battles between chariot-mounted aristocrats might involve only a few thousand men on both sides. By the end of the 6th century, there were infantry armies of more than 100,000.

- It was at this moment that the general Sun Wu appeared. Sun Wu was born in Qi, but he made his name in the service of the southern state of Wu against its western neighbor, Chu. In 509 B.C., Sun Wu achieved a dramatic victory over Chu, but the triumph of Wu proved short-lived. The state was ultimately conquered by one of its southern neighbors.

- In the two centuries after the fall of Wu, war accelerated in scale, breadth, and lethality. In the Warring States era (5th–3rd centuries B.C.), we see ever larger and better organized states. By the 4th century, when the *Sunzi* was written (c. 330–320 B.C.), only seven large states remained. In other words, it was composed in a context in which multiple states were large and lethal enough to compete for control of all of China.

- We would think that such dramatic changes in the scale and scope of warfare would demand a complete reappraisal of the military ethos, but aristocratic values of heredity, privilege, and personal valor still prevailed. The *Sunzi*, with its anti-heroic bent, was an argument against that fundamental contradiction.

- The *Sunzi* is not just a critique of aristocratic pretentions, however; it is also an assault against moral philosophers, like the Confucians, whose goal was to restore harmony within China's social and political institutions by returning to the moral tenets of the founders of the Zhou dynasty. In contrast to Confucian morality and ritual, the *Sunzi* claims that the professional management and use of mass infantry armies is "the greatest affair of the state."

The *Sunzi* as a Work of Strategic Theory

- The *Sunzi* makes three major claims: (1) that the text contains the wisdom of Sun Wu, who deserves the title of master (*zi*), a thinker on par with the greatest philosophers; (2) that the sole purpose for the existence and employment of the military is to increase the wealth and power of the state; and (3) that the general must wield the military with the same skill and autonomy with which a master swordsman handles his weapon.

- We can see these three claims in stark relief in the very first line of the text and peppered throughout the book. For example, on the purpose of the military, the *Sunzi* says, "If it does not profit the state, do not use the military." On the autonomy of the general, it says, "The ruler who has able generals and who does not interfere in their affairs will be victorious."

- With the historical background we now have, we realize that what initially sound like bland platitudes are actually part of a radical and relentless sales pitch that demands a coldly rational, anti-heroic, and almost superhuman approach to war.

- The author of the *Sunzi* was not satisfied with the way in which states were conducting wars, and he didn't approve of the criteria

for command. Thus, the *Sunzi* presents a revolutionary ideal that is vastly superior to the aristocratic/heroic ideal that sees battle as ritual and to the Confucian disdain for military affairs.

- As much as the *Sunzi* is an elaborate assault on amateurish, vain aristocrats and on naïve Confucian moralists, it is also a spirited delineation and defense of the realm of authority and expertise that defines the professional general.

Theoretical Prescriptions

- From the three major claims of the *Sunzi*, we can derive the three core theoretical prescriptions of the book: Be efficient, avoid protraction, and value the commander's intellect and skill above all else.

- In order for a state to survive and to win wars, it must make efficient use of its resources, while always keeping an eye on the ultimate benefit to the state. Chapter III of the *Sunzi* lays out a continuum from the most to the least efficient strategies that moves from attacking the enemy's strategy to attacking its alliances, armies, and finally, cities.

- The second of the *Sunzi*'s core theoretical prescriptions is to avoid protraction. This is an important theme in the work. In fact, all of Chapter II is concerned with the dangers and costs of protracted operations. Protraction poses a mortal danger to both belligerents, from which neither side benefits.

- The third prescription of the *Sunzi* places an emphasis on the intellectual, as opposed to the heroic, qualities of the commander. The intellectual qualities enable the general to master the totality of the military as both an institution and an instrument and are critical to the successful performance of net assessment.
    - The first chapter of the *Sunzi* gives us five categories of net assessment to determine the nature of a looming conflict: (1) the spiritual strength of a state, that is, its ability to mobilize, to make sacrifices, and to resist the enemy's attempts at subverting

its resolve; (2) the environment; (3) the terrain; (4) command, that is, the talent of the general, the pivotal figure who must manipulate these elements; and (5) method—logistics, staffing, discipline, and organization.

- With the *Sunzi*, command is no longer based on aristocratic pedigree; it is an intellectual enterprise, based on the ability to test and process these five elements and craft strategy in accord with their subtle variations.

Theory into Practice

- The first key to putting this theory into practice is to have superior intelligence and, at the same time, to limit an opponent's access to intelligence.

- The second key is operational initiative. Keep the enemy off balance by employing both conventional and unconventional forces and through deception. Use intelligence and deception to distract, anger, or win over the opposing general. Take the war to the enemy by invading its territory to multiply the stresses on its institutions and society.

- The third key is knowing when and where to deliver the decisive blow. Create and exploit the situation where you can make the best use of your resources. Know how to position your troops to maximize their destructive impact on the enemy.

- The successful commander must study the field of engagement, weigh the strengths and weaknesses of the military forces, plumb the will and intentions of the adversary, and gauge the mood of the troops.

Modern Applicability

- The *Sunzi* provides the modern soldier, businessperson, and sports coach with a wealth of advice that is intensely appealing but often difficult to follow in practice.

The promise of big rewards at low risks explains the appeal of the *Sunzi* in the world of business.

- In reading the *Sunzi*, we should ask ourselves whether it deemphasizes the interactive nature of war, whether its apparent faith in the clarity and utility of espionage and intelligence is realistic, and whether war or business or sports can be as rational and antiseptic as the text seems to promise.

- The *Sunzi* highlights many of the enduring tensions between the military and the politicians it serves, but it is essential not to confuse the judicious exercise of political authority over the military with the amateurish interference of a Warring States aristocrat in the serious business of war.

- The *Sunzi* does not have a monopoly on wisdom, but reading it carefully and understanding the author's larger purpose can be a marvelous educational experience and may improve the chances of success in any field.

Suggested Reading

Meyer and Wilson, "*Sunzi Bingfa* as History and Theory."

Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (translated by Samuel B. Griffith).

———, *The Art of Warfare* (translated by Roger Ames).

Questions to Consider

1. Does placing Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, or any other strategic classic, in its historical context increase or decrease its contemporary utility?

2. What are the most important qualities of Sun Tzu's ideal military commander?

Sun Tzu through Time

Lecture 5

If a great work of strategic theory is a "possession for all time," then the *Sunzi* gives Thucydides a run for the money. It was incorporated into the Chinese strategic canon more than 2,000 years ago, making it perhaps the most consistently applied and historically significant classic of them all. To highlight the *Sunzi*'s historical impact, this lecture covers four topics: the place of the *Sunzi* in China's strategic culture, the *Sunzi* in feudal and modern Japan, the embrace of the *Sunzi* in the West, and a case study of the most brilliant example of the *Sunzi* in action— World War II's Operation Fortitude.

The Place of the *Sunzi* in China

- Given the *Sunzi*'s status in the canon of Chinese—and world—strategic literature, it might seem strange that it received a negative response in ancient China. But recall that the *Sunzi* represented a forceful assault on the aristocratic pretensions of the warrior elite and on the naïve moralism of the Confucians. This assault didn't go unanswered.

- One school of thought rejected the *Sunzi* outright, while another tried to moderate some of its more extreme prescriptions.
    - The most prominent rejector was Xun Qing (Xunzi), an important successor of Confucius. In his "Debate on the Principles of Warfare," Xun Qing lays out an extended critique of the *Sunzi*, in which he rejects the autonomy and authority of the professional commander and asserts the sole legitimacy of the ruler in all matters of governance, including war.

    - A more subtle critique of the *Sunzi* is offered in the *Wuzi* (*The Military Methods of Master Wu*). The *Wuzi* is attributed to Wu Qi, a minister and general who lived a century after Sun Wu. He tries to strike a middle course among three poles: the extreme anti-heroic and amoral approach of the *Sunzi*,

the moral compass sought by the Confucians, and the martial virtue craved by the aristocracy.

- Despite its force and appeal, the *Sunzi* did not dominate strategic thought in China. Instead, it sparked a debate about the role and utility of military force in statecraft and in society. The *Sunzi*, the *Wuzi*, and other works also enshrined the necessity to think holistically and strategically about the use of force.

- The centrality of the *Sunzi* in Chinese strategic thought has inclined some to conclude that it represents the epitome of Chinese strategic culture. In particular, some people, including many in contemporary China, would have us believe that the concept of "winning without fighting" has defined Chinese military history, but we can point to many examples in which winning by fighting was a necessity.

- It's also true that Chinese tradition was under intense assault for most of the 20th century. The Communists dismissed the *Sunzi* as anachronistic and naïve. Today, a renewed interest in the classics is developing in China, but the move back to tradition is tentative and often superficial.

The *Sunzi* in Japan

- The *Sunzi* probably made its first appearance in Japan in the 8th or 9th century A.D. and, by the 11th century, was widely quoted in military texts. Even in the 19th and 20th centuries, when Japan was embracing foreign military models, the *Sunzi* remained required reading among military officers. Ironically, this Chinese text was viewed as central to maintaining Japanese national character in a modern world.

- For some among the samurai, however, the *Sunzi*'s anti-heroic and amoral approach to the use of the military ran completely counter to their cultural ethos. An aphorism from the Tokugawa period (17th–19th centuries) argues that although the *Sunzi* is important, a true warrior reads the *Wuzi*. Given the *Wuzi*'s attempt to bring

heroism and morality back into war, we should not be surprised by its relative popularity among the samurai.

- When Japan emerged from its isolation in the late 19th century, its leaders looked both to foreign models and the classics to craft a new military ethos. The *Sunzi*'s emphasis on intelligence, surprise, and deception became crucial elements of the new Japanese way of war.
    - When these tools were kept subordinate to sound strategy and policy, Japan proved successful, as we can see from its successes in both the Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War.

    - By the 1930s, however, deception and surprise had become almost ends in themselves. In the attack on Pearl Harbor, we see a brilliant example of operational deception and surprise but one that also had catastrophic strategic implications.

The Embrace of the *Sunzi* in the West

- The first European translation of the *Sunzi* was published in Paris in 1782 by a French Jesuit missionary who had served in China. More translations followed in the early 20th century, but these were not widely read beyond a small group of China experts. Western interest in the *Sunzi* did not really spike until the late 1940s, inspired by Mao's victory in the Chinese civil war and the advent of the Cold War.

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For Mao, winning without fighting, the most problematic axiom in the *Sunzi*, was inconceivable.

- After the Communists won China's civil war and Mao's guerilla strategy began to be exported to the Third World, many people became interested in the "Chinese way of war." Indeed, U.S. General Samuel B. Griffith claimed that Mao was the *Sunzi*'s most important

disciple, but Mao's strategic outlook seems far more European than classically Chinese.

- Cold War tensions between the United States and the USSR also made the *Sunzi* an appealing strategic guide. From the late 1940s onward, attacking the enemy's strategies and alliances was far more attractive than the obvious thermonuclear implications of attacking the armies or cities of the opposing superpower.

- By the 1980s, the *Sunzi* had escaped from the realm of security studies and began to appear in business school curricula and American pop culture. Today, interest in the *Sunzi* is at an all-time high.

The *Sunzi* in Action

- The execution of Operation Fortitude in World War II tracks almost exactly with chapter XIII of the *Sunzi*, which is entitled "The Use of Spies." The chapter describes five types of spies and the "divine skein" of their recruitment and manipulation. Fortitude was the Allied scheme that convinced Hitler that the Normandy landings were a diversion and that the real invasion would come at the Pas de Calais.

- The Nazis were relentless in rooting out enemy infiltrators and traitors. As a result, living agents and internal spies working for the Allies were relatively few. Great Britain and the United States were at pains to craft a divine skein out of doubled agents and disinformation.
    - In the 1930s, a group of Polish engineers and mathematicians managed to build an Enigma machine in reverse, which they shared with the British. Churchill immediately grasped the significance of the ability to read German radio traffic. True to the *Sunzi*, he accorded significant funding to what came to be called Ultra, which opened the way for the Allies to weave their own divine skein.

    - With a mix of Ultra intercepts and good detective work, MI5 managed to co-opt Germany's entire espionage ring in

Britain by 1941. This created the wellspring of doubled agents from which the divine skein could be sewn. Remarkably, the Germans never realized that their espionage network had been completely compromised.

- As much as knowing what the Germans were doing was important, knowing what the Germans thought the Allies were doing was even more strategically significant. Because of Ultra, the Allies knew whether or not the Nazis believed their disinformation campaign.

- The basic premise of Fortitude, divided into Fortitude North and Fortitude South, was to convince the Germans that major Allied invasions were planned for Norway and the Pas de Calais in France.
  - Misinformation spread through doubled agents was reinforced by radio transmissions *from* and well-publicized appointments *to* entirely fictitious military headquarters.

  - The northern feint was convincing enough to tie down nearly 30 German divisions in Scandinavia, a theater of marginal importance. The real coup, however, was Fortitude South, which invented a fictitious army under Patton in southeast England.

  - The deception masters served up to German reconnaissance all the evidence of an army preparing for an assault on occupied France. Patton's fictional army even bought up thousands of Michelin Guide maps for the Calais area.

  - Fortitude South convinced Hitler and Field Marshal von Rundstedt that the attack would be at Calais sometime in August of 1944.

  - When the Allies began to land in Normandy on June 6, Hitler thought it was a diversion and would not reinforce with the troops that were committed to Calais. Three weeks later, Hitler was still convinced that a second assault force was coming from Dover.

- Despite the brilliance of the deception, Fortitude did not allow the Allies to win without fighting. But were it not for the divine skein of intelligence and deception embodied in Fortitude South, a successful Allied invasion of France in 1944 may well have been inconceivable.

The Success of Operation Fortitude

- The *Sunzi* gives us a straightforward explanation for the efficacy of Operation Fortitude: The Allies knew Germany's general inclinations and the structure of its intelligence gathering and could, therefore, use its own institutions against it. Ultra also exploited the Germans' arrogance over the purported superiority of their encryption technology.

- Further, the British and Americans understood that their divine skein hinged on turned agents. MI5 and the FBI made excellent use of these assets.

- The deception story was also plausible. Attacks on Norway and the Pas de Calais made military sense, and the fictitious armies made credible noise in preparing for those assaults. That was enough to reinforce what was essentially a sound German assessment.

- Finally, Allied civil and military leadership appreciated the importance of espionage and deception and went to great pains to fund and man Ultra and Fortitude but also to keep them absolutely secret.

- As much as Fortitude can be viewed as a model of intelligence, deception, and surprise, it should also serve as a cautionary tale.
    - Fortitude was a necessary preparation for Operation Overlord, but a massive amphibious invasion was still required to oust the Germans from France and to drive on Berlin.

    - Moreover, the more the Germans fell back, the muddier the intelligence picture became, and brute force overcame elegant deception. Fortitude was a spectacularly successful part—but

only a part—of a comprehensive Allied strategy for victory in Europe.

- It's also true that the circumstances of Ultra and Fortitude may be too ideal to try to repeat in all but the rarest cases. Despite our contemporary revolution in information technology, it would be arrogant to assume that we could lift the fog of war as completely as the Allies did in this case.

Suggested Reading

Cubbage, "German Misapprehensions Regarding Overlord."

———, "The Success of Operation Fortitude."

Sawyer, *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*.

Warner, "The Divine Skein."

Questions to Consider

1. What does it mean to know the enemy and to know yourself?

2. Was Operation Fortitude too perfect of an intelligence coup to serve as a model?

Machiavelli's *The Art of War*

Lecture 6

In his most famous and most controversial work, *The Prince*, Niccolò Machiavelli argued that the most important areas of study for a ruler were the rules and disciplines of war. War, he said, was the "sole art" of the ruler and one of the main means by which a prince could rise to power and maintain his position. Machiavelli wrote two subsequent volumes on exactly these topics: books on the rules and disciplines of war and the mechanics and merits of military power. In this lecture and the next, we'll look at those two books, *The Art of War* and *Discourses on Livy*.

Machiavelli's Life

- Machiavelli was born in Florence in 1469. His father, a lawyer, introduced the young Niccolò to the world of Greek and Roman history. As a boy, he took an avid interest in ancient history, especially in Livy's account of the early Roman Republic.

- For the first 25 years of his life, Machiavelli's Florence was ruled by the Medici family, but in 1494, the French king, Charles VIII, invaded Italy and ousted the Medicis. In 1498, Machiavelli had a hand in bringing to power Piero Soderini and was rewarded with important positions in the new government.

- In his guise as a diplomat—a spy—Machiavelli gained firsthand knowledge of the chaos and intrigue of Italian politics. He witnessed the rise and fall of the brilliant and ruthless Cesare Borgia. In fact, Borgia became one of the models for *The Prince*, and his military reforms inspired Machiavelli's own military projects.

The Chaos of Italy

- Charles VIII's invasion of Italy sparked a multilateral tug-of-war for control of the Italian peninsula. From the 1490s to the 1550s, the kings of France, England, and Spain, along with the pope and the Holy Roman Emperor, all vied to dominate the Italian states. The

Italian states themselves were forced to ally with these superpowers and against one another.

- In the face of these outside powers and their Italian allies, Florence was virtually powerless. Machiavelli believed that the republic needed a strong military to ensure its survival as an independent state with an independent foreign policy.

- Unfortunately, like many Italian states, Florence relied on mercenaries for its defense. These professional soldiers (*condottieri*: "contractors") were expensive and, because they worked for profit, disinclined to risk their assets—their soldiers and heavy cavalry—in decisive battles. As a result, Italian wars tended to drag on.

- Machiavelli was dissatisfied with the *condottieri* and wanted to put Florence's fate in the hands of a Florentine commander with a Florentine citizen-army. His ideas gained greater appeal in light of the republic's protracted efforts to retake the city of Pisa using *condottieri*.

- In 1505, after yet another failed assault on Pisa, Soderini ordered Machiavelli to begin recruiting a militia from the agricultural districts around Florence. The new militia proved crucial in retaking Pisa in 1509 but was unable to defend the city of Prato or Florence itself in 1512. In the purge that followed the return of the Medicis to Florence, Machiavelli was imprisoned and tortured.

The Roman Model

- In his forced retirement from government, Machiavelli returned to the study of ancient history and its lessons for contemporary Italy. In particular, he looked to Roman history and the model of the Roman Republic.

- In his view, a republic was the best and most stable form of government because it embodies stabilizing tensions. In republican Rome, such tensions existed among the two consuls, the aristocratic/oligarchic Senate, and the tribune of the plebs.

- Machiavelli appreciated the intimate link between society and the military. The fact that Florentine society had been demilitarized and had outsourced its defense to mercenaries represented fundamental weaknesses of the republic. In contrast, the very basis of the Roman Republic was the Roman citizen-army: the legions.
    - The command structure of the legions mirrored the political structure of the republic, making them a kind of incubator of republican virtue. The legions stabilized the republic internally and defended it externally.

    - In addition, long-serving citizen-soldiers were both better soldiers and better citizens; a stronger army and stronger republic could direct their energies outward, toward conquest and empire.

- Even with the catastrophic failure of the militia at Prato, Machiavelli remained committed to the merits of the citizen-army. Unlike a militia, a long-serving citizen-army would give Florence greater freedom of action in its foreign affairs and would decrease its dependence on powerful allies.

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***The Art of War* echoes the views expressed in *The Prince* on the merits of military power: A strong military is the foundation of a viable state.**

Overview of *The Art of War*

- *The Art of War* is structured as a Socratic dialogue in the style of Plato. Participating in the dialogue is a group of Florentine noblemen, led by Cosimo Rucellai, and the *condottiero* Fabrizio Colonna. Colonna, who acts as the spokesman for Machiavelli's ideas, takes the role of Socrates, and Rucellai and his guests are the interlocutors.

- In this long conversation, Colonna and the Florentines range over the breadth and scope of recorded history. In the process, they test which ancient tactics

and strategy are best suited to which particular military challenges. Machiavelli acknowledges that contemporary Italy is not the same as ancient Rome, but he still makes a powerful and specific argument about the Roman institutions that would best serve the security and stability of Florence.

- There is a tendency to view *The Art of War* as dry, preachy, and excessively strident. As the only major work published during Machiavelli's life, it seems to lack the snide humor of his more famous works. The Socratic structure is also seen as too one-sided, with the excessively deferential Florentines simply receiving wisdom at the feet of Colonna.

Structure of *The Art of War*

- *The Art of War* is divided into a preface and seven chapters. In the preface, Machiavelli speaks in his own voice about the interconnection of politics and war and the intimate relation between the military and civilian order.
    - Machiavelli's views on the merits of military power are similar to those expressed in *The Prince*: A good military is the foundation of a viable state. Without good arms, a state cannot build good institutions and cannot defend itself. Without good arms, the prince cannot see his vision become a reality.

    - On the topic of the interdependence of strong political institutions and military might, Machiavelli offers a counterargument to the *Sunzi*. Rather than a general who is removed from the political elite, Machiavelli argues for one who is a member of the elite. A general should be as comfortable with politics as he is with war and strategy.

- Book I of *The Art of War* is an extended discussion of *virtu*, the skill and prowess of the general. *Virtu* gives the general the ability to assess and adapt to the endless complexity of the battlefield. *Virtu* in war also encompasses aggressiveness and the pursuit of decisive battle.

- Book II deals with armaments and military formations. Colonna holds forth on the merits of the Roman legion, but he wants to combine that structure with more contemporary innovations.
    - He seems to recognize the advent of what the British historian Geoffrey Parker called the "military revolution"—the 16th-century innovations that included improvements in artillery and musketry, increases in the size of European armies, the expansion of state bureaucracies, and the beginning of real logistics.

    - These changes spelled the end of religiously inspired wars fought by small armies of knights and opened the era of mass war and power politics.

- In Book III, we see the hybrid Roman/modern army in action.

- Book IV bears more than a passing resemblance to some of the middle chapters of the *Sunzi*. It covers marching the army through various types of terrain and weather and deals with the ways in which a commander can raise and manipulate the morale of his men to tactical advantage.

- Book V concerns the demands of marching an army into enemy territory. A good army has clear orders and minimal logistics. It is arrayed so as to defend against attack from all directions, and it is careful to avoid traps and ambushes.

- Book VI is a detailed discussion of how to encamp an army—not surprisingly, in Roman fashion. We also hear Colonna's thoughts on why prostitution and gambling should be banned in military camps. The discussion then turns to espionage and counterespionage.

- Book VII deals with the strengths and weaknesses of different styles of fortifications, methods of attacking fortifications, and the capabilities and limitations of artillery.

Book III: A Fictional Battle

- The bulk of Book III is devoted to an extended discussion of a fictional battle in which the advantages of the hybrid Roman/modern army are on full display. The chapter stands out in gripping vividness compared to the often dry detail of the rest of the book.

- Some have seen this central chapter as Machiavelli's chance to refight the Battle of Prato with the army that *The Art of War* envisions. There may be some merit to that view, but Machiavelli was too consistently interested in influencing policy in the present to linger too much on what might have been in the past.

- Decisive battle was the centerpiece of Machiavelli's entire approach to strategy, and a decisive battle is the centerpiece of his *Art of War*. All the other elements covered in the book—recruitment, training, formations, espionage, and so on—come together in this great clash of arms.

- In the opening stages of the battle, the victorious army takes out the enemy's artillery. The main body then moves with precise order and discipline to close with the enemy. The enemy collapses in the face of this onslaught and falls into a rout. The whole affair seems predestined, and many of Machiavelli's detractors are right to point out that such a mechanistic view of battle is simplistic and dangerous.

- We should note, however, that this perfect battle is meant to be a clash of opposites. On one side is an army that has perfected the mechanics of war and embraced the model of ancient Rome. On the other side is an army that has ignored the lessons of the past and the present.

- Despite its strengths, *The Art of War* is primarily tactical in its focus, dealing with the mechanics of military power rather than with strategy at the higher level. To comprehend the full range of Machiavelli's insight on the purpose and conduct of war and to understand the strengths and weaknesses of his strategic injunctions, we will next turn to his other great military work, *Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livy.*

Suggested Reading

Gilbert, "Machiavelli: The Renaissance of the Art of War."

Hornqvist, "Machiavelli's Military Project and the *Art of War*."

Machiavelli, *The Art of War* in *The Chief Works and Others*.

Questions to Consider

1. In what ways is Machiavelli's *The Art of War* similar to Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*? In what ways is it different?

2. Why do you think Machiavelli used Fabrizio Colonna as his spokesman? Was Colonna a good choice?

Machiavelli's *Discourses on Livy*

Lecture 7

Somebody very smart once said, "If you want a new idea, read an old book." Machiavelli could not have agreed more. He drew many innovative ideas for solving the problems of 16th-century Italy from old books. Machiavelli's *Art of War* was very much inspired by his reading of an old book by Vegetius. In this lecture, we will spend time on Machiavelli's reading of an even older book, his *Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livy*, a text that serves as his manifesto on republican empire and his exposition on the importance of *virtu*.

Titus Livius

- Titus Livius, known as Livy, was a Roman whose formative years coincided with the Roman civil wars, first between Caesar and Pompey and then between Brutus, Marc Antony, and Octavian Caesar (Emperor Augustus).

- Livy appears to have been a friend and confidant of Augustus, writing an official history of Rome commissioned by the emperor himself. It is to that monumental history, *Ab urbe condita libri*, that Livy owes his fame and the affection of Machiavelli.

- The first 10 books (the first "decade") of Livy's work cover the first 450 years of Roman history, from the mythical founding of the city in the 8th century B.C. to the conquest of Italy and Rome's emergence as a Mediterranean empire.

Overview of the *Discourses*

- Machiavelli's *Discourses* were probably mostly written after *The Prince* and before *The Art of War*. We can therefore view the *Discourses* as a kind of downward expansion on *The Prince*, taking policy in *The Prince* down to the level of political institutions and strategy in the *Discourses*. In the same way, *The Art of War* is a downward expansion on the *Discourses*, linking political

institutions and strategy to military institutions, operational doctrine, and tactical methods.

- For Machiavelli, the early history of Rome serves as a kind of laboratory for studying human nature and human motivations in action, illustrating the patterns of history, the types of challenges that states might face, and the options for dealing with those challenges. Machiavelli makes creative use of Livy's history to inculcate readers with the habits of political and strategic judgment they will need in the highest civilian and military posts.

- Machiavelli is also writing to his fellow Florentines in particular.
  - As we've seen, *The Art of War* was a call for Florence to follow the ancients in the military arts. The *Discourses* is a call to the Florentines to follow the Romans in political organization—most critically, in their strategic behavior.

  - If Florence was to survive and ultimately to thrive, modeling its armies on Rome was not enough. The Florentines also had to model their strategies on the audacity and adaptability of the Romans; they had to replicate Rome's strategic *virtu*.

  - To make his case, Machiavelli tries to shock his audience into realizing the valuable lessons of Rome by showing the glaring dichotomy between ancient Roman *virtu* and contemporary Italian corruption. Specifically, he highlights the contrasts between Florence, a state corrupted in its institutions and a slave to the caprices of *fortuna*, and early Rome, a state blessed with strong institutions and a master of its own destiny.

Fortuna* and *Virtu

- The term *fortuna* in Machiavelli's writing can be defined as fate; it is what lies beyond man's control. Although *fortuna* makes human existence a constant struggle, it is not purely malevolent or capricious. Struggle gives birth to conflict, which can result in creativity.

- *Virtu* is a more problematic concept. In its simplest sense, *virtu* involves adapting to current circumstances and acting appropriately. It should not be confused with virtue or morality; in some instances, *virtu* may be the exact opposite of morality. It is *virtu* that allows men and states to contend with, and capitalize on, *fortuna*. *Virtu* is about insight, adaptability, efficacy, and the will to act; it is strategic agility.

- *Virtu* varies with circumstances, at different levels of society, and at different levels of war. Thus, we have the *virtu* of states and their rulers in determining policy and crafting strategy; the *virtu* of the general at the level of strategy and operations; and the discrete *virti* of the officers and men, that is, the operational and tactical levels of war.

- Machiavelli wasn't the first to highlight *virtu* as a counterpoint to *fortuna*, but he was among the first to systematically link all these levels and types of *virtu* together. If anything, the rise of Rome as portrayed by Livy is, to Machiavelli, a study in the optimization of individual and institutional *virtu* in action.

- Ultimately, *fortuna* places men and states within the roiling currents of history; *virtu* is what allows men and states to harness those currents and become the masters of their own destiny.

The Structure of the *Discourses*

- The *Discourses* is divided into three books, each with numerous chapters in which Machiavelli discusses particular historical vignettes or trends from ancient Rome. He then matches those with examples—or, more often, counterexamples—from contemporary Italy that contrast the *virtu* of the Romans with the depravity and corruption of the Italians.

- The first book of the *Discourses* is concerned mostly with Roman political institutions. Here, the Roman Republic, as characterized by Machiavelli, is an ideal balance of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Rome was, therefore, politically stable, but the dynamic tension of its institutions also made it strategically nimble.

- Book II looks at how Rome used its homegrown military power to defend itself and then used offensive wars to grow and prosper. Book III deals primarily with the deeds of great Roman citizens and how their *virtu* benefited Rome.

The Policies and Strategies of Republican Imperialism

- In the *Discourses*, war is divided into four basic categories: offensive and defensive, and limited and total. In general, Machiavelli favors the offensive both strategically and operationally.
    - He tells us that weaker states—those that are less politically cohesive and robust—are better off going on the offensive. Taking war into the heart of an enemy's territory enables such states to reduce their own burdens of defense and multiply the burdens on the enemy. Offensive war also offers the chance of a decisive result in the near term.

    - Constitutionally stronger states are better off on the defensive. They are better able to bear the burdens of a protracted defense.

- In Book II, Machiavelli expands on the different types of wars by introducing the distinction between limited and total war.
    - A limited war is waged to expand the power and influence of the state. The populations of the conquered territory are generally treated humanely and are either allowed to live with their own laws or incorporated into the winner's state.

    - A total war is a cruel and frightful zero-sum affair in which a nation seeks to seize a new homeland and either drive out or exterminate the indigenous population.

- Republics must be especially vigilant and prepared for the almost inevitable possibility of war.
    - Machiavelli claims that republics invite wars because foreign princes are either eager to conquer a fledgling republic or are frightened into a preventive war against an expanding republic. War is also more likely for a republic because it is a more dynamic and expansive system of government than a monarchy.

- Machiavelli is one of the first thinkers to show us why different types of political systems tend to have significantly different strategic inclinations.

The Conduct of War

- Both the *Discourses* and *The Art of War* were arguments against the prevailing notion that ancient tactics and strategy were irrelevant in an age of modern armies and gunpowder weapons.

- The *Discourses* stresses the tactical and operational *virtu* of the Roman infantry legion, manned by citizen-soldiers and motivated by religion and love of Rome. The legion could easily adapt its shape to the terrain and to the enemy. It was designed to accept tactical defeat and then fall back, regroup, and counterattack.

- Many critics of Machiavelli point to his obsession with infantry and the legion as emblematic of his hopeless anachronism. Machiavelli seems to downplay, if not disparage, the importance of artillery and the range and lethality of musket fire. This criticism misses the larger point that Machiavelli finds contemporary analogies to the legions of Rome.

- Machiavelli's ideal commander has his own brand of *virtu*—that flexibility and adaptability necessary to contend with *fortuna*. He is a greedy consumer of intelligence, not shy about using methods of deception to weaken an enemy, and on campaign, he is bold. At the same time, he is sensitive to opportunities for termination of war.
  - Given that the general is often responsible for everything from planning, to leading, to terminating the campaign, Machiavelli favors the Roman system that gave commanders a great deal of autonomy—freedom from control by a distant government.

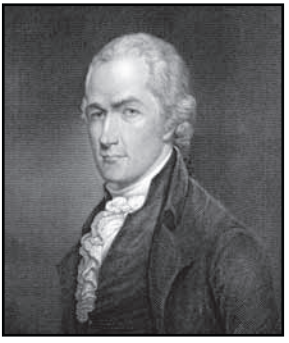
  - At the same time, republican generals were also members of the civilian elite and served for fixed terms; this served to check the tendency toward military necessity hijacking national interest.

The Relevance of Machiavelli Today

- Machiavelli's books on strategy and war were a watershed in the evolution of Western strategic thought. He was ahead of his time in his call to subordinate military action to political ends, a concept that dominates strategic thought today. Unfortunately, his apparent efforts to free war from ethical considerations lost him many potential students.

- Later in this course, we will look at several states that meet Machiavelli's definition of a republic: France, Great Britain, and the United States. All seem to validate Machiavelli's point about the innate expansionism of republican empires, but they also point to the dangers of imperial overstretch. In fact, some recent scholarship seems to prove that democracies are far more belligerent than less representative systems of government.

- Note that America seems to have followed something of a Machiavellian trajectory. Alexander Hamilton, for example, talked explicitly about building the country into a republican empire, strong in institutions, strong in military power, and in control of sufficient territory so that it might be both secure and vigilant.



Like Machiavelli, Alexander Hamilton was a staunch advocate of the republican empire.

- The paired concepts of the citizen-army and the republican empire probably find their fullest exposition in the history of the United States. As we look forward in the 21st century, we might ask ourselves a few questions: Where is the United States relative to the point of imperial overstretch? What are the implications of our move away from a citizen-army to a professional military? Finally, how might Machiavelli assess our current state of affairs?

Suggested Reading

Heuser, *The Strategy Makers*.

Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy* in *The Chief Works and Others*.

Najemy, "Society, Class, and State in Machiavelli's *Discourses on Livy*."

Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*.

Questions to Consider

1. Was the Roman Republic a good model for Renaissance Florence?

2. How do the *Discourses* differ from *The Art of War*? What is the significance of those differences?

The Napoleonic Revolution in War

Lecture 8

The Battle of Jena, which took place in 1806 between the Prussians and the French, was a masterpiece of classic Napoleonic tactics—the use of terrain, superior numbers, and superior firepower to sweep the field of the enemy. The Battle of Auerstaedt, fought on the same day as Jena, highlighted the superior morale and leadership of the French *grande armée*. The two masters of war we'll consider in the next part of the course, Antoine-Henri de Jomini and Carl von Clausewitz, were both present at Jena, and both immediately understood the larger significance of these two battles: Prussia's status as a Great Power and its reputation for military acumen were shattered on that day.

The God of War

- Carl von Clausewitz, a 26-year-old Prussian aide-de-camp at the time of Jena, later referred to Napoleon as the "god of war."
    - Clausewitz realized that the way Napoleon commanded and the way his armies fought were the culmination of a fundamentally new way of war: a transformation of warfare unleashed by the French Revolution.

    - Napoleon was the god of war because he embodied the French state and controlled French foreign policy. As emperor and national hero, he funneled the passions and hatreds of the French people, and as commanding general, he brilliantly wielded the *grande armée* on the field.

- The Prussians at Jena and Auerstaedt couldn't have been more different than the French. Their leadership was divided, and they suffered from weak command and control of their various units. Further, they had only superficially embraced the kind of warfare—the tactics, maneuver, coordination, and logistics—that the *grande armée* had long since mastered.

- A decade later, however, the Prussians were part of the coalition of Great Powers that forced Napoleon to abdicate. They did so by adopting many of the political and military reforms that had made the French army so formidable.

Warfare in the *Ancien Régime*

- As we saw in our lectures on Machiavelli, war in the Renaissance was primarily the domain of mercenaries, hereditary aristocrats, and poorly trained local levies. Standing armies tended to be relatively small, although they could bulk up during actual campaigns. War was constant and protracted, though rarely intense.

- Not much changed over the next 200 years. Even in the 18th century, the military forces of the major European powers were still significantly handicapped. The exception was Prussia under Frederick the Great, but even Frederick could not completely overcome the systemic problems of the European military system.
    - Armies in the 18th century were larger than those of the Renaissance but still small relative to the populations of their respective states.

    - Because monarchs avoided conscripting peasants, who were engaged in agriculture, the manpower pool typically included unproductive members of society—criminals, vagrants, and so on. Armies were fleshed out with foreign mercenaries.

    - To minimize the social disruptions of maintaining a standing military, *ancien régime* rulers tried to keep society and the military separate. Soldiers in the enlisted ranks served for very long terms, in some cases up to 30 years.

    - Given the questionable mettle of these foot soldiers, desertion was another major problem. To prevent mass desertions, armies marched slowly, in mass formations, and in daylight.

- Other challenges presented themselves in combat. Poor training and the technical problems of early gunpowder weapons demanded rigid and linear tactics.

- There were some efforts at tactical and technological reforms and the professionalization of some sectors of the officer corps under the likes of Frederick the Great, but in general, an *ancien régime* army was a slow and unwieldy mass of disgruntled and terrorized soldiers led by untrained and unimaginative aristocrats.

- Not surprisingly, 18th-century wars tended to be frequent but just as frequently indecisive. Few rulers, again with the exception of Frederick the Great, were willing to commit finite resources to decisive battles.

- The European balance-of-power system also argued against decisive wars. Any state that seemed poised to fundamentally change the status quo would invariably be met by a coalition of other powers intent on maintaining the balance of power.

The *Levée en Masse*

- The event that transformed warfare during the era of the French Revolution and the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte was the *levée en masse*. Initially an act of desperation in the face of foreign invasion, the *levée en masse* had two results: a massive French army of more than 700,000 men and an unprecedented nationalization of the French war effort.

- In 1793, France faced a coalition of all the major European powers intent on reversing the revolution. In response, the Committee of Public Safety promulgated the *levée en masse*, which put the entire French nation on a war footing.

- To feed and equip its massive new army, the committee nationalized and centrally coordinated arms manufacture, provisioning, and supply. To train the army, new units were interspersed with veteran units or, in some cases, paired with veteran noncommissioned

officers for training as they marched toward the front. The French learned to mass the green troops in large columns, using them to screen their well-trained mobile units.

- French troops were broken down into divisions of multiple brigades that could move along different roads quickly and converge on the battlefield. Desertions prevented traditional armies from using this tactic, which meant that the French were suddenly lighter, faster, and more flexible than their enemies.

- In the area of command, the new regime inherited a tradition of innovation from the old that included the use of divisions, columns, and skirmishers. The French military built on that legacy of innovation and paired it with ambitious and audacious new blood in its officer corps.

- The fact that the new French army was both larger and more flexible inclined French commanders to be bolder and less risk-averse than their opponents. Nowhere was this more the case than with Napoleon Bonaparte.

The Rise of Napoleon

- The child of minor Corsican nobility, Napoleon Bonaparte was a 20-year-old artillery officer in the French army at the outbreak of the revolution in 1789. By 1793, he was a brigadier-general.

- Napoleon's precocious genius for war was clearly on display during the 1796–1797 Italian campaign, where he smashed the Austrians, France's staunchest enemies, and then deftly negotiated the Treaty of Campo Formio.

- He also had a genius for political intrigue, which was apparent in 1799 when he abandoned his army in Egypt and returned to Paris to seize power as first consul. In 1804, he declared himself emperor.

- In the hands of Emperor Napoleon and his gifted marshals, the raw, mass conscript armies of the revolution and the *levée en masse* were

transformed into the most lethal fighting force the world had ever seen, the *grande armée*.

- The *grande armée* first saw action in the campaigns of 1805–1806, where Napoleon scored success after success at Austerlitz, Jena, and Auerstaedt.

- By 1807, Napoleon had used the *grande armée* to force the submission of all his continental enemies.

Nearly every element of *ancien régime* warfare, from the tactical to the strategic levels, would change with the French Revolution and the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte.

- Napoleon wasn't much of a military reformer, but he didn't have to be. By the time the *grande armée* was formed in 1803/1804, France had been at war for more than a dozen years, and its men were generally well combat-tested. Among Napoleon's modest innovations were the expansion of the artillery, the closer integration of the artillery and the infantry, and the expansion of the corps system.

Strategic Implications of the Transformation

- The *grande armée* allowed Napoleon to build a strategy based on speed, maneuver, firepower, shock, and pursuit.

- In many ways, the Napoleonic way of war was very Sunzian in execution. Napoleon and his marshals carefully planned all the mundane elements of a campaign and were voracious consumers of intelligence. But ultimately, Napoleon's goal was not to win without fighting; he sought to inflict the most decisive blow possible on the enemy's army.

- Whereas 18th-century wars were rarely decisive, Napoleon's *grande armée* could now inflict shocking casualties on its adversaries, along with strategic and psychological blows directed at the enemy's means and will.

- The size and operational depth of Napoleon's forces also meant that they could sustain heavy losses themselves and still be combat-effective and able to pursue the retreating enemy. This prevented the enemy from regrouping and compounded its strategic paralysis. Ultimately, the *grande armée* could threaten an enemy capital.

- For both Napoleon and Clausewitz, this "principle of continuity" was the key to Napoleon's quick, decisive victories. The psychological shock of a dramatic battlefield reversal was compounded by the highly credible threat that the emperor could inflict additional costs. In the early years of Napoleon's rule, this combination was usually sufficient to induce a European ruler to accept the emperor's terms.

- The battles of Jena-Auerstaedt, along with the ensuing march to Berlin, distill the essence of Napoleonic strategy. The *grande armée* effectively struck three centers of gravity: It overwhelmed the enemy army in the field, it seized the enemy's political capital, and by its speed, it foreclosed the possibility of allied intervention on behalf of a reeling enemy. Napoleon did the same to the Austrians the following year.

- At the peak of his powers, Napoleon married military genius with diplomatic acumen. He used diplomacy to isolate potential adversaries, in other words, to attack their alliances. But even after humiliating an adversary in battle, he would generally offer generous terms to soften the blow and facilitate capitulation.

Napoleon's Downfall

- As much as the *grande armée* was the great enabler of French success, it also proved the path to Napoleon's ruin. Over time, his enemies mastered many of the elements of the French military

revolution and, as a result, began to shift the qualitative balance between their forces and the *grande armée*.

- Better diplomacy and a growing consensus among the Great Powers that Napoleon had to be reined in also made for a more cohesive coalition. It was no longer easy for Napoleon to isolate his enemies and defeat them.

- For all of that, it was Napoleon's own blunders—putting his brother on the throne in Spain and invading Russia with a weaker version of the *grande armée*—that accelerated his fall. These paired disasters fundamentally undermined the military power of France and, with it, the political power of Napoleon.

- For all of the tactical and organizational innovations embraced by the *grande armée*, the core of the transformation of war in the Napoleonic era was, as Clausewitz noted, political—driven by the revolution in France and the nationalization of war.

Suggested Reading

Chandler, *The Campaigns of Napoleon*.

———, *Jena 1806*.

Esdaile, *The Peninsular War*.

Paret, "Napoleon and the Revolution in War."

Questions to Consider

1. Why were the armies of revolutionary France so revolutionary?

2. What were Napoleon's greatest strengths? What were his greatest weaknesses?

Baron Jomini as a Strategist

Lecture 9

Carl von Clausewitz and Baron Antoine-Henri de Jomini were among the first generation of historians and strategic analysts who tried to make sense of the trauma of the Napoleonic era. But as we'll see in this lecture and the next, these two masters had a fundamentally different way of interpreting that trauma. Jomini viewed combat and tactics in the age of Napoleon as an important but still evolutionary advance in warfare and strategy. To Jomini, Napoleon was not a harbinger of ominous and irreversible changes in the nature and the scale of war; he was merely the apotheosis of war's eternal nature.

The Life of Jomini

- Jomini was a prolific military historian and strategic analyst. A French-speaking Swiss, he had prepared for a business career but got caught up in the romance and excitement of the revolutionary changes sweeping Europe at the end of the 18th century.

- In 1801, at the age of 22, Jomini moved to Paris, where he began his study of military history and the art of strategy.

- In fact, it was his scholarship that brought Jomini to the attention of Napoleon Bonaparte. Jomini's first major work, *A Treatise on Great Military Operations*, compared the campaigns of Frederick the Great to those of France's revolutionary armies, especially Napoleon's brilliant Italian campaign of the 1790s.
    - In this work, Jomini's theoretical principles are interspersed with detailed discussions of the mechanics of military operations, including logistics, marches, maneuver, morale, and the use of concealment.

    - For Jomini, the study of military history and the great commanders and campaigns of the past was a test of the military principles that he felt best explained victory and defeat.

- Frederick and Napoleon had mastered these principles and used them against adversaries who had lost sight of the eternal patterns of war. Almost all of Jomini's subsequent writings used the successes and failures of Napoleon as proofs of his core concepts.

- Jomini's participation in the greatest campaigns of the Napoleonic era gave him unprecedented insight into the great military and political leaders of his day.
  - He believed that the Napoleonic revolution in warfare represented a return to the ways in which wars should be fought.

  - In contrast to Clausewitz, who argued that the French Revolution had fundamentally transformed war, Jomini tried to explain Napoleon's successes and failures in accordance with what he viewed as immutable principles of military strategy.

- In 1813, a mix of professional frustrations and personal principles compelled Jomini to abandon Napoleon and join the Russian Army. He retained his Russian commission until his death in 1869.

The Appeal of Jomini

- Most of our masters to this point in the course were long dead before their views got much of a hearing, but Jomini enjoyed the blessing and the curse of interacting with his fans and detractors in his own lifetime.

- Jomini's popularity is partially explained by the fact that he wrote in French, which all educated Europeans read, unlike Clausewitz, who wrote in German. Jomini also outlived the Prussian by several decades and produced multiple versions of his strategic principles.

- Further, Jomini's "great captains" approach represented an appealing and recognizable look at the consummate masters of the art of war. This approach applied to Napoleon was particularly satisfying to a traumatized European population. In Jomini's estimation, the phenomenon of Napoleonic war was not a harbinger

of ominous and irreversible changes in the nature and scale of war but merely the apotheosis of war's eternal nature.

- Finally, Jomini was popular because his search for guiding principles of war found an enthusiastic audience among the emerging class of professional military officers.

Jomini's Core Theoretical Tenets

- From the early 1800s to his death in 1869, Jomini hammered again and again on a deceptively simple lesson: "That all strategy is controlled by invariable scientific principles; and that these principles prescribe offensive action to mass forces against weaker enemy forces at some decisive point if strategy is to lead to victory."

- Jomini's best known and most frequently translated work is his *Summary of the Art of War*, written in 1838. In it, he argued that the eternal key to victory lay in the ability to maintain a concentration of one's own forces and to throw that larger mass against smaller elements of the enemy's forces at a series of what he calls decisive points.
    - Concentration of forces capitalizes on what Jomini termed "interior lines of communication." Army units kept in close proximity with good communications and supply both behind them and between them could converge in a rapid and coordinated manner on a logistically isolated part of the enemy's army or its frontier fortifications.

    - The French corps moving quickly along multiple roads and converging on outnumbered elements of the enemy was exactly what Jomini prescribed.

- True to his Enlightenment inclinations, Jomini was also an operational and theoretical optimist. Operations could be controlled and scripted with a high degree of certainty, and strategic theory could serve as a practical guide for action in war.

- Jomini's theory has been condemned by modern-day pundits for its apparent simplicity and its self-serving character. Though it's true that Jomini was analytically monomaniacal and personally ambitious, he was also a serious student of the serious realities of war.
    - If we read him carefully, we can see that he was fully aware of the fog, friction, and chance of war. He was not blindly attached to the idea that war could be reduced to mathematical calculations, and much of his early work was concerned with showing the limits of a purely scientific approach to war.

    - He also possessed an encyclopedic knowledge of war in the 18th and 19th centuries and had firsthand experience of Napoleon in action. He understood both the emperor's operational and tactical genius and his strategic and political failings. As a staff officer, he was intimately involved in making Napoleon's strategic genius an operational reality.

Specifics of Jomini's Strategic Thought

- Jomini doesn't try to lay down absolute laws of war, but he does insist both that general rules apply and that military leaders ignore these rules at their peril. One may accuse him of being formulaic, but Jomini makes the important point that the rules of war can offer practical guidance.

- Nor was war an end in itself for Jomini. In fact, the opening chapters of the *Summary* deal at length with the larger political purpose of war and the other instruments of national power, such as diplomacy, that exist side by side with the military.

- Jomini saw that different political objectives call for different strategic objectives in war. In fact, he was harshly critical of Napoleon on this point.
    - The emperor invariably aimed for the destruction of the enemy's army in a decisive battle, but this objective makes sense only in the pursuit of an unlimited political objective, such as in the Jena campaign.

- Napoleon's search for decisive battle in Russia was, to Jomini, counterproductive and catastrophic.

- Ultimately, for Jomini, a well-planned and well-executed campaign offers a much greater chance of success, regardless of its objective. Planning for all kinds of wars hinges on mastering the same principles and applying them to fit the circumstances of each unique contingency.

- Jomini also took some tentative steps toward explaining why some wars come to quick and decisive ends while others are protracted and indecisive. In this discussion, we see some shades of Machiavelli's critique of the mercenary wars of Renaissance Europe.
  - At the height of his powers, Napoleon was able to discern precisely how much and what kind of pain was needed to bring about a quick end to a war. The speed, mass, and lethality of the *grande armée* made that strategic vision a reality.

  - Yet when Napoleon began to substitute operational success—in other words, the winning of battles—for strategic vision, as was the case in Spain and Russia, France became bogged down in wars it could not win and could no longer afford.

Jomini's Enduring Value

- Much more so than his immediate predecessors, who focused primarily on the tactical level of war and on the techniques of logistics and marches, Jomini was concerned with all of the levels of war and with their interconnection.
  - His *Summary* deals at length with many of these subspecialties, including logistics, morale, training, tactics, and military intelligence, but he never loses sight of how the mastery of all these means remains subordinate first to strategy and then to the achievement of a political end.

  - In this sense, Jomini was critical to the invention of modern strategy, the linkage between the modern way of war and its political purpose.

- Moreover, the clarity and felicity with which Jomini deals with these subspecialties and with the levels of war laid out much of the vocabulary of the modern military profession, including such terms as interior versus exterior lines and concentration of force.

- Jomini is also exceptionally insightful on military intelligence. In fact, when it comes to its value, collection, and analysis, Jomini goes even further than the *Sunzi* on the subject of espionage and is delightfully specific about what it means in practice.

- More evidence of Jomini's enduring value comes in his discussion of leadership. It is true that to Jomini all of the "great captains" of the past are master practitioners of his core principles, but as much as Jomini was inspired by the Enlightenment and the promises of reason, man with all his gifts and flaws still mattered, especially in war.
    - Theories mean nothing if intelligent men do not, in Jomini's words, "apply them, with map in hand, to hypothetical wars, or to the brilliant operations of great captains."

    - By engaging in these types of mental exercises, one could achieve *coup d'oeil*—strategic intuition—what Jomini calls "the most valuable characteristic of a good general."

- Jomini was also aware of the likely tension between the master practitioners of war and their political masters. His take on this issue perhaps argues for too strict a delineation between politics and strategy: that the government must not meddle in matters that only educated and experienced officers can understand.

- Jomini was an innovative thinker who immeasurably advanced the systematic study of strategy and inspired intense debates about strategy and operations. He tirelessly emphasized the importance of history and self-education to the cultivation of consummate military leadership. He understood that although war was not subject to rigid scientific laws, one could still identify rules and principles that are of direct value to its practitioners.

Suggested Reading

Brinton, Craig, and Gilbert, "Jomini."

Heuser, *The Evolution of Strategy*.

Jomini, *The Art of War*.

———, *Jomini and His Summary of the Art of War.*

Shy, "Jomini."

Questions to Consider

1. What were Jomini's objectives in writing military theory? Did he achieve those objectives?

2. What are the parallels between Jomini's theories and Machiavelli's *The Art of War* and Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*?

Clausewitz's *On War*

Lecture 10

Carl von Clausewitz was born under the *ancien régime* but came of age during Prussia's two-decade struggle with revolutionary France. He joined the army at the age of 12 and was still in uniform when he died 39 years later. During the course of his career, Clausewitz saw a good deal of combat, earned a solid reputation as a staff officer, and developed an abiding interest in history and philosophy. He was also a passionate advocate of military reform, although his agenda met with only limited success. It is his written work, especially *On War*, that cements his place in the pantheon of strategic thinkers.

Studying the Past to Prepare for the Future

- In *On War*, Clausewitz argued that the revolutionary changes that had taken place in the Napoleonic era demanded an entirely new way of thinking about war, as well as an entirely new way of preparing Prussia to fight the wars of the future. Paradoxically, this preparation for the future should be based on the study of history.

- To Clausewitz, history is not just about learning what happened in the past; it stands in for experience and can help us objectively evaluate courses of action in light of their alternatives.

- The rigorous study of history also allows us to test general theoretical concepts. Theory is "intended to provide a thinking man with a frame of reference … to guide him in his strategic choices." Theory provides useful analytical tools that can help us confront complex problems; testing these theoretical principles against history keeps us honest.

- At the same time, Clausewitz bridled at the idea that something as complex and contingent as war could be subject to hard-and-fast theoretical maxims: "Theory cannot equip the mind with formulas

for solving problems. … But it can give the mind insight into the great mass of phenomena and of their relationships."

Absolute War v. War in Reality

- The distinction between theory as a frame of reference and theory as a prescriptive guidebook for waging war has created confusion over the years. That confusion is compounded by the tension in Clausewitz's work between the Enlightenment principles of reason and scientific thinking and the uncertainty and irrationality of German romanticism. This tension is best seen in his discussion of absolute war versus war in reality.

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In *On War*, Clausewitz borrowed the scientific methods of such Enlightenment thinkers as Isaac Newton, but he remained skeptical that the rational approach could be applied to human interaction.

- In a nod to Newton, Clausewitz works toward what war looks like in reality by starting with the ideal or abstract nature of war. What would war look like in a vacuum, free from all constraints, such as rationality and material limitations?

- In the "pure concept," war would always be for the most unlimited objectives and involve a total effort; in other words, destroy the enemy's armed forces, occupy its country, and exterminate its population.

- Some have interpreted this Newtonian approach as either Clausewitz's belief in a science of war or his advocacy of absolute war. Both interpretations are wrong. Absolute war is an abstraction that is meant to help us to better understand war in reality.

- In reality, war does not usually achieve its absolute form primarily because war is political; it is fought for some political object. There is no political objective that justifies absolute war.

- Further, war is a physical contest, fought by human beings in the real world; it involves fear, passion, and genius, as well as fog, friction, and chance. These factors naturally shape the nature of a war and prevent it from reaching its pure concept.

The Paradoxical Trinity

- From this Newtonian methodology, Clausewitz derives one of the most seductive, creative, and confusing tools of strategic analysis ever conceived: the paradoxical trinity, Clausewitz's tool for net assessment.

- Every war, Clausewitz says, is characterized by three dominant tendencies: (1) "primordial violence, hatred, and enmity, which are to be regarded as a blind natural force"; (2) "the play of chance and probability within which the creative spirit is free to roam"; and (3) "its element of subordination, as an instrument of policy, which makes it subject to reason alone."

- We can see why this is a "paradoxical trinity": If the passions aroused by war are a blind natural force, how can war remain subject to reason? The same goes for the creative spirit (the genius of the general): What is there to prevent a spectacular military success achieved through a stroke of that genius from influencing policy?

- As a political instrument, war must serve a rational political purpose, but by its very nature, war may be dominated by passion and hatreds or by unforeseen events on the battlefield or strokes of genius. Political leaders and military commanders must always strive to keep passion and chance subordinate to reason.

- Clausewitz overlays the trinity on a nation at war, converting it from an abstraction into a practical tool of net assessment.

- To determine the likely nature of a looming conflict, all that's needed is to apply this simple model: Figure out how the three dominant tendencies (passion, genius, and reason) of one belligerent will interact with the three dominant tendencies of another belligerent.

- To make those determinations, one must calculate how the people, the military, and the government interact in the enemy's state and in one's own.

The Political Aims of War

- To Clausewitz, war was a continuation of the political competition between states by military means. War's violent nature makes it a unique form of political competition, but we can never lose sight of its political purpose.

- Although war may have a unique grammar—meaning that war and combat are governed by military considerations—ultimately, war and politics serve the same logic.

- Clausewitz addresses a spectrum of wars for varying political aims, from limited wars—conducted to wrest concessions from an adversary or to prevent a challenge to the status quo—to unlimited wars—conducted to overthrow a regime.

- The types of government institutions, the character and inclinations of the populations, and the larger environment also contribute to the unique nature of a conflict. A war between two dictatorships will likely be much different than a war between two democracies, even though the political objectives might be similar.

Clausewitz on Strategy

- From net assessment emerges a list of strategic targets, or what Clausewitz calls "centers of gravity" These might include the enemy's army, its capital, its main ally, or in the case of popular uprisings, its people. A state might have several potential centers of

gravity that may shift over time depending on the political objective being pursued.

- Once the center of gravity is determined, Clausewitz looks for ways to strike it for maximum strategic and political effect. "Two basic principles … underlie all strategic planning," he says: "act with the utmost concentration and with the utmost speed."
    - This is a prescription for dominating that part of the trinity where combat takes place: the realm of chance and probability.

    - The superior general masses his forces for a rapid and decisive blow against the enemy's center of gravity. Once he has shattered that center of gravity, he pursues the beaten enemy.

- Clausewitz also tells us that war is inherently interactive—as much as we use force to compel an enemy to do our will, our enemy is doing the same to us.

- Finally, while Clausewitz advocates mass at the decisive point, he is aware that one mass trying to overwhelm an enemy's mass often causes war to escalate. Even after they have conducted net assessment and strategic planning, it is still incumbent on the general and the politician to keep war from getting out of control.

The Culminating Points of Attack and Victory

- Clausewitz's principle of continuity demands that we follow up a battlefield victory with a continuation of the offensive to exert maximum military and psychological pressure on the adversary. The antithesis of this principle is the culminating point of the attack, beyond which it is counterproductive to advance—doing so invites defeat.

- The culminating point of attack is the point at which the remaining strength of the attacker is "just enough to maintain a defense and wait for peace." Going past it shifts the advantage to the defender, who gets stronger relative to the attacker.

- Passing the culminating point of victory isn't just pushing an offensive too far; it's pushing political objectives too far. It may actually increase the enemy's will to resist and invite third-party intervention on the enemy's behalf.

- With these culminating points, Clausewitz explains why military success does not always lead to success in war. He also reemphasizes the idea that war serves a political purpose; hence, victory can be declared only when that purpose is achieved.

Why Wars End

- On the topic of why wars end, Clausewitz offers another of his deceptively simple maxims: "No one starts a war … without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it. The former is its political purpose; the latter its operational objective."

- If we take this prescription literally, then a war is over when we have achieved our operational objective. This, however, can only be the case if we have accurately predicted the enemy's center of gravity and have inflicted sufficient harm upon it to convince the enemy to capitulate.

- Those factors are almost impossible to determine with accuracy in advance; therefore, the decision to end a war ultimately lies with the defeated side: "Once the expenditure of effort exceeds the value of the political object, the object must be renounced and peace must follow."

- Of course, such decisions are often not rational. Limited wars are especially difficult to terminate. Even when war is brought to a formal end, Clausewitz understands this result is inherently unstable, given the political nature of war.

Politicians and Military Leaders

- Clausewitz's thoughts on the proper relationship between politicians and military leaders in the making of strategy are among the most

brilliant ever penned: "Subordinating the political point of view to the military would be absurd, for it is policy that has created war. … No other possibility exists, then, than to subordinate the military point of view to the political."

- But Clausewitz doesn't argue that generals should simply acquiesce to political domination. Crafting strategy is a dynamic conversation between politicians and military leaders that is constantly tested, reviewed, and adapted throughout a conflict.

Suggested Reading

Clausewitz, *On War.*

Paret, "Clausewitz."

Rothfels, "Clausewitz."

Strachan, *Clausewitz's On War*.

Questions to Consider

1. Is the center of gravity a useful strategic concept? What is the difference between culminating point of attack and culminating point of victory?

2. What is the difference between a limited and an unlimited war? How do Clausewitz's core concepts differ in a limited versus an unlimited war?

Jomini and Clausewitz through the Ages

Lecture 11

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Clausewitz and Jomini are the two most influential strategic theorists of the modern era. At first, Jomini was the more popular of the two, but over time, Clausewitz has caught up to, and perhaps overtaken, the Swiss author. Today, they continue to profoundly influence operational doctrine and strategic thought around the world. In this lecture, we'll look at the reputations of these two authorities and at their views on the important question of the proper roles of civilian and military leaders in planning and conducting wars.

Jomini's Influence

- As we saw in an earlier lecture, Jomini's menu of guiding principles for strategy and operations found an enthusiastic audience among the emerging class of professional military officers, who were eager to define and delineate the profession of arms.

- His writings provided the theoretical foundations, core principles, educational focus, and vocabulary for the military profession. The *Summary of the Art of War* was, therefore, widely considered the greatest military textbook of the 19th century.

- In the United States, Jomini's early fans included General Winfield Scott, who based his campaign plan in the Mexican-American War on the principles of Jomini, and the West Point professor Dennis Hart Mahan, whose lectures relied heavily on Jomini and influenced such students as William Tecumseh Sherman and Henry Halleck.

- The poor performance of the West Point Jominians in the Civil War tarnished Jomini's prestige in the United States. The bloody stalemate of the First World War, however, reignited interest in Jomini's concepts of maneuver warfare. The first generation of air-power theorists, writing in the 1920s and 1930s, were also drawn to Jomini's "decisive points."

- Today, it may seem that Jomini lost out to Clausewitz and to the *Sunzi* in American war colleges and military academies. His original works are still read, but quite often, if Jomini gets attention, it is as a negative example: an object lesson in being too mechanical and prescriptive.

- He has not, however, become irrelevant. In fact, a great deal of what Jomini thought about strategy and operations has come to deeply imbue U.S. operational doctrine. The U.S. Army's *Operations Manual*, FM 3-0, puts forward nine principles of war, all of which are variations on themes laid out by Jomini.

Clausewitz's Influence

- As a member of the reform faction in Prussia, Clausewitz was uniquely situated to affect the Prusso-German school of strategy, but he often ran afoul of his military and civilian superiors. His premature death, compounded by the incomplete nature and analytical density of *On War*, further limited his overall impact.

- But after Prussia's shocking victory over France in 1871 and especially with praise for Clausewitz from Helmuth von Moltke, the Prussian chief of staff, interest in *On War* began to increase across Europe.

- In the early 1900s, Clausewitz's appeal was primarily among political theorists, including Lenin and Mao Tse-tung, who were drawn by his arguments about the political character of war. In the West, Clausewitz won many fans in Britain, but after World War I, he was unfairly tarred with the brush of German militarism and fell out of favor.

- It wasn't until the 1970s that military officers in the United States got much exposure to Clausewitz, but he is widely studied today. Two critical events account for this sea change: (1) the appearance in 1976 of an exceptional English translation of *On War* by Michael Howard and Peter Paret and (2) the founding of academic

departments in strategy and policy, giving military officers exposure to experts who understand and appreciate Clausewitz.

- The influence of Clausewitz on the U.S. military took yet another step forward in 1982, when Colonel Harry Summers published *On Strategy*, a Clausewitzian postmortem on America's failure in Vietnam. Summers's work found an instant readership in the military. Not content with simply understanding failure, Clausewitz might be useful in preventing future defeats.

- Finally, it seemed that Clausewitz might get to play a role in the planning and execution of war. Colin Powell's reading of Clausewitz was a significant influence in what became the Weinberger-Powell doctrine: the set of political and military preconditions proposed as a litmus test for committing U.S. troops to foreign wars.

- Clausewitz's distinction between limited and unlimited wars also filled an analytical vacuum in a military geared almost exclusively for fighting a big war with the Soviet Union but intellectually unprepared for the unique challenges of fighting and winning wars for limited political objectives, such as Vietnam.

- The Gulf War of 1990–1991 was the first test of the Americanized Clausewitz in action. The framing of the limited political objectives, the bounding of strategy within those objectives, the search for centers of gravity, and the fear of culminating points permeated the American conduct of that war.

Military and Civilian Roles in War

- Both Clausewitz and Jomini are frequently invoked in the often-heated debates about the proper roles of military officers and civilians in planning, executing, and terminating wars.

- One of the reasons that Jomini tends to be more popular than Clausewitz among military officers is that Clausewitz demands a high degree of political oversight in the conduct of war: "Policy is the guiding intelligence and war only the instrument, not vice versa.

… No other possibility exists, then, than to subordinate the military point of view to the political."

- Jomini seems to lean more toward the *Sunzi*, with the professional's hostility toward the meddling of the amateurs back in the capital: "A general whose genius and hands are tied by a [Ruling] Council five hundred miles distant cannot be a match for one who has liberty of action …."

- Jomini is emblematic of what has come to be called the "normal theory" of civil-military relations. This theory accepts that war serves a political end, but it falls to the professional military to determine the best way to fight a war in pursuit of those political ends.

- The military profession is unique for a number of reasons, not least the fact that it is a profession of violence.
    - Fortunately, members of the military do not spend the majority of their time doing what they are trained to do, which means that the military is among the most self-reflective of the professions.

    - At the same time, military officers do not enjoy the same degree of autonomy as other professionals. In American history, this has created a great deal of tension between the serving military and the civilians in government.

    - The U.S. Army, in particular, traditionally took the more Jominian view of a clear point of separation between political and military considerations.

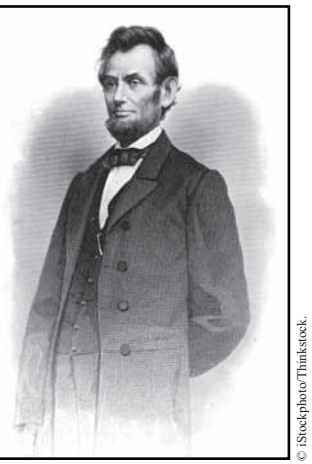
    - At first glance, this principle seems to be validated by history. For example, in the assessment of many, the inability of politicians to stay out of the spheres of strategy and command was what doomed American efforts in Vietnam.

Countering the Normal Theory

- A distinctly Clausewitzian counterargument to Jomini and the normal theory was developed in 2002, with the publication of a book

called *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime* by Eliot A. Cohen, a professor of strategic studies.

- Cohen's thesis was that the normal theory represented a dangerous dereliction of the duties of the political leader, central to which was the judicious supervision of the execution of war. If politicians stay out of military affairs, they lose the ability to maintain the subordination of military action to political ends, and once wars are freed from political control, they tend to escalate toward Clausewitz's extreme.



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Abraham Lincoln has been cited as a model of civilian leadership in war, highlighting the idea that Jomini's normal theory represents a dereliction of the duties of politicians.

- To make his case, Cohen used four models of civilian leadership in war: Lincoln in the Civil War, Clemenceau in World War I, Churchill in World War II, and Ben-Gurion in Israel's war of independence. All four leaders relentlessly pestered their military commanders and offered their own operational and sometimes tactical suggestions.

- In crafting his argument, Cohen takes his marching orders from Clausewitz: "Political considerations do not determine the posting of guards or the employment of patrols. But they are influential in the planning of war, of the campaign, and often even of the battle."

- With the exception of tactical minutiae, almost every action in war can have political significance; thus, every significant decision can and should be subject to political oversight. Military officers need to recognize this fact and to welcome it. This is what Cohen calls the "unequal dialogue."

- In general, Cohen's argument is persuasive, but he tends to neglect the military side of the civil-military equation. The danger of too narrow a definition of the unequal dialogue is that it can become an unequal monologue, with the military simply acquiescing to political oversight at all levels of war.

- In the end, Clausewitz tells us that as much as civilians need to familiarize themselves with what militaries can and cannot do, senior military leaders need to be knowledgeable of the strategic and political consequences of military action. They need to respectfully push back on issues of strategy and, possibly, even policy.

- Ultimately, it is a question of how deep and what kind of political oversight is necessary. The answer to that question, as with almost all questions related to strategy and war, is dependent on the nature of the war and the scale of political objectives.

Summing Up Clausewitz and Jomini

- The fact that Eliot Cohen's Clausewitzian view of the subordination of military action to political oversight has had real-world influence in policy circles in this country and has set off new debates about civil-military relations should alert us to the enduring significance and influence of Clausewitz and Jomini.

- That influence is best discerned by looking at the different levels of war. Clausewitz is most relevant to understanding the nexus of policy and strategy, while Jomini's interest in eternal principles of warfare best suits the tactical and operational levels of war.

- This "level-of-war" breakdown is a useful framework, but we should not simply view Clausewitz and Jomini as two sides of the same coin; significant differences exist between these two theorists.
    - Most significant is the disparity between their philosophical assumptions. Jomini, the Enlightenment theorist, believes that even with all of war's complexity, practical prescriptions for action are still possible. Clausewitz, the German romantic

pessimist, is ever mindful that even though one side might win all the battles, it can still lose the war.

- We are the inheritors of both philosophical traditions, and even today, we have yet to come down on one side or the other.

Suggested Reading

Calhoun, "Clausewitz and Jomini."

Cohen, *Supreme Command*.

Handel, *Masters of War*.

Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*.

Questions to Consider

1. What are the main areas of agreement and disagreement between Jomini and Clausewitz?

2. What challenges does a democracy, such as the United States, face in trying to implement Cohen's unequal dialogue?

From Sail to Steam—The Sea-Power Revolution

Lecture 12

In our discussion of the Peloponnesian War, we got a glimpse of the fundamental social, political, and cultural distinctions between land powers and sea powers—elephants and whales. We also got some inkling of the various ways in which a navy can be used, such as commerce raiding, amphibious landings, and decisive fleet-on-fleet battles. With this lecture, we turn our attention more fully to the sea and look at the revolution in naval warfare and maritime trade that took place over the century between the end of the Napoleonic Wars and the beginning of World War I.

From Sail to Steam

- The transition from sail to steam is bracketed by two epic naval engagements: Lord Nelson's triumph at Trafalgar in 1805 and Admiral Togo's defeat of the Russians at Tsushima in 1905.
    - Each battle looks like a classic example of victory at sea: a victory won through superior seamanship, communications, and gunnery and the audacity of a brilliant admiral.

    - But they took place in two radically different worlds. When Alfred Thayer Mahan and Sir Julian Corbett began writing about naval history and naval strategy in the 1890s, the maritime world was in the midst of a total transformation: a transformation from sail to steam.

- The changes that took place in the century between these two epic battles represent not just advances in military technology but a transformation in the global economy. Although the process of globalization had begun back in the late 15th century, it accelerated dramatically in the 19th century, as did the competition among would-be sea powers.
    - With a general state of peace emerging in Europe after 1815, the energies of European countries and, to some extent, the United States were directed outward in search of markets and colonies.

- In the Opium Wars of the mid-19th century, the British succeeded in cracking open the lucrative China market. Not only did this expand the opportunities for trade, but it also liberated the massive amounts of silver that had been piling up in China for two and a half centuries. Japan and Korea were forced open soon afterward.

- After this point, the cycle of growth accelerated. Growing global demand for the products of Western manufacturing accelerated the industrial revolution, increasing both production and the impetus to find more foreign markets. At the same time, demand for raw materials increased, as did the need for commercial shipping.

- None of these demands could be met without certain technological advances, as well as advances in medicine. Railroads further accelerated the commercial exploitation of newly opened frontiers, and Western arms technology, notably the breechloader, greatly facilitated the colonial enterprise.

- The next big advance in the maritime revolution was steam propulsion, but the transition from sail to steam in commercial shipping wasn't particularly rapid, nor was it complete.
  - Sailing vessels were remarkably fast and economically competitive throughout the 19th century. In contrast, early steamships were expensive and inefficient and required vast stores of coal and frequent stops for refueling.

  - Steamships found their first real niche in the mail and passenger business between Suez and India. On these voyages, steam vessels had advantages in speed, could steam into the prevailing winds, and could navigate the narrow Suez Canal under their own power.

  - In terms of global shipping, the advantages of steam began to gradually win out, but it was probably not until the 1880s that the total tonnage of steam-powered ships edged out sailing ships.

The Calculus of Sea Power

- The transition to steam also transformed the calculus of sea power. In the age of sail, timber, cloth, hemp, and sailors were the raw materials of sea power. But by the end of the 19th century, any nation that could harness enough iron ore, coal, and talented engineers could compete on the high seas.

- If 19th-century maritime power was to be measured in wooden ships, then the British would have been at a distinct disadvantage, having cut down their forests to defeat Napoleon. Britain, though, had great comparative advantages in coal, iron, and steel production and still ruled the waves.

- The communications revolution that had begun with the expansion of global shipping took a quantum leap forward with the addition of telegraphy and submarine telegraph cables.
    - In the 1850s, the British were experimenting with cables across the English Channel; a decade later, they enjoyed direct and nearly real-time communications with continental Europe, North America, and India.

    - Two decades after that, a global network of telegraphy sped diplomatic cables, military orders, financial transactions, and news around the planet.

    - This was true globalization. Whereas maritime commerce in the age of sail had involved small cargoes of precious goods, steamships could move all manner of commodities in bulk. In addition, the leap forward in global communications guaranteed that these cargoes would make it to the markets where they were in highest demand.

- As the world approached the turn of the 20th century, maritime commerce and competition flourished. The world's oceans had become a great global commons, a largely ungoverned space through which the lifeblood of national power and prosperity

flowed. Any nation that sought its fortunes in global trade could ill-afford to neglect its navy.

The Military Side of Sea Power

- On the military side of the sea-power revolution, it wasn't so much steam power as the screw propeller that transformed naval warfare.
  - Side and stern paddle wheelers had demonstrated some utility in midcentury conflicts, but in general, paddle propulsion was inefficient, cumbersome, and vulnerable. It also got in the way of gunnery.
  - The screw propeller, which was fully submerged and mounted along the midline of a ship, was much more efficient and much less vulnerable to enemy fire.
  - The installation of these propeller shafts in lighter-but-stronger steel-hulled ships and their attachment to high-pressure boilers represented the coming-of-age of the modern steamship. The boilers allowed for the mechanization of the ship itself; steam pressure pumped the bilges, powered the steering, and maneuvered the guns.
- One of the most important drivers of naval transformation in the 19th century was the revolutionary improvement in gunnery.
  - At the time of Trafalgar, success in naval battle depended more on rates of fire than range or accuracy, but the size and complexity of the guns meant that even the best crews could manage only two shots a minute.
  - The new breech-loaded and rifled naval guns offered greater range, higher rates of fire, and improved lethality over the muzzle-loaded, smooth-bore cannon of Lord Nelson's navy.

The Reconfiguration of the Modern Warship

- The convergence of steel construction, steam power, and advanced gunnery resulted in the complete reconfiguration of the modern warship.

- The first-generation steam-powered ships were wooden, but the advent of exploding shells increased interest in armoring these ships, and by the late 1850s, iron-hulled ships were coming into vogue. The first and most important of this second generation of large steam warships was the HMS *Warrior*.

- The first all-steam warships were smaller vessels, such as the CSS *Virginia* and the *Monitor*. The *Monitor* also sported a turret, which gave her two big guns a broader field of fire, and the turret could be turned to protect the gun ports during reloads.

- Fewer guns, bigger holds, and advances in steam propulsion ultimately spelled the end of steam/sail hybrid battleships, such as the *Warrior*. In 1871, the Royal Navy launched HMS *Devastation*, exclusively steam powered and sporting a pair of two-gun turrets.

- The battleships and armored cruisers that Togo had at the Battle of Tsushima were even more advanced. Togo's flagship, the *Mikasa*, had a top speed of 18 knots, and with full coal bunkers, she could cruise for 7,000 nautical miles at a speed of 10 knots.
    - The main guns of *Mikasa* could fire three armor-piercing, 800-pound shells every two minutes, and with their telescopic sights and advanced range-finders, they could accurately hit targets 6,000 meters away.

    - *Mikasa* also had what was called a mixed battery, including smaller broadside guns and swivel guns on deck to defend against close attack, and she was armed with torpedoes.

    - To complement its offensive punch, *Mikasa* was belted above and below the waterline with nine inches of steel armor.

    - Finally, every ship in Togo's fleet was equipped with a radio-telegraph set that kept Togo in contact with his subordinates and with ground stations.

Admiral Togo's flagship, the *Mikasa*, represented the best of what came to be called the pre-Dreadnought battleships.

- As much as gunnery was becoming concentrated onboard, naval power was being concentrated in fewer, bigger ships. In 1810, the Royal Navy had 156 ships of the line; in 1914, it had 72 battleships and heavy cruisers. This shift would force military and political leaders to reconsider their willingness to "risk the fleet."

- The modern battleship vastly complicated the business of operating a navy. In the age of sail, barring major damage, ships needed to stop only for food and water, but a steam navy required elaborate logistics for coal and spare parts, as well as provisions.

- The new complexities of naval warfare also required a new breed of naval officers. The world's navies were forced to embrace new skill sets in naval warfare and to create training and educational institutions to hone their operational edge.

Changes after Tsushima

- As much as things had changed between Trafalgar and Tsushima, the changes in naval warfare of the decades ahead would be even more rapid and dramatic.

- A year after Tsushima, the Royal Navy commissioned the HMS *Dreadnought*. Compared to *Mikasa*, *Dreadnought* was bigger, better armed and armored, and faster. Ironically, the spectacular performance of Togo's big guns at Tsushima spelled the end of mixed-battery battleships like *Mikasa*. The age of the all-big-gun *Dreadnought* had begun.

- The battleship remained at the center of the fleet, but also in development were all manner of new ship types and weapons systems, including destroyers, submarines, and mine-layers, along with advanced mines, self-propelled torpedoes, and aircraft.

- Although steam and steel had transformed navies by the end of the 19th century, major naval wars were rare.
    - Whereas Clausewitz could look back on the Napoleonic revolution in warfare, our next two masters, Alfred Thayer Mahan and Sir Julian Corbett, were still in the midst of the sea-power revolution.

    - With the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905, they had a test case of both the power of modern naval technology and of what they viewed as the enduring principles of naval strategy.

Suggested Reading

Brodie, *Sea Power in the Machine Age*.

Corbett, *Maritime Operations in the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–1905* (especially pp. 382–411 in volume II).

Gray, *The Leverage of Sea Power*.

Mahan, "Retrospect upon the War between Japan and Russia."

Tucker, *Handbook of 19th Century Naval Warfare*.

Questions to Consider

1. How did technological innovations transform global commerce? How did they transform naval warfare?

2. Who would have been more out of his element: Nelson at Tsushima or Togo at Trafalgar?

Alfred Thayer Mahan

Lecture 13

In 1884, Alfred Thayer Mahan was asked to serve as a lecturer at the U.S. Naval War College, and his lectures there became the basis for two influential books on sea power. Although his writing made him a hero to foreign navies, many in the U.S. Navy were hostile to his ideas. Like Jomini, he sought to distill general and eternal principles about naval policy and warfare from his study of history. Like Machiavelli, his works were fashioned to speak to all four levels of naval war: politics, strategy, operations, and tactics. Above all, Mahan wanted to open America's eyes to the importance of sea power to the nation's destiny.

Sea Power v. Naval Power

- As we saw in the last lecture, sea power rests on a foundation of economic, institutional, geographic, technological, and cultural factors, of which naval power is only a part, albeit a key component of national power.

- Mahan's understanding of this led him to think in grand terms about America's maritime destiny. He argued that the United States must become a true sea power in all of its military, cultural, and commercial dimensions.

- In defining sea power, Mahan identifies six fundamental factors: (1) geography, (2) physical configuration, (3) extent of territory, (4) population, (5) national character, and (6) governmental institutions.

- Island, peninsular, and insular nations are preadapted to being sea powers because of their geography, but socioeconomic and political factors are also important. A people that depends on the sea is more likely to have the expertise to compete on the maritime commons, but only if the government is supportive.

- For Mahan, this becomes a virtuous cycle. Favorable geography and a "seagoing bent" among the people make for a vibrant maritime economy that, in turn, can spawn a great navy. A great navy built and supported by pro-maritime policies can strengthen the economy and society and encourage people to seek even greater fortunes on the sea. This was the story behind Britain's rise to maritime dominance.

- The fact that a nation has an affinity for the sea does not mean it is destined to be a sea power. As Mahan points out, leadership matters. Politicians who promote maritime pursuits and fund the navy are as precious as naval officers who understand the proper use of the fleet.

America as a Sea Power

- In terms of geography, physical conformation, and extent of territory, the United States is what Mahan calls an insular nation. Because it is not at immediate risk of invasion, America doesn't need a large army. But because its livelihood depends on access to the seas and it is vulnerable to having its trade routes interdicted, it does need a powerful navy.

- Mahan's assessment in the latter half of the 19th century was as follows: America faced no continental threats, but it did have three coastlines to defend. Mahan's service in the Civil War had shown him just how vulnerable the East and Gulf coasts were to blockade. But defending the coasts is not enough; a sea power needs a fleet that can preemptively take command of the seas.

- There were, however, several trends working against Mahan's arguments.
    - First, continental consolidation was drawing the energies of the American people inward, not driving them out onto the sea.

    - Second, Mahan was concerned that American democracy and American politicians were too shortsighted to appreciate sea power in all of its dimensions, especially the navy.

- A final impediment to embracing the Mahanian vision was the preference of the U.S. Navy for coastal defense and commerce raiding over fleet actions. Low-cost commerce raiders were thought to have a disproportionate impact on an enemy's economy. Mahan agreed that commerce raiding might be useful, but it was no match for the strategic effects of a battle fleet.

- As much as geography seemed to make the United States a natural sea power, the will of the population, the commitment of the government, and even the sympathies of the U.S. Navy were not in line with Mahan's thinking.

- The implications of Mahan's theory of sea power went far beyond domestic politics and military budgets, crossing the line into foreign policy. For the most part, he abided by Clausewitz's principle of subordinating the military to policy; nevertheless, his opinions on foreign policy and the fecklessness of democratic governments were well publicized.
  - These policy positions derived from Mahan's strategic and operational maxims. For example, "choke points"—critical nodes in global trade—figure large in Mahan's writings. The control of choke points was the key to projecting naval power globally.

  - If America was going to compete on the seas, then it needed an overseas empire, an empire comprised of strategically significant choke points. In other words, operational necessity had foreign policy implications.

  - This is not imperialism simply for the sake of imperialism. To Mahan, annexation of overseas colonies had to be prudent and in America's best interests.

Mahan's Advice

- In the simplest terms, Mahan's advice for naval officers and strategists was: "Act like Nelson." But this is not as simple as it sounds. Mahan knew that Nelson could act as he had only because

the full weight of British geography, society, and government enabled his actions.

- Nor was Mahan so naïve as to think that it was a good idea to try to re-fight Trafalgar. Tactics and technology had changed too dramatically, but for Mahan, "The old foundations of strategy so far remain, as though laid upon a rock." Even at the operational levels of war, some of the eternal principles still pertained.

- Still, when it came to peacetime preparations, the politicians and the military needed to be of one mind and construct the strongest naval force possible, building on the latest technological and tactical innovations.

- In addition, the battle fleet must be kept as a concentrated body. Mahan allows for other naval missions, including commerce raiding and coastal defense, but the battle line should never be drawn into those secondary pursuits.
    - In the lead-up to war, a concentrated fleet could serve as a deterrent to a would-be challenger. A divided fleet, in contrast, was symbolic of a dangerously divided focus and could actually invite attack.

    - In war, the massive combined firepower of the concentrated battle fleet was the surest way to send an enemy's navy to the bottom or to keep it blockaded. And defeating the enemy fleet on the high seas or bottling it up in port would give a nation an unprecedented command of the sea.

- In a shooting war, Mahan tracks with Jomini in advocating the offensive defense: Other than a few ships set aside for commerce and coastal defense, take the battle fleet into the enemy's home waters. This enables control of the lines of supply and communication and seizure of forward choke points.

- No one who devoted so much time to studying Nelson could neglect leadership and the human factor in war. Mahan was

deeply impressed with the audacity shown by Nelson in his relentless pursuit of a broken enemy fleet. Great naval leaders embraced calculated risk and understood the political and strategic implications of their operations.

- The eloquence of Mahan's arguments, complemented by the passionate advocacy of civilian navalists, brought about one of the most remarkable peacetime military transformations in history: In the course of two decades, the U.S. Navy went from being a secondary service of modest capabilities to one of the leading navies of the world.

The Russo-Japanese War

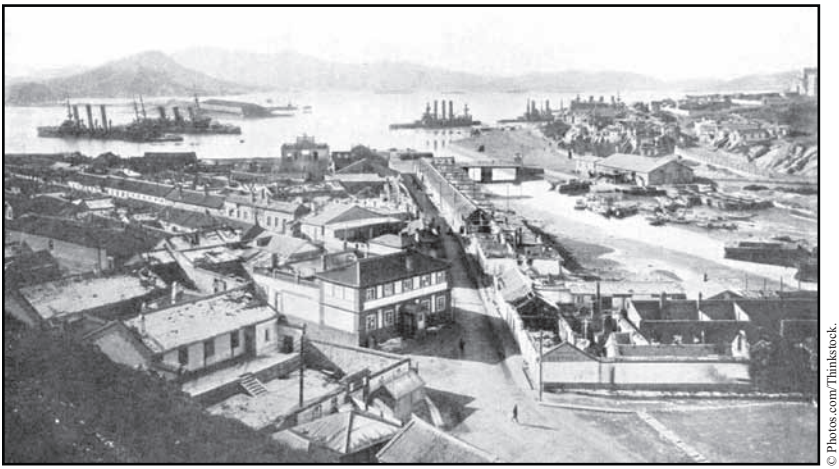
- Fought in 1904 and 1905, the Russo-Japanese War was a contest of rival imperial aspirations over spheres of influence in northeast Asia. In his "Retrospect" on the war, Mahan penned a blistering critique of the Russians.

- In his estimation, the Russians had the means to build a first-class navy but not the will. The result was a hodgepodge of ship types and a shortage of training that doomed the Russians from the outset of the war.

- Further, Russia's battle line was divided into three fleets: the Baltic, the Black Sea, and the Port Arthur squadron. This gave the Japanese regional parity and emboldened them to attack Port Arthur on the first night of the war.

- Russia had also failed to set up a global network of bases and coaling stations to enable it to quickly and credibly project naval power. When the Baltic fleet sailed in October 1904, it was forced to rely on the modest support of allies. Great Britain, with its huge comparative advantages in bases, shipping, and coal, was an ally of Japan and hindered the Russian transit at every turn.

- Finally, as it negotiated 18,000 miles of transit and choke points, the Baltic Fleet quite literally telegraphed its position, progress,



The Japanese attacked the divided Russian fleet at Port Arthur on the first night of the Russo-Japanese War.

and problems to the Japanese. Russia was weak militarily and politically and did not have the control of communications required of a true sea power.

- Poor preparation was compounded by poor execution. Russian naval operations and tactics were hamstrung by an excess of caution. With the exception of a brief period in 1904, the Port Arthur squadron did not contest Japan's close blockade.

- Russian leaders were hesitant about sending the Baltic fleet to reinforce the Asian squadrons. In the end, the Port Arthur squadron was destroyed in port before the Baltic fleet could relieve the siege. This meant that Admiral Togo had the freedom to meet the exhausted Baltic fleet with the entirety of his armada.

Summing Up Mahan

- We should view Mahan's straight cause-and-effect line of decisive fleet engagements, command of the sea, and victory in war with a bit of skepticism, but his appeal is nonetheless easy to understand:

He offered readers an exceptionally clear grand strategy and naval strategy.

- As a navalist and maven of prudent imperialism, Mahan's timing could not have been better. He had powerful friends in the navy and the government, and the United States was favorably positioned to translate his theoretical prescriptions into reality.

- In another sense, however, his timing couldn't have been worse. Mahan did his best work in the 1890s, in the midst of a global transformation, not at the culmination of that transformation. Barring a full war between first-rate naval powers, Mahan was obliged to rely on the Nelsonian analogy to predict the future of naval warfare.

- For the navies of the 1890s and the first decade of the 1900s, Mahan was probably right with the Nelsonian analogy, but new technologies and tactics were on the horizon, and Mahan failed to appreciate how these might transform naval warfare.

Suggested Reading

Crowl, "Alfred Thayer Mahan."

Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783*.

———, *The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire, 1793–1812*.

———, *The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future*.

Sprout, **"**Mahan: Evangelist of Sea Power."

Sumida, *Inventing Grand Strategy and Teaching Command*.

Questions to Consider

1. What were Mahan's objectives in writing maritime theory? Did he achieve those objectives?

2. What are the main elements of Mahan's critique of Russian strategy in the Russo-Japanese War? Did the Russo-Japanese War validate Mahan's theories?

Sir Julian Corbett

Lecture 14

Sir Julian Corbett was a world traveler, journalist, fiction writer, and student of naval history. While Mahan gave us the strategy to win a war at sea, Corbett shows us how the whale—that nation with command of the sea—can translate its control into the defeat of the elephant. In this, Corbett was responding to the Mahanian obsession with finding and destroying the enemy's fleet. He did not disagree that fleet engagements were critical, but he viewed the fleet-on-fleet battle as only one means to a larger political end. Just as Mahan focuses primarily on winning command of the sea, Corbett concentrates on exploiting that command.

Corbett's Study of Sea Power

- Born in 1854, Julian Corbett studied law at Cambridge but practiced only for a few years. He came to the study of naval history and strategy somewhat accidentally, through an interest in Sir Francis Drake, the 16th-century explorer and naval commander.

- Corbett's first serious work of naval history, *Drake and the Tudor Navy*, brought him to the attention of Admiral Sir John Fisher, the man in charge of officer education in the Royal Navy. At Fisher's request, Corbett began lecturing at Britain's Naval War College and continued writing at a furious pace.

- Like Mahan, Corbett leaned heavily on the histories of Britain's wars against France to derive his theory of maritime war. His ability to link seemingly arcane naval history to matters of contemporary strategic significance gained him a wide audience.

- With the support of Fisher, Corbett emerged as an influential voice in pre-World War I Britain. He lobbied for closer coordination between civil and military leaders and pushed for the establishment of a joint staff, akin to the U.S. Joint Chiefs. Ever the Clausewitzian, he saw the intimate link between policy and strategy,

Corbett's Holistic Way of War

- Corbett was eager to fill in the missing components of Clausewitz's *On War* and to produce a theory of maritime strategy as a complement to, and an expansion of, Clausewitz's continental way of thinking.

- He believed that the history of British maritime power could be mined so as to deduce a general theory of how sea powers win wars. That theory was not intended to guide "conduct in the field"—it wasn't an operational manual—but it was designed to increase the strategic effects of naval operations.

- In his lectures, Corbett reminded students that naval strategy was not a "separate branch of knowledge." Naval officers were specialists in naval war, but they had to "get hold of a general theory of war, and so ascertain the exact relations of Naval Strategy to the whole."

- For Corbett, high-level strategy was designed to coordinate the actions of the different services.
    - As he wrote in *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, "The army and navy must be used and thought of as instruments no less intimately connected than are the three arms [artillery, cavalry, and infantry] ashore."

    - This entailed the possibility that one military branch might have to be subordinate to another in the interests of strategic success.

    - Looking at war holistically also educated officers about the abilities of the other elements of national power. A naval planner could not afford to be ignorant of the capabilities and limitations of the army or the diplomatic corps.

- Elsewhere in *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, Corbett offers an elegant summary of the holistic nature of strategy: "The paramount concern … of maritime strategy is to determine the

mutual relations of your army and navy in a plan of war. When this is done, and not till then, naval strategy can begin to work out the manner in which the fleet can best discharge the function assigned to it."

Functions of the Navy

- According to Corbett, the first function, or naval mission, may be exactly what Mahan prescribed: Seek out the enemy's fleet and defeat it.
    - But Corbett was skeptical about the ease with which one fleet could force an enemy fleet into a battle like Trafalgar or Tsushima. A strategist anticipating a future war should not hinge his plans on shattering the naval power of the enemy in one or two blows.

    - Nor did Corbett think that total sea control was a necessary precondition for victory. Sea control is not as absolute as Mahan implies, and the pursuit of absolute control could well lead to strategic overextension.

- The next function assigned to the navy is blockade, which has a primary and a secondary value: (1) It prevents the enemy from disrupting maritime communications or threatening the coasts, and (2) it may force the enemy to try to run the blockade and be met by the opposing fleet. Commercial blockade is another option, to disrupt the flow of the enemy's seaborne trade.

- The third and fourth naval assignments are commerce raiding and commerce defense. For Corbett, naval power is a manifestation of commercial activity. Commerce raiding can, therefore, be pursued with an eye toward its strategic effect.

- None of these various missions is an end in itself. Instead, they are means to the greater end of controlling maritime communications.
    - By "maritime communications," Corbett means not only military logistics but the entire network of maritime commerce. Because the sea is a global commons through which a portion

of every nation's prosperity travels, it is automatically a strategically critical theater.

- Because at least a portion of the enemy's trade must travel by sea, its economy can be attacked directly. This, in turn, makes war at sea more of a zero-sum proposition than war on land.

- Corbett countered the argument that more naval assets should be shifted to commerce defense in Britain by asserting that the immensity of British seaborne commerce was in inverse proportion to Britain's strategic vulnerability to economic warfare. In other words, even the most aggressive enemy could disrupt only a fraction of British trade.

- Corbett offered up another counterintuitive argument on the fifth naval mission, homeland defense. He believed that even when absolute command of the sea was contested, local command, especially command of the English Channel, was sufficient to foil most amphibious invasions.

Role of the Navy in Operations Ashore

- Corbett's insights on the integration of land and sea power and his creation of the theory of expeditionary warfare are perhaps the most important aspects of his theory. He argued that only a sea power—isolated from the main theater of a conflict—could truly wage a limited war: a war for limited political objectives.

- Contiguous land powers were more prone to escalate a conflict to its "higher form," that is, Clausewitz's absolute. Escalation occurred because there were fewer geographical impediments keeping the two sides from throwing maximum effort into a war.

- A nation with command of the sea lines of communication, however, could more easily calibrate its intervention and could also take advantage of the maritime weakness of its continental adversary.

The Use of Sea Power

- For Corbett, the two prime examples of the Clausewitzian use of sea power were Wellington's campaign on the Iberian Peninsula and the Russo-Japanese War.

- In the Peninsular War, Britain used its command of the sea to support Portuguese and Spanish resistance to France. The war in the Iberian Peninsula induced Napoleon to commit precious resources to a protracted and inconclusive campaign of suppression. The "Spanish ulcer" not only weakened the emperor but cemented Britain's status as a leader—not just the financier—of the final coalition against Napoleon.
    - Great Britain had a long tradition of seizing colonies and occupying the overseas territories of its enemies. Closer to home, Britain engaged in maritime harassment: small-scale operations that disrupted the enemy's plans, supported allies, and strengthened Britain's strategic position.

    - But Wellington's operations in the Iberian Peninsula achieved a level of strategic significance that made them "indistinguishable from regular continental warfare."

    - Under Wellington, the British committed a "disposal force"—a modest contingent that limited the costs in blood and treasure Britain would suffer. The operations of this force were far from glamorous—conducting convoys, transporting troops, and so on—but commanding the sea on all three sides of the Iberian Peninsula proved decisive.

    - The Peninsular campaign was a perfect example of a relatively low-cost effort that achieved disproportionate strategic effects.

- As was the case with Mahan, the Russo-Japanese War was the critical test case for Corbett's theoretical concepts. While Mahan critiqued the Russian side, Corbett was primarily looking for lessons that could be relevant to an island nation. Where the Iberian

For Corbett, Wellington's campaign on the Iberian Peninsula represented a direct attack by the whale on the elephant; the British operations were, Corbett wrote, "indistinguishable from regular continental warfare."

campaign was almost perfect in execution and results, Corbett's assessment of the Russo-Japanese War was mixed.

- The Japanese received high praise for their deft use of diplomacy to set the stage for the war. Japan's statesmen and military commanders had also thought through the specific political objectives they were trying to achieve and had determined the military objectives most likely to translate into victory.

- In addition, army and navy leaders met as a joint staff to coordinate operations in advance. Perhaps most important, the Japanese were careful to keep the war limited, that is, not to seek the overthrow of Russia but, rather, to force the Russians to recognize Japan's sphere of influence in Korea.

- At the same time, Corbett perceived that the Japanese also made several crucial mistakes. Most critically, they split their land operations along two axes. This division of effort lessened the offensive punch of the Japanese army and forced Togo to disperse the navy to support multiple actions.

- These missteps cost the Japanese dearly in blood, treasure, and time and threatened to undermine the entire war plan. Fortunately for Japan, the Russians failed to capitalize.

Corbett and Mahan

- As with Clausewitz and Jomini, Corbett and Mahan are more complementary than they are contradictory. The points of divergence are, however, noteworthy and illuminating.

- In addition, both theorists enjoyed near-term and long-term influence.
  - Mahan, the evangelist of sea power, became a worldwide sensation, and his works are still read widely today, especially in China.

  - Julian Corbett distilled the British way of war and profoundly influenced the works of such military visionaries as Basil Liddell Hart. Corbett was also the first to lay out the concept of joint expeditionary war.

  - In his later works, Corbett would touch on the lessons that could be learned from Britain's disastrous amphibious expedition to Gallipoli and on the promise of naval aviation.

Suggested Reading

Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*.

Esdaile, *The Peninsular War*.

Questions to Consider

1. How much of a Clausewitzian was Corbett?

2. What are the main elements of Corbett's analysis of the Russo-Japanese War? Did the Russo-Japanese War validate Corbett's theories?

Mahan, Corbett, and the Pacific War

Lecture 15

In the strategic studies community, "Corbettian" and "Mahanian" are used as shorthand terms for the core principles of these two masters. Mahanian refers to the massing of capital ships (battleships or carriers) for a decisive fleet-on-fleet battle in order to achieve near-total command of the sea. Corbettian is shorthand for a strategy of cumulative effects, in which capital ships are deployed in an elastic configuration across a broader but still mutually supporting front and in which naval actions are integrated with amphibious landings. As we will see in this lecture, the Pacific War is rich in examples of both Mahanian and Corbettian approaches.

Origins of the Pacific War

- The origins of the Pacific War do not lie in a maritime dispute between the United States and Japan. Rather, this war began on the Asian mainland, and from a Japanese perspective, it remained primarily a continental struggle.

- Since the 1890s, Japan had been carving out an empire in east and northeast Asia. The Japanese had annexed Korea in 1910 and seized Manchuria in 1931. In 1937–1938, they seized large portions of Chinese territory, but they could not win the war in China outright. They then launched an ill-conceived war in Mongolia, where they were trounced by the Red Army.

- At this point, the Japanese navy got involved. If Japan was going to have a chance of winning the war in China, it needed secure access to raw materials from the French, Dutch, and British colonies in southeast Asia. A naval campaign was required to seize those colonies and secure sea lines of communication.
    - War against Britain and Holland was an acceptable risk, because those countries were too busy with Japan's Axis allies in Europe.

- The bigger problem was that if Japan attacked British Malaya or the Dutch East Indies, there was no guarantee that the United States would stay out of the war.

- The U.S. bases in the Philippines could potentially be used to harass the sea lines of communication between southeast Asia and Japan, which meant that Japan needed to neutralize the Philippines.

- Given that attacking the Philippines meant war with the United States, then a preemptive attack on America's fleet in being at Pearl Harbor was necessary.

- We can see in this bizarre rationalization Mahanian concepts of choke points, sea lines, and access to strategic resources. The problem was that Japan was too weak in absolute terms, too tied down on the Continent, and too short of merchant shipping to be the kind of sea power that could pull off the conflicts it planned.

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The strategy enacted by the Japanese in attacking Pearl Harbor was built on invalid assumptions, mislearned lessons from earlier wars, a superficial understanding of Mahan, and an almost suicidal neglect of Corbett.

- The Japanese believed that they might be able to knock the United States out with simultaneous blows against the Philippines and Pearl Harbor. If that didn't work, then a qualitatively superior Japanese battle line could meet a weakened U.S. fleet in a decisive engagement, much like Tsushima.

- The Japanese assumed that what they had done to Russia in 1905 would yield similar strategic and political results with the United

States in 1941. But the United States was far more economically and politically stable than Russia had been.

- Further, in the Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese had focused their finite land and sea assets on a single theater and along parallel lines of advance. In the Second World War, they scattered their navy and only a fraction of their army along multiple axes.

- As strategically flawed as Japanese thinking was, at the operational level, the first phase of Japan's Pacific War was spectacularly successful. Had they transitioned to defense, the Japanese might have been tougher to defeat, but because they were convinced that follow-on offensives were a strategic necessity, they quickly became overextended.

U.S. War Planning

- Initial U.S. war plans were very Mahanian, especially War Plan Orange, which called for massing the American fleet on the West Coast and sailing out to relieve Guam and the Philippines. These actions would be followed by a decisive battleship engagement near Japan and then a blockade of the Japanese home islands.

- Facing a possible two-front war in Europe and Asia, the United States revised Plan Orange into Plan Dog, a Europe-first strategy that called for a defensive stance in the Pacific. Between Plan Dog and the damage to the fleet at Pearl Harbor, the United States was stuck on the defensive in early 1942, but that does not mean it was inactive.

- Throughout 1942, Admiral Ernest King, the new chief of naval operations, employed what Corbett called the offensive-defensive, strategically defensive but operationally offensive when the circumstances were right.
    - This is different from Mahan's offensive-defense, in which one opponent goes on the strategic offensive. The United States could not do that at this point in the war.

- Instead, King set up his Corbettian offensive-defensive along two lines, Hawaii to Midway and Samoa-Fiji-Australia. U.S. aircraft carriers were deployed along those two lines in an elastic configuration that allowed King to shift these precious assets from one line to the other.

- The idea was to stem further Japanese advances and to harass and wear down the Japanese navy by forcing it to go on offensives that it could not sustain.

- King also planned to launch the inevitable counteroffensive west and north along these two axes, which would force Japan to divide its fleet again.

- What King envisioned was a kind of Jominian strategy at sea, a series of incremental battles, in which American and Allied forces could leverage local superiority against decisive points.

Coral Sea and Midway

- The first test of King's offensive-defensive came at the Battle of Coral Sea in May 1942. Coral Sea evolved into a medium-scale Mahanian fleet engagement, but instead of big-gun battleships, it was a clash between two carrier groups—the first all-air battle in naval history. The Japanese won the battle at the tactical level, but at the strategic level, Coral Sea was a major setback for Japan.

- The next Mahanian fleet-on-fleet battle to arise from the offensive-defensive was Midway in June 1942.
  - In this case, the United States was forewarned of the attack. The Japanese had also violated one of Mahan's cardinal tenets by dividing their fleet.

  - As a result, Midway was a fairly evenly matched battle, and this time, the Japanese received a Tsushima-like shellacking.

- Essentially, both Coral Sea and Midway were Mahanian surface engagements expanded into three dimensions by the addition of submarines and aircraft.

- We can also see that both of these Mahanian battles evolved out of Corbettian strategies—King's offensive-defensive—and they were fought to cover or contest amphibious landings. In fact, most of the major fleet actions of the war coincided with amphibious campaigns.

Guadalcanal

- Guadalcanal was the first tentative step in King's counteroffensive. The idea was to begin an advance up through the Solomon Islands with the ultimate goal of driving the Japanese out of New Guinea and the Bismarcks.

- U.S. Marines landed on Guadalcanal in August 1942 and seized the strategically critical air base at Henderson Field. The Japanese were compelled to contest those landings because a U.S. base on Guadalcanal would have scuttled their efforts to interdict U.S. supplies flowing to Australia.

- What followed was a complex Corbettian interaction game, with both sides trying to use their command of the local seas to enable ground operations on the island. The third dimension was in the air, with both land-based and carrier aircraft joining the fight.

- For Corbett, the key to a successful peripheral operation is local sea control, an idea we might extend into local air control. But even Corbett admitted that control is rarely absolute. In fact, at Guadalcanal, the United States did not dominate the seas or the air.

- Ideally, a peripheral operation inflicts unrecoverable damage on the enemy's critical military capabilities. Guadalcanal did exactly that to the Japanese navy.

- With the Corbettian noose tightening around Japan, there was one last flurry of Mahanian fleet action in mid- to late 1944: the battles of the Philippine Sea and Leyte Gulf, both losses for the Japanese.

The Submarine Campaign

- With submarines, smaller surface ships, and PT boats, the United States unleashed the most devastating commerce raiding campaign in history against Japan. As a result, Japan's sea lines of communication were vulnerable to interdiction throughout the Pacific War.

- The Japanese had tried to make good on their shortcomings in merchant shipping, but they neglected such simple defensive measures as convoying and antisubmarine patrols. Japan's absolute dependence on imported raw materials magnified the strategic effects of the submarine campaign. By early 1945, Japan had almost no merchant shipping.

- In contrast to America's dispersion of submarines, the Japanese built a small number of very large submarines and attached them as supports and screens for the main body of the fleet. As a result, they couldn't effectively harass the Allies' lines of communication.

- Japan's embrace of new military technology and mastery of new naval tactics, especially carrier and amphibious operations, were truly impressive. In 1941, pound-for-pound Japan had the best navy in the world, but the Japanese had wholly neglected the larger goals of maritime strategy.

The End Game

- By the summer of 1945, the fleet of Japan was mostly sunk and its merchant shipping obliterated. What should naturally follow is either a Mahanian or Corbettian end game, but that is not what happened.

- The Mahanian end game would have been a long, slow squeeze of the Japanese islands à la War Plan Orange. A Corbettian end game

would have been the United States and its allies taking the war directly to Japan's center of gravity à la Wellington at Waterloo. Neither of these happened, yet Japan surrendered. Why?

- In the end, there are at least three theoretical explanations for Japan's surrender.
  - First, there is the maritime theory explanation, in which the United States destroyed the Japanese navy and its seaborne commerce.
  - Second is the Clausewitzian explanation, in which the Soviet Red Army poured into Manchuria in early August 1945 and demolished Japan's military—and, potentially, its political—center of gravity.
  - Third is the air power explanation, in which the U.S. Air Force rained destruction on every major city in Japan and closed the deal with two atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Suggested Reading

James, "American and Japanese Strategies in the Pacific War."

Marston, ed., *The Pacific War Companion*.

Questions to Consider

1. What did Guadalcanal have in common with Wellington's Peninsular campaign? Were the strategic effects similar?

2. How would Mahan and Corbett critique Japanese strategy in the Pacific War? Was Japan a cooperative adversary?

Air Power in Theory and Practice

Lecture 16

A 1936 science fiction classic called *Things to Come*, a film based on a novel by H. G. Wells, begins with an air raid on London that reduces the great city to poisoned rubble. Less than a decade later, many of the cities of Germany and Japan lay in smoldering ruins, and their populations seemed helpless before the new lords of the air, Britain's Royal Air Force and the U.S. Army Air Forces. The outcome of the war seemed to bear out many of the strategic prognostications of the early air-power theorists, but in this lecture, we'll ask whether theory and practice really aligned that closely.

The History of Air War

- In the opening phases of World War I, dirigibles and airplanes were used for reconnaissance and attached to ground and naval forces in support roles. Over the course of that conflict, however, aircraft began to play larger roles in combat.

- Even at this early point, we can see a dichotomy between tactical/operational missions and strategic missions. On the one hand, we have aircraft coordinating with land and sea campaigns. On the other hand, we have air forces beginning to operate independently and experimenting with bombing as a strategic weapon.

- Bombing raids were launched on London and on Germany's Ruhr valley. By 1918, the aircraft was a regular fixture in the skies over Europe, and while the airplane's overall role in the war was fairly modest, the war drove an overwhelming interest in aircraft and air-war doctrine.

- All the pioneers in air-power theory were veterans of the First World War, and all believed that aircraft would fundamentally transform war and strategy. At the same time, they all owed an intellectual debt to the sea-power theorists of the preceding generation.

- The air, like the sea, is mostly a vast, ungoverned space, an aerial commons. The fact that aircraft are freed from the friction of the ground and the vicissitudes of wind and tide makes air power, in theory, superior to both sea power and land power.

- Where fleets and armies are primarily operational means to political ends, an air force—again, in theory—is a strategic weapon. An air force can strike deep into the enemy's homeland at the outset of a war, without a sequence of land battles or fleet engagements.

Giulio Douhet

- General Giulio Douhet was an Italian military engineer and an early proponent of the rapid mechanization of the Italian military. Even before the outbreak of World War I, Douhet was sold on the strategic significance of air power.

- Although the strategic impact of air power had not yet been tested, Douhet was convinced of several basic theoretical assumptions:
  - All wars in the future would be total wars; hence, from the start, all strategies should be geared toward maximum strategic effect.

  - The third dimension of air war rendered ground and naval forces subordinate, if not superfluous, to strategy.

  - Air power is innately offensive, and the vastness of the aerial commons means that no effective air defense can be mounted against a massed flight of heavy bombers.

  - The goal of strategic bombing is to shatter the morale of the civilian population and, with it, the enemy's means and will to continue the war.

- The first phase of an air war required seizing command of the air. With this, the air force, comprised exclusively of self-defended heavy bombers, would completely ignore tactical support roles and

even military targets, focusing instead on bombing the adversary's industry and population centers.

- In the meantime, ground forces would hold the enemy's army in place. A Clausewitzian battle was no longer required; an enemy would simply implode under relentless battering from the air.

- In Douhet's conception, no means would be spared; poison gas, incendiaries, and explosives were all on the table. Ironically, as ghastly as this vision seemed, anything else would have been inhumane and immoral.

Sir Hugh Trenchard

- In Great Britain, one key element of Douhet's vision had already been realized: the Royal Air Force (RAF), created in 1918, was a wholly independent military service. Great Britain also had its own air-power visionary in the person of Sir Hugh Trenchard, the first commander of the RAF.

As first commander of the Royal Air Force, Hugh Trenchard carved out a place for the RAF in policing the far-flung British Empire from the air.

- Trenchard echoed and amplified Douhet's argument that without command of the air, ground and naval forces were doomed. But Trenchard's theory of air war was not simply about the indiscriminate bombing of urban areas. He identified vital infrastructure nodes and key industries that should be targeted for maximum strategic effects.

- The physical destruction and logistical disruptions caused by effective targeting would be amplified by psychological shock. Such operations would, however, require highly detailed economic and logistical intelligence on the enemy.

- Trenchard shared many theoretical assumptions with Douhet:
  - Command of the air was the key to victory.
  - Command of the air could be seized only by going on the offensive at the earliest possible moment in the war.
  - Physical destruction is desirable, but it is psychological shock that will break the enemy's will to fight.

- Although Trenchard and other British air-power theorists maintained a primary focus on offensive strategic strike, they tried to balance those demands with air defense of the homeland and tactical support to ground and naval forces.

General William Mitchell

- Across the Atlantic, General William "Billy" Mitchell was America's leading air-power advocate. Working on the British model, Mitchell advocated dividing U.S. air forces into tactical and strategic missions, although he remained convinced that strategic strike against the enemy's homeland was the primary mission of the air force.

- After the war, Mitchell began lobbying both for an independent air force and for Congress to appropriately fund the air services.

Mitchell was also convinced that the airplane had fundamentally undermined the utility of big battleships.

- Despite his repeated condemnations of the U.S. Navy, Mitchell was still a Mahanian at heart. He saw the same virtuous cycle in air power that Mahan saw in sea power. A nation blessed with geographical advantages, home to a technologically advanced and air-minded population, and enjoying the benefits of unabashed political support must become a true air power.

- Mitchell shared with Douhet and Trenchard the belief in the offensive to gain command of the air, deep strikes against the enemy's vital centers, and the preeminence of psychological shock over physical destruction.

- Mitchell did not live to see the U.S. Air Force become an independent service, but a young cadre of Mitchell protégés, known as the "Bomber Mafia," began to have a major influence on air-power doctrine.
    - The members of the Bomber Mafia were the progenitors of the concept of daylight precision bombing—a way to destroy or disrupt critical nodes in the enemy's "industrial web."

    - This was the doctrine that the Army Air Force had on hand when the United States entered World War II.

Air Power in Action

- The Combined Bomber Offensive (CBO) was a joint Anglo-American strategic bombing campaign against the Luftwaffe and the industrial web of Germany. Although it was an Allied effort, the campaign was divided primarily into the American Eighth Air Force launching daylight precision attacks and the RAF engaged in nighttime area/saturation bombing.

- The CBO began in June of 1943 as an attempt to focus round-the-clock bombing on Germany's war-making capacity. What followed was the largest and costliest air campaign to date, yet

its effects diverged dramatically from the strategic predictions of prewar theorists.

- The early air-power theorists had fairly simple, almost mechanistic views of how strategic bombing would work. Theoretically, if enough bombs were put on the right targets, then the enemy would cave. But what was missing from that theoretical perspective was an appreciation of interaction and adaptation in war.
  - Early air-power theorists also tended to overemphasize the blessings of the air and disregard such challenges as wind and weather.

  - Further, the idea that an effective defense against a massed air assault was impossible proved untrue. Massed bomber attacks were relatively easy to track, and fighter planes could approach a slow-moving mass of bombers from any angle.

  - It was only when the Allies were able to provide long-range fighter escorts that this problem was solved. Even then, the strategic bombing campaign fell short in several categories, including accuracy, bomb damage, and psychological effects.

- As much as the theorists had underestimated the power of air defense, they had also grossly overestimated the ability of bombers to find and hit targets. Inflicting damage on Germany's industrial web took time; it was not until late in the war that core German military industries were decisively degraded.

- Ironically, the most important effects of the strategic bombing campaign in Europe were tactical and operational.
  - Bombing raids were interdicted by the Luftwaffe at great cost to the bomber fleets, but when the Allied bombers got long-range escorts, the Luftwaffe was nearly wiped out. This changed the operational air balance on the Eastern and Western fronts, making Allied and Soviet advances easier.

- The Germans were forced to divert thousands of their antitank guns and hundreds of thousands of personnel to antiaircraft missions, further easing the Allied operational advance.

- Finally, the damage done to German industry, especially the oil industry, and the destruction of the German rail system made German armies less maneuverable in the face of Allied armies, who had unmolested interior lines of supply.

Air Campaigns against Japan

- In the Pacific theater, the Boeing B-29 Superfortress was a significant improvement over the previous generation of bombers in terms of range and bomb loads.

- Starting in March of 1945 and for the next five months, B-29s dropped tens of thousands of tons of explosives and incendiaries on Japan and thousands of mines in Japan's coastal and inland waters. By the summer of 1945, nearly every major city in Japan had been destroyed from the air.

- Still, the intercepts of signal traffic in June and July of 1945 showed that the Japanese remained well armed and prepared to defend the home islands. Their means and will were as yet unbroken, even in the face of the most ferocious bombing campaign ever conceived. The promise of air power had fallen short.

- That conclusion, however, doesn't take into account the atomic bombs. For all of their apparent shortcomings, it might be the case that the air-power theorists were only a bit premature when it came to predicting the impact of air-power technology. The marriage of Superfortresses with super-weapons, which took place over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, approached the realization of Douhet's vision: the short, sharp, will-shattering blow that leads directly to capitulation.

Suggested Reading

Emerson, "Operation Pointblank."

MacIsaac, "Voices from the Central Blue."

Meilinger, ed., *The Paths of Heaven*.

Pape, *Bombing to Win*, chapter 4.

Warner, "Douhet, Mitchell, Seversky."

Questions to Consider

1. What are the principal tenets of early air-power theory?

2. Based on the strategic bombing campaigns of World War II, which early air-power assumptions were the most valid? Which assumptions were the most flawed?

From Rolling Thunder to Instant Thunder

Lecture 17

We ended our last lecture by alluding to the specter of the atomic bomb, but in this lecture, we will put nuclear weapons aside for the moment and instead look at the thinking of American air-power theorists in relation to the use of conventional bombing in the decades after World War II. We will then analyze a few examples of conventional air power in action: Robert McNamara's Rolling Thunder campaign against North Vietnam, John Warden's Instant Thunder plan for the 1990–1991 war against Iraq, and the NATO air operations over Yugoslavia and Libya.

Conventional Air Power after World War II

- Even with the introduction of nuclear weapons, Americans quickly learned that conventional air power still had an important role to play. The second generation of air theorists continued to stress the value of independent strategic strikes and to highlight the psychological impact of bombing over destruction of the enemy's means to fight.

- Early Air Force doctrine enshrined the centrality of strategic bombing, both nuclear and conventional. While the Air Force continued to support surface operations, its core mission remained strategic. Air power, even conventional air power, still promised the most direct means to compel the enemy to do one's will.

- In an era of nuclear weapons and superpower rivalry, there was much to justify this focus. Strategic air power also satisfied the American predilection for high technology and strategies that leveraged America's wealth over investment in large standing militaries.

Rolling Thunder

- The first big test of conventional air power against a Maoist-style people's war took place in Vietnam. Initial Air Force plans for the bombing campaign in Southeast Asia focused almost exclusively

on strategic strikes against North Vietnam, not attacks on the insurgency in the South.

- The air plan remained true to the tenets of early air-power theorists in that the campaign was designed to be intense and massive in order to maximize strategic shock and speed the capitulation of the North. This would be accomplished by rapidly destroying both North Vietnam's means and its will to continue the struggle.

- The Johnson administration modified these initial plans in favor of a more graduated air strategy that would inflict calibrated pain on North Vietnam but prevent Chinese intervention. The compromise was the Rolling Thunder campaign envisioned by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara.

- As a former Air Force officer, McNamara was as convinced of the strategic efficacy of air power as his superiors, but as Secretary of Defense, he felt obliged to balance the "go-big, go-early" inclinations of the Air Force against the need to avoid a repeat of Korea.
    - A major Chinese intervention in Vietnam was not likely, but it was certainly a possibility, and such a scenario had daunting nuclear repercussions.

    - Rolling Thunder, therefore, was primarily directed toward convincing North Vietnam to stop its support of the insurgency in South Vietnam. Such strategic persuasion hinged as much on what targets the bombers avoided as on those they hit.

    - Given that the United States could destroy almost any target it chose, the assumption was that it could hold hostage those targets of particularly high value to North Vietnam by not bombing them. The idea was that restraint would induce cooperation.

    - Secondarily, Rolling Thunder would devastate the industry and infrastructure of the North so as to deny Hanoi the ability to support the Vietcong.

- It soon became apparent, however, that strategic persuasion was not working and that the air interdiction side of the campaign should become the primary focus.

- Between 1965 and 1968, U.S. planes dropped more tons of bombs on North Vietnam than they had on Japan during World War II, yet Rolling Thunder was an abject failure. The United States could not inflict sufficient pain on the North to force it to renounce the objective of overthrowing the Saigon government.

- Air-power advocates regularly point to Rolling Thunder as an object lesson in how not to run an air war. Excessive political meddling, restrictive targeting lists, and gradualism all prevented the air weapon from achieving its strategic potential.

- Vietnam offers mixed lessons on the strategic utility of air power. Better targeting, better technology, and stealth aircraft promised to bring conventional strategic bombing a step closer to its theoretical promise.

Instant Thunder

- The plan for air-power use in the Gulf War of 1991, Operation Instant Thunder, was a product of the lessons learned from Rolling Thunder's failure. Designed by U.S. Air Force Colonel John Warden, it was also meant to serve as proof of concept of the strategic paralysis that air power can deliver.

- Warden's concept of air power hinged on the innate superiority of air power as a strategic instrument.
  - At best, land and naval forces can strike only operational centers of gravity, the enemy's armed forces.

  - By contrast, properly targeted and sufficiently destructive air strikes against the enemy's strategic centers of gravity can directly contribute to victory and can do so at relatively low cost and low risk.

- Warden parsed these different centers of gravity at the different levels of war as a system of five concentric rings. They are, in increasing levels of importance from the outer ring to the inner: the enemy's armed forces, civilian population, infrastructure, "system essentials" (food, fuel, electricity, and communications), and leadership.

- If we think of an adversary as an organism, then striking the brain (the leadership) and the nervous system (system essentials) will naturally have a more direct and paralyzing result than hacking away at the limbs, or outer rings.

- Given the conventional wisdom on the failures of Rolling Thunder, in particular, the negative connotations of civilian "meddling," it is ironic that Warden's air-power doctrine demanded a high degree of political oversight. But the more strategic the target, especially an enemy head of state, the more essential it is to have senior civilians give the final approval.

- The first draft of Instant Thunder called for a week of attacks on 84 targets almost exclusively in the inner two rings of Saddam Hussein's regime.
    - Over time and under pressure from his superiors, Warden modified the plan to include strikes that would physically paralyze the Iraqi army.

    - In the end, a modified version of Instant Thunder became just one phase of a four-phase air plan that targeted essentially everything of any military, economic, or communications significance in Iraq and Kuwait.

- Precision-guided munitions, the centerpiece of Instant Thunder, represented just a fraction of the ordnance dropped on Iraq. Nonetheless, Warden and many in the Air Force were convinced that the rest of the air and ground war were sideshows to the paralyzing effects of Instant Thunder.

- Others, however, remained skeptical. Robert Pape, a specialist in international security affairs, challenged many of Warden's core assumptions. For Pape, air strikes in Warden's outer rings—against the enemy's armed forces and national infrastructure—can also win wars.

Air War over Yugoslavia

- In March of 1999, NATO initiated a campaign of air strikes against the government and military of Yugoslavia. The objectives of the campaign were to force Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic to stop the ethnic cleansing of the Albanian population in Kosovo, withdraw his forces from Kosovo, accept UN peacekeepers, and abide by the terms of the Rambouillet Accords.

- Targeting of the campaign corresponded to four of Warden's five rings: leadership, regime infrastructure, national infrastructure, and the Yugoslav military.

- The NATO strategy was initially coercive, aiming to punish Milosevic and the Serbian military and force them to accede to NATO demands. Very quickly, however, it evolved into a denial strategy, with the aim of denying Milosevic the means to conduct purges.

- The early bombing campaign stiffened support for Milosevic, but over time, economic pain and popular unrest started to wear on the regime. The strikes on the Yugoslav military proved particularly effective against large bases and columns of heavy machinery, but they did not stop small groups of Yugoslav infantry from terrorizing Albanians or driving them out of Kosovo. Milosevic ultimately caved to NATO demands in June of 1999.

- In the final analysis, Kosovo looks like a partial vindication of strategic bombing as a decisive instrument in war. With NATO in complete control of the air, a mix of coercion and denial seemed to work against a weak and isolated regime and in a war fought for limited objectives.

Air Campaign over Libya

- NATO air strikes against the regime of Muammar Qaddafi began in mid-March 2011 in response to Tripoli's bloody crackdown against protestors. From the outset, the goal of the NATO campaign seems to have been regime change.
    - The early air plan was a mix of coercion to convince Qaddafi to stop attacking the anti-regime elements and denial to prevent him from attacking the rebels.
    - As in Kosovo, the strategy evolved into something more aggressive. Here, it became a campaign of brute force against the regime and the Libyan military.

- Denial strikes against the Libyan army and its mercenary allies were ostensibly about protecting the protestors, but in reality, they were primarily designed to help the rebels make the transition from guerilla tactics to conventional operations.

- When it became clear that Qaddafi was not going stop his campaign of repression, then forceful regime change became the only option. At that point, coercion and denial were transformed into brute force.

- In the face of Qaddafi's recalcitrance and the relative military weakness of the rebels, NATO air power decisively altered the balance of power and allowed the Libyan resistance to go on the offensive. The rebels on the ground never did become particularly powerful or militarily proficient, but they were strong enough to defeat an army that had been driven back from rebel strongholds and pummeled relentlessly from the air.

Modern Theories of Conventional Air Power

- Contemporary theorists have given us three basic approaches to modern conventional air power:
    - Warden: Paralyze the enemy regime with targeted strikes in the inner rings.

- Pape: Coerce the enemy with a mix of strikes designed to affect both its means and will.

- Libya: Employ full-spectrum targeting with the aim of aiding a local surrogate and toppling the enemy regime.

- It's likely that future air campaigns will end up being a combination of all three. The ratio of approaches in that combination will depend on the nature of the war, the strategy of the adversary, and the type of operational environment.

Suggested Reading

Byman and Waxman, "Kosovo and the Great Air Power Debate."

Lake, "The Limits of Coercive Airpower."

Pape, *Bombing to Win*, chapters 6 and 7.

Warden, "The Enemy as a System."

Questions to Consider

1. What were the critical assumptions about air power that informed Rolling Thunder?

2. How would you modify air-power theory based on the lessons learned from Kosovo and Libya?

Nuclear Strategy

Lecture 18

To this point in the course, we've talked about strategy as the use of military force to achieve political objectives. The threat of nuclear war turns that concept entirely on its head. Nuclear strategy is primarily about not resorting to force because the costs of a nuclear exchange dwarf all conceivable political gains that might be sought. At the same time, preventing nuclear war means thinking openly and at length about how such a war might be waged. In this lecture, we'll look at three theorists who have tried to make sense of this paradox.

Key Terms in Nuclear Strategy

- The core concept in nuclear strategy is deterrence, which hinges on the capability to inflict unacceptable costs on an adversary, as well as the ability to credibly communicate the intent to do so. The key words here are: capability, credibility, and communication.

- Under the heading of credibility is the concept of proportionality. The scale of reprisal must be proportional to the value of the object that is threatened. If the possible reprisal either is not costly enough or could be classified as overkill, then it does not represent credible communication of intent.

- Deterrence can take many forms, including immediate deterrence (responding to a specific, near-term threat), general deterrence (a more comprehensive strategy to prevent a range of threats), direct deterrence (convincing an adversary not to attack), extended deterrence (convincing an adversary not to attack an ally), minimum deterrence (maintaining a second-strike capability), or limited deterrence (maintaining the ability to strike an enemy's military assets to control escalation).

- Counter-value strikes are attacks on civilian targets, and counter-force strikes are attacks on military targets.

- Mutual assured destruction (MAD) is the capability of two or more adversaries to sustain an initial strike and retain the ability to retaliate with a massive counterstrike.

- Flexible response refers to a range of options between capitulation and mutual annihilation.

- Arms limitation or disarmament is the reduction of the nuclear arsenal on both sides.

Bernard Brodie

- Bernard Brodie was the first and most enduring of America's nuclear theorists. He was also among the first generation of American academics to study the interconnections among policy, strategy, and war.

- To Brodie, the advent of nuclear weapons represented a strategic revolution comparable to the revolution in Napoleonic warfare. Absolute war was now possible, but that fact was actually a cause for guarded optimism.
    - Although irrationality and inadvertent escalation could never be eliminated, Brodie believed that they would be remote possibilities. Rationality would stay the hand of world leaders when it came to pushing the nuclear button.

    - Given that nuclear retaliation was the almost certain response to nuclear aggression, leaders had to realize that no political object was worth the risk of nuclear war. This was the core assumption of deterrence, and Brodie was the first to articulate it in these terms.

- Almost immediately after Brodie sketched out the basics of deterrence, another school, known as the war-fighters, began exploring how nuclear weapons might actually be used in the event of a war. Among the questions they pondered were these: Was limited nuclear war possible? Could escalation to all-out war be controlled?

- In the 1950s, Brodie answered both of those questions in the affirmative. Nuclear weapons, he said, might be useful at the tactical level, and they could be used in ways short of total annihilation. But that was only if the political and military leadership had identified ways to control escalation.

- For Brodie, the larger question was: Could a nuclear war be won? And his answer to that was also a tentative yes. A belligerent could achieve its political objectives, but probably not at acceptable costs.

- Brodie concluded that limited nuclear war was preferable to massive retaliation. In preparing for such a war, he believed that the United States would gain tactical and operational nuclear capabilities that could also further deterrence by demonstrating credibility and capability across a range of conflict scenarios.

- Although he later repudiated the idea of limited nuclear war, Brodie did lay the theoretical groundwork for flexible response. But flexible response was always in tension with massive retaliation.

Thomas Schelling

- Thomas Schelling, a Nobel Prize winner in Economics, brought to nuclear strategy a general interest in conflict, competition, and competitive bargaining.

- Because most bargaining is more variable sum than zero sum (one side's gain is the other side's loss), Schelling looked for ways to use the threat of nuclear weapons as a variable-sum bargaining tool.
    - To Schelling, the advent of nuclear weapons did as much to transform international relations as it did to transform warfare.

    - The ability of a nuclear power to instantaneously reach out and hit an enemy's homeland made coercive diplomacy much more likely.

- Schelling likened coercive bargaining in a nuclear context to a game of chicken: The winner is the one who might be just crazy enough to drive the car off the cliff.
    - One player wins in this game when the other player balks. In a political crisis, the best way to get one player to balk is to credibly commit to driving both players off the cliff.

    - Massive retaliation could only be credible if one adversary thinks the other might risk nuclear war over a small chunk of territory or the fate of an ally.

    - Nuclear chicken is not only a winning strategy in specific crises (immediate deterrence), but it also helps in developing a "bargaining reputation," a consistent commitment to playing hardball that satisfies long-term or general deterrence.

    - In other words, Schelling was trying to figure out how to make fear and irrationality serve the rational ends of deterrence.

- Schelling was also interested in making the nonrational dimensions of chance and probability serve rationality. He came up with the idea that a threat that left something to chance could be an effective bargaining tool.
    - Even if the enemy is not entirely convinced that its adversary is crazy enough to push a crisis to the nuclear brink, the closer both players get to the brink, the higher the risk that some unforeseen accident will push both over the edge.

    - The enemy is forced to make the rational decision to back down by fear of the unknown and fear of the adversary. In other words, fear can be exploited and manipulated to enhance bargaining. This was how Schelling rationalized brinksmanship.

- Winning in a game of nuclear chicken obviously hinges on controlling the play of probability and chance and on possessing greater intelligence than the enemy. These are difficult requirements to meet in practice and present a significant risk if either is wrong.

- Schelling believed that in peacetime, a player should sell itself as the one least likely to try to change the status quo; in a crisis, that player should sell itself as the one most likely to escalate. The limits of restraint are signaled by establishing the outer limits of the player's nuclear umbrella and populating that defensive perimeter with its own troops.

- Schelling penned some of the foundational works on arms control theory and practice. He didn't believe that arms control was an end in itself—the nuclear genie would never be put back in the bottle—but arms control, if applied to the right kinds of weapons, could enhance stability, promote greater communications with the Soviet Union, and increase mutual deterrence.

Vasily Sokolovsky

- Vasily Sokolovsky had a distinguished career in the Soviet military and, after his retirement, became an important military theoretician. His most famous work, *Military Strategy*, sought to integrate competing Soviet military schools of thought in one authoritative volume.

The book *Military Strategy*, compiled by Vasily Sokolovsky, a Soviet army commander and military theoretician, offers a frightening look at Soviet nuclear theory in the early 1960s.

- Frighteningly, Sokolovsky's book includes nothing about deterrence, and there is a heavy emphasis on nuclear warfare, including preemption, and on massive and simultaneous nuclear strikes on both counter-force and counter-value targets. Above all, there is a high degree of optimism that the Soviet Union could fight and win a nuclear war.

- Sokolovsky and his co-authors assumed that any war between the superpowers would escalate almost immediately to a global thermonuclear war. Therefore, going on the offensive early and overwhelmingly would be the best way to make the inevitable communist victory less costly.

- The core Soviet political assumption was that the capitalist world was out to destroy communism; thus, despite whatever minor proximate crisis might lead to war, the true objectives of the United States were unlimited. Such a war would be an act instigated by the capitalists out of desperation, but it was a war that the Soviets would ultimately win.

- The key to nuclear strategy was to limit the costs the Soviets and their allies would suffer in the course of the war. This translated into massive, multidimensional attacks on American targets around the globe. The idea was to completely disrupt all elements of America's war-making potential: weapons systems, the economy, command and control, and so on.

- In such a strategy, there could be no illusions about economy of force, such as more precise attacks to deliver disproportionate strategic effects. Overkill was the dominant concept. This naturally meant that the Soviets had no interest in nuclear arms control and were relatively unconcerned with limited nuclear war and conventional war between the superpowers.

- It's important to note that *Military Strategy* was produced for public consumption inside and outside the Soviet Union. For this reason, it might be regarded as a sort of strategic communication designed to rattle the West.

- It's also significant that the book was written almost exclusively by Soviet military officers, whose organization was absolutely subordinate to the Communist Party. Their goal was not to influence policy but to be prepared if called by their leadership to wage a

nuclear war. The Kremlin's nuclear stance was actually more about deterrence than victory in nuclear war.

Nuclear Strategy in the 21st Century

- As we look forward into the 21st century, we should note that almost all of the foundational thinking about nuclear weapons is a product of the Cold War, an anomalous period of global bipolarity between two massively nuclear-armed superpowers.

- A lot less ink has been spilled on the nuclear strategies of middle powers or on the dynamics of counter-proliferation against rogue nations, but these are precisely the nuclear challenges that we now face.

Suggested Reading

Bayliss and Garnett, eds., *Makers of Nuclear Strategy*.

Freedman, "The First Two Generations of Nuclear Strategists."

Gray, "Strategy in the Nuclear Age."

Questions to Consider

1. How did the radically different natures of the United States and the Soviet Union influence American and Soviet thinking about nuclear weapons?

2. Did nuclear deterrence work in the Cold War? If so, will it work on powers with small nuclear arsenals, such as North Korea, China, and possibly, Iran?

Mao Tse-tung in Theory and Practice

Lecture 19

Mao Tse-tung is unique among our masters for the scale of his own political and military achievements. In the course of the Chinese Civil War, Mao led the Chinese Communists back from abject defeat in the mid-1930s to the military conquest of most of China in 1949. His success is largely explained by his theory of insurgent war and his ability to put it into practice. In this lecture, we'll examine that theory and see it in action in the Chinese Civil War. We'll also discuss why Mao's theories are still viewed as relevant by insurgents and counterinsurgents alike.

Background on Mao

- Mao was born into a modestly prosperous peasant family in 1893 and first exposed to Marxist-Leninist thought at Peking University. In 1921, Mao attended the founding meeting of the Chinese Communist Party and later joined the Kuomintang, or Chinese Nationalist Party, as part of the First United Front.

- In 1927, the United Front collapsed, and Chiang Kai-shek ordered a purge of Communists from within his Nationalist Party. Mao was ordered by the central Communist Party to lead an uprising against the Nationalists in Hunan, but it failed, and Mao was forced to seek refuge in the countryside. Mao and a few remnants of the shattered Chinese Communist Party ultimately established a base area in the mountains of Jiangxi Province.

- The Communists were eventually forced out of Jiangxi and onto the Long March, which brought them to the even more remote and barren environs of Yenan. There, Mao began to write at length about strategies in China's revolutionary war.
    - He embraced the Marxist idea that all socioeconomic systems throughout history contained within themselves the seeds of their own destruction.

- At the same time, he was profoundly Leninist in his emphasis on the need for a disciplined and ideologically pure party to lead the revolution and to prevent the movement from losing focus.

- At the beginning of Mao's career, China was still semi-feudal. By Marxist orthodoxy, it was not yet ready for socialism or communism. But Mao argued that the contradictions in the Chinese socioeconomic system were sufficiently explosive that a Communist-led revolution would speed China through Marx's phases of history.

"On Protracted War"

- Mao's essay "On Protracted War" lays out a three-phase formula for revolutionary warfare: (1) strategic defense, (2) strategic stalemate, and (3) strategic counteroffensive. As a good Marxist and a good student of Clausewitzian interaction, Mao emphasizes the dialectics of each phase, in other words, the balance and interaction between the two belligerents.

- In the first phase, strategic defense, the invader or the counterrevolutionary is on the offensive and the insurgent is on the defensive.
  - But Mao's first phase is not just an operational defensive. It is designed to lure the enemy past its culminating point of attack, at which point, small insurgent bands can overwhelm overextended and isolated enemy units.

  - These small offensives within the larger strategic defense are an important source of arms and ammunition. They are also designed to push the population toward more active support of the revolutionary movement.

- In the second phase, strategic stalemate, the enemy has essentially ceded large swaths of territory, and the insurgency moves from relying on the generosity of the population to building a government to lead the population. At the same time, the army is gaining in competence and continuing to capture supplies and weapons.

- Ideally, the third phase, strategic counteroffensive, is the shortest phase of a protracted war. The rebels have the manpower, materiel, and training necessary to meet the enemy in a conventional campaign. Ultimately, the conventional defeat of the counterrevolutionary army in the field compounds the internal weaknesses of the now-hollow regime and convinces its allies to abandon it.

- Note that "On Protracted War" actually relates to two distinct struggles: the war of national liberation against the Japanese and the revolutionary war against Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Party. This is particularly relevant to phase III, because the scale of the final counteroffensive will vary depending on whether the rebels are dealing with a foreign occupier or an indigenous government.
    - The value of the object, that is, maintaining power over occupied territory, will likely be lower for a foreign invader. An indigenous government will probably value its hold of national territory much more highly and will be much more strategically focused on suppressing the revolution within.

    - A single offensive victory might be sufficient to convince a foreign power that the costs of the war have exceeded the value of the object. But when it comes to overthrowing the national government, a series of offensive campaigns will be needed.

- Phase III is certainly appealing in theory, but it is a challenge to implement in practice. A premature leap into a strategic counteroffensive may actually play to the strengths of the incumbent regime. Mao was aware of this problem, and his answer was for the rebels to fall back on a robust phase II or even phase I.

Mao on Civil-Military Relations

- On the subject of civil-military relations, Mao takes Clausewitz's subordination of the military to the political to an extreme. In a revolutionary war, everything the military does has political ramifications; thus, political oversight must be highly invasive.

- Ultimately, maintaining absolute subordination of the military is essential to winning the war against what Mao calls the "enemies with guns," as well as consolidating the revolution against the "enemies without guns" (the secret counterrevolutionaries).

Mao in Practice

- The Chinese Civil War breaks down into three fairly clear phases, but Mao's elegant script is much more messy and contingent in practice than in theory.

- Phase I corresponds to the period from 1927–1937, with Chiang Kai-shek on the offensive and the Chinese Communists on the defense. Following the demolition of the urban base of the Communist Party in 1927, the remnants fell back to isolated base areas in the hinterland, the largest and best organized of which was in Jiangxi Province.
    - Over the next six years, the Communists in Jiangxi gradually expanded that base and were able to occupy towns and some small cities. At the same time, they experimented with different approaches to land and social reform, and Mao cobbled together a modest military force that he called the Red Army.

    - In 1933–1934, Chiang Kai-shek encircled and strangled the Communists' base in Jiangxi, forcing them to break out and undertake the Long March. Chiang tried to repeat the encirclement strategy at the Communists' new refuge in northwest China, but most of his accomplishments were undone by the Japanese invasion in 1937.

- The outset of phase II is marked by the Japanese invasion, which provided some relief for the Communists, allowing them to build more base areas and sell themselves as fighting a foreign invader. In reality, after 1941, neither the Japanese nor Chiang Kai-shek could muster enough energy to oust the Communists from their bases.

- When Japan surrendered in 1945, the Communists were far stronger than they had been in the 1930s and had a higher domestic and international profile.

- They were, however, still at a significant disadvantage relative to the Nationalists. The territory they controlled was desolate and remote, and they faced desperate shortages of weapons, tanks, and trucks.

- By 1947, the Communists, now armed with captured Japanese and American weapons and supplied by the Soviet Union, transitioned to phase III. By late 1948, 600,000 Red Army troops fought an equal number of Nationalist troops for a critical railway junction in Anhui Province.
  - In a battle that lasted more than two months, the Communists achieved victory through mechanized maneuver warfare and their new mastery of artillery. By the end of January 1949, Chiang Kai-shek had lost all of North China to the Communists.

  - On October 1, 1949, Mao proclaimed the founding of the People's Republic of China.

The Three Phases in Manchuria

- In 1945, both Chiang and Mao took a huge gamble and committed significant forces to Manchuria. In the short term, the gamble didn't pay off for Mao.

- Essentially, the Communists rushed into a premature phase II in Manchuria, trying to seize and govern three provinces. Chiang Kai-shek capitalized on their overextension and drove them back into a combination of phase I in southern Manchuria and phase II in some parts of the north.

- In the process, however, Chiang became overextended. By early 1947, the Nationalists were past their culminating point of attack, but Chiang could not accept the political risks of ceding territory.

The Communists were able to gradually wear down isolated garrisons and seize their weapons and vehicles.

- This sounds like a classic transition from phase I to phase II, but the Communists didn't have time to win the loyalty of the population. Instead, they conducted a systematic campaign of mass murder to terrorize the people into support.

- Backed up by the ruthless exploitation of the people and enabled by unprecedented levels of manpower and materiel, Mao's Red Army leapt into phase III.

- In 1948, the Communists completed the conquest of Manchuria and threw their full strength into the conquest of those areas south of the Great Wall. At this point, they could claim the political legitimacy they had lacked as rural guerillas.

- Mao's three phases worked in Manchuria, but the conditions there may well have been too ideal to repeat. Manchuria thus represents a problematic proof of Mao's theory.

Mao's Legacy

- In his youth, Mao had envisioned the Communist Party's role as harnessing a whirlwind of popular dissatisfaction. By 1948–1949, after 20 years of brutal struggle, the only way Mao could defeat the Nationalists was by shifting to a systematic campaign to exploit the peasant masses.

- This is Clausewitz's trinity in the making. Mao saw that the use of violence by the party could mobilize the passions of the people. Popular passion and support would strengthen the party but also give it the military means to contend with the Nationalists in the realm of chance and probability. By dominating that realm militarily, Mao defeated his enemies and achieved his ultimate political purpose.

- Mao's stunning victory in China made him something of an icon among communists in the developing world. By the 1950s, insurgent leaders were hungrily devouring Mao's writings, and China was sending aid and advisors to movements around the globe.

- But Mao's legacy goes far beyond the Cold War. From the Shining Path in Peru in the 1980s and 1990s to the communist movement that took power in Nepal in 2008, Mao's prescriptions for revolution have maintained their appeal and their apparent effectiveness.

Suggested Reading

Beckett, "Mao Tse-tung and Revolutionary Warfare."

Mao Tse-tung, "On Protracted War."

Marks, ed., *Maoist Insurgency since Vietnam*.

Questions to Consider

1. What are Mao's three phases? What is the critical vulnerability of each phase?

2. Is Mao more of a Sunzian or a Clausewitzian?

Classics of Counterinsurgency

Lecture 20

The wave of insurgencies that erupted in the 1950s and 1960s forced many political and military leaders to develop responses to Mao's theory of revolutionary war. While the British, French, and Americans all experimented with a range of strategies, it was not until the early 1960s that these experiences were codified in theory. Of the early treatises on counterinsurgency, those by David Galula and Roger Trinquier, both seasoned military professionals with experience in the Algerian War, have proven enduring and influential, especially in the context of America's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Background on Algeria

- Algeria had been conquered in the 1830s and incorporated into metropolitan France soon after; as such, Algeria wasn't considered a colony but an integral part of France.

- In the 1950s, small cells of Algerian nationalists began an insurgency to overturn French rule and to release the grip of the European settlers, known in Algeria as the *pieds noirs*.

- By 1954, Paris was confronted by a major nationalist rebellion led by the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN).
  - This rebellion was an expression of the grievances of a native Algerian population long denied full citizenship and economic opportunity.

  - Much of the FLN effort was concentrated in the cities along the Mediterranean coast, where the nationalist forces conducted a campaign of terrorism.

- The French were initially united in their opposition to Algerian independence, and the French government deployed more than 400,000 troops to Algeria.

- Starting in Algiers, the French tried to crush the FLN using a mixture of population control, psychological operations, resettlement, and intensive military operations.

- But when the harsh methods of the elite French paratrooper units (*paras*) became publicly known, the legitimacy of France's claims over Algeria came into question.

- The situation in Algeria, especially in Algiers, was further complicated by the *pieds noirs* and their allies in the French military and Algerian government.
  - The *pieds noirs* declared their own war against the FLN and were even less restrained than the *paras* in their tactics.

  - Further, the *pieds noirs* were willing to retaliate against the government and the military when it looked as if French policy was softening toward Algerian independence. The situation devolved into a multidimensional civil war.

- Despite impressive military successes in the period from 1957–1960, the French president, Charles de Gaulle, came to the conclusion that the value of retaining Algeria was not equal to the projected costs in blood, treasure, and French prestige. In the early 1960s, de Gaulle opened negotiations with the FLN, and Algeria gained its independence.

David Galula

- In the mid-1950s, David Galula was a company commander in the rural Kabylie region of northern Algeria. He later became a research fellow at Harvard and was in high demand at the RAND Corporation, where his works were translated into English for an American audience contemplating a major U.S. commitment to Vietnam.

- Galula's theoretical observations on counterinsurgency derived from his own professional experience, as well as his reading of military history and strategic theory. His operational memoir, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956–1958*, offers unflinching criticism of his colleagues in

the French army, who relied on counterproductive military solutions to what he understood to be essentially a political problem.

- According to Galula, to wage a successful counterinsurgency, it's necessary to embrace Mao's demolition of the distinction between the political and the military. In other words, in counterinsurgency, all military actions have political implications and vice versa.

- That realization led Galula to the conclusion that the "essence [of counterinsurgency] can be summed up in a single sentence: Build (or rebuild) a political machine from the population upward." Because a Maoist first phase hinges on the population giving material support to the guerillas, the key for the counterinsurgent is controlling the population, not controlling territory.
    - Popular support for either the insurgent or the counterinsurgent is rarely spontaneous or overwhelming, but the insurgent desperately needs material support from the people, while the counterinsurgent needs local allies.

    - In rural Algeria, the French were the outsiders. They needed a local ally to help them win over the population or at least to deny popular support to the insurgency.

    - Such allies are gained through "clear-hold-build" operations, that is, finding and eliminating insurgents, protecting the local population, and rebuilding the infrastructure.

    - In Galula's scheme, once one base of popular support is cleared, held, and rebuilt, the process is repeated in progressively larger areas. The fact that the counterinsurgent has more military power and more resources than the insurgent means that the general population gradually moves from passivity to active support of the counterinsurgency.

    - When that level of popular support is achieved, the counterinsurgent can then move into areas of the country

where the insurgency is in a Maoist phase II, trying to hold and govern territory.

- Galula attacks the vulnerabilities of Mao's phase I and phase II to deny the insurgents the ability to progress to the decisive phase III. His solution demands a massive and sustained commitment in time, treasure, and troops, as well as a firm hand to command local respect and reassure local allies of the seriousness of the counterinsurgents.

Roger Trinquier

- Roger Trinquier served in Indochina in the mid-1930s and for 10 years in China. He brought a wealth of insurgency and counterinsurgency experience with the Viet Minh to his assignment in Algeria.

- According to Trinquier, modern war is fundamentally different from traditional war; it is "an interlocking system of actions—political, economic, psychological, military—that aims at the overthrow of the established authority in a country and its replacement by another regime." His fellow officers, however, failed to recognize this change and instead insisted on waging traditional war.

- Trinquier argued that the center of gravity of an insurgency is not the army of the enemy or even the population; it is the "armed clandestine organization" that is trying to impose its will on the population. Modern wars are wars of subversion, not wars of conventional arms. The goal of the counterinsurgent is, therefore, complete destruction of the clandestine organization.

- The problem with urban counterinsurgency is that the enemy can readily hide within the civilian population and exploit the illusion of civil law and order, what Trinquier called the "fiction of peace." The insurgents exploit the fiction of peace to cover the fact that they are waging a war and to prevent the government from responding appropriately. The crisis in Algiers was not a law enforcement problem; it was a war.

The Crisis in Algiers

- Algiers in 1956 was a city of nearly a million people and the political and cultural center of French Algeria. As such, the city was overwhelmingly pro-French. If the FLN were to achieve independence, then French control of Algiers had to be shaken.

- In the heart of Algiers was the Casbah, a densely packed neighborhood of some 80,000 Muslim Algerians. The 1,500-man Algiers command of the FLN enmeshed its clandestine organization within the fabric of the Casbah, from which it could reach out and launch acts of terrorism on the various European districts of the city.

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The FLN's campaign of terrorism and murder in Algiers was designed to jumpstart a revolution and strike directly at the heart of French control.

- As intelligence chief and second-in-command of the elite 10th Paratrooper Division in Algiers, Trinquier understood that he had to pierce the veil of the Casbah to get the upper hand over the FLN. Ordinarily, that task would have fallen to the city's police force, but Trinquier assessed that the police in Algiers were not up to the task.

- The French declared martial law in Algiers, creating what Trinquier considered the necessary preconditions for a successful urban counterinsurgency. French *paras* conducted aggressive and highly militarized sweeps of the Casbah, summarily executed insurgents, and used torture to gain intelligence and build a picture of the leadership structure of the FLN.
    - Trinquier knew that torture violates the traditional laws of war, but in his view, it is a necessary evil to combat a war of subversion. French torture was perceived to be so effective that no one in the membership of the FLN could resist.

- The use of torture made an already nervous and highly suspicious FLN see potential French spies everywhere. An added benefit was that the paired threats of indiscriminate sweeps and torture induced many Algerians to spontaneously inform on the FLN.

- Because of his views on torture, Trinquier is not mentioned in the U.S. Army's *Counterinsurgency* field manual, but many elements of his theory are included there in spirit, in particular, his methods for controlling the population and dismantling the insurgent command structure.

- In the end, Trinquier's injunctions on how to fight and win a modern war seem vindicated by the results of the Battle of Algiers. By the summer of 1957, the FLN's Algiers command and control structure was in ruins and its senior leadership was either dead or cooperating with the French.

- At the same time, the national and international blowback that followed the revelations of *para* methods undermined the legitimacy of French rule in Algeria and toppled the government of the Fourth Republic.

The French Defeat as a U.S. Model?

- The U.S. military looked at the Algerian War as a model for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan because Algeria offered many elements present in those conflicts: a mix of urban and rural theaters, religious and nationalistic motivations, and the successful use of terrorism by an insurgency.

- On the counterinsurgency side, the Algerian War shows us a highly professional but largely conventional French military struggling to respond to a radically different type of war and being called on to perform the functions of both a civilian government and a military occupation.

- Further, Algeria lets us explore the problematic nature of employing tactical and operational expedients, such as torture, forced resettlement, and counterterror, which may enable military success but can also have significant strategic and political blowback.

- It remains to be seen whether a counterinsurgency doctrine based explicitly on the French model of Algeria—a war characterized by the counterinsurgent's use of torture, racial profiling, and extrajudicial executions—makes good political sense in the context of the global war on terror.

Suggested Reading

Aussaresses, *The Battle of the Casbah*.

Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare*.

———, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956–1958*.

Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*.

Pontecorvo (director), *The Battle of Algiers* (film).

Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*.

U.S. Army, *Counterinsurgency* (FM 3-24).

Questions to Consider

1. What are the core elements of Galula's and Trinquier's theories of counterinsurgency?

2. Why is it so difficult for counterinsurgents to translate their military superiority into their desired political outcome—the restoration of a stable political order?

Just-War Theory

Lecture 21

Questions regarding the morality of war are as old as war itself, and all serious scholars and practitioners of war need to take such issues into account. This is why just-war doctrine—which has grown out of centuries-old religious and secular writings concerning the morality of war—is an important part of the curriculum at military academies, war colleges, and security studies programs and an invaluable complement to our study of the classics of strategic theory. In fact, as we'll see in this lecture, the language and principles of just-war theory have become pervasive and inescapable in the study and conduct of warfare.

An Ancient Tradition

- In *The City of God*, St. Augustine addressed a fundamental paradox of the western Roman Empire: It was a Christian state committed to peace, but it was also a territorial entity beset by enemies. To Augustine, Christians could be pacifists as individuals, but a Christian state required a legitimate recourse to war. In wrestling with this paradox, Augustine laid the foundations for *jus ad bellum*, the just recourse to war.

- In his *Summa theologica*, Thomas Aquinas expanded on Augustine to resolve some of the lingering questions about morality and war. For a war to be just, Aquinas argued, it had to meet three criteria: (1) The decision for war must be exclusively reserved to the ruler; (2) war must be fought for a just cause and to reestablish justice; (3) the intentions of the ruler in going to war, not merely the rationale for war, must be just.

- Hugo Grotius, a 17th-century Dutch jurist, began the process of translating just-war theory into modern international law. Among his most important contributions was advancing the rules that govern *jus in bello*, the just conduct of war.

- The contemporary scholar Brian Orend has proposed a third category within just-war theory: *jus post bellum*, the just termination of war.

Jus ad bellum

- The lynchpin of *jus ad bellum* is that war is waged for a just cause—for example, to right a wrong, resist aggression, or defend the innocent.

- The second criterion of *jus ad bellum* is right intention, meaning that a belligerent must be sincere in its claims to seek justice and right wrongs.

- The third criterion stresses that only the proper authorities of a sovereign state may declare war and that the declaration must be made public.

For the 17th-century Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius, as much as the justness of the cause matters, so too does the justness with which states wage war.

- The fourth criterion is that war must be a last resort; it is justified only when all other peaceful means have been exhausted.

- The fifth criterion posits that a just war must stand a reasonable chance of success. Committing national suicide, even in the pursuit of a just cause, is not just.

- The last criterion of *jus ad bellum* is proportionality. The inevitable costs in death and destruction that a belligerent is likely to inflict and to suffer must be proportional to the magnitude of the injustice being rectified.

- The concepts and vocabulary of *jus ad bellum* are deeply entrenched in international law, in the teachings of the Catholic Church, and in the charter of the United Nations.

Jus in bello

- *Jus in bello* concerns the actions that a belligerent takes in war itself. These standards are codified in international conventions, such as The Hague and Geneva conventions. Deviation from these strictures makes even the most justifiable wars immoral.

- The first key principle of *jus in bello* is that military operations must distinguish between combatants and noncombatants and, to the greatest extent possible, minimize noncombatant casualties.

- The second principle is that military actions cannot be disproportionately costly relative to the military value of the target being attacked. This involves an assessment of the likely costs suffered by both sides.

- Third, operations must be guided by military necessity, targets must be legitimate military targets, and their destruction or capture must contribute measurably to the military defeat of the enemy.

- Fourth, prisoners of war can no longer be treated as active combatants. They must be looked after humanely and repatriated at the earliest possible moment.

- Finally, no means may be used in war that are *mala in se*, that is, evil in and of themselves. This includes rape, torture, the recruitment of children, collective reprisals, and the use of any technology that is by its nature indiscriminate, especially weapons of mass destruction.

- In addition to the standards covering military operations, some just-war scholars argue that a state at war should not infringe on the rights of its own population. Internment of suspect minorities, press censorship, and the suspension of elections and legal rights may all call into question the just conduct of a war.

Jus post bellum

- As mentioned earlier, *jus post bellum*, the just end of war, is a relatively new idea, but we can still identify several characteristics of a just peace.

- First, a just war, justly waged, is justly won only if the terms of the peace vindicate the original grievances. In other words, the peace doesn't simply restore the status quo ante but establishes a better and more just state of peace.

- The demands of the victors must be proportional in a just peace. They must not be excessively punitive relative to the injustice that was the cause of the war.

- Further, peace terms must distinguish between soldiers and civilians and between the government and the population. The weight of the punishment must fall on the decision-makers, not the people.

- A just peace also includes fair systems of compensation. The victims of aggression might have their losses made good. This is often at the discretion of the victor, who may choose to forgo reparations.

- Fair and public trials must be held for the senior leaders who violated *jus ad bellum* and for the military commanders who violated *jus in bello*.

- Finally, a victor may bear a heavy responsibility to rehabilitate a defeated foe and rebuild its institutions of government.

***Jus ad bellum* in Iraq**

- In 2003, President Bush asserted that the war in Iraq was a just cause. His rationale was twofold: first, self-defense against the possibility of an attack by Iraq and, second, the illegitimacy and brutality of Saddam Hussein's regime.

- Bush also claimed that the United States and its allies had right intentions. In his address to the American people on the first night of the war, the president said, "We have no ambition in Iraq, except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people."

- The president made these justifications public and believed he had proper authority as elected representative of the American people. He also had the consent of Congress and international support. On the other hand, the lack of a final UN resolution meant that Bush's rhetorical position was not unassailable.

- War against Iraq was claimed as a last resort. Bush offered Hussein and his two sons a 48-hour window to leave Iraq and prevent a war, thus shifting the moral burden for the war to the Iraqi leader.

- Proportionality and the probability of success were bound up in the war plan that applied "decisive force" and would "not be a campaign of half measures." But it was also a plan that targeted the regime, not the population.

***Jus in bello* in Iraq**

- Regarding *jus in bello*, Bush's speech at Camp Lejeune in 2003 noted that the standard operating procedures of the Iraqi military were *mala in se*, but the liberators did not sink to those depths.

- American and allied troops treated civilians kindly, tried to spare noncombatants from harm, and showed respect to soldiers who surrendered. They were also careful to distinguish between soldiers and civilians. For example, the extensive use of precision guided munitions was intended to satisfy proportionality and to limit civilian casualties.

- Target selection in Operation Iraqi Freedom was also based on the *jus in bello* standard of military necessity.

- The incredible performance of the allied military forces in March and April 2003 set a new standard for abiding by the stringent requirements of *jus in bello*.

***Jus post bellum* in Iraq**

- It is easy to find fault with the planning and execution of the post-combat phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom, but the Bush administration did pay significant attention to many of the criteria of *jus post bellum* in the lead-up to the war.

- As we said, the peace terms that conclude a just war should establish better conditions than those that existed prior to the conflict, and for President Bush, the status quo ante was unacceptable. The key rationale and goal of the war was to replace Hussein's regime with a democratic Iraq, but that set the bar of expectations and postwar responsibilities high.

- Nonetheless, when it became clear that Hussein had lost hold of the reins of power, President Bush made a public declaration that the aims of the war had been accomplished. The United States and Great Britain claimed the authority of occupying powers in accordance with international laws and conventions.

- Again, although critical elements of postwar planning were lacking, the administration had made extensive preparations for near-term humanitarian crises, such as famine and a crush of refugees.

- During the occupation, the Coalition Provisional Authority tried to discriminate in its pursuit of the Iraqi leadership. The subsequent decisions to disband the Iraqi army and purge all Ba'athists from the government were further attempts to hold only a portion of the population responsible and to reform dysfunctional institutions.

- The United States did not seek compensation for itself or its allies, and although it held international criminal tribunals, it urged the new Iraqi government to publicly try Hussein and his inner circle.

- The jury is still out on how well the United States and its allies met the *jus post bellum* criteria in Iraq, but the standards were clearly considered.

The Moral Element in Strategy

- Many of the strategists we have talked about in this course have been rightly obsessed with maximizing efficiency and effectiveness in war. In contrast, abiding by just-war principles is decidedly inefficient.

- Furthermore, in making the just-war argument, a state runs the risk of ceding the moral high ground to its critics and opponents. No state can possibly meet all of the just-war criteria, and any failure threatens to undermine the moral legitimacy of the entire war.

- Despite these persistent problems, the efforts of the Bush administration to meet the just-war standards in Operation Iraqi Freedom reveal just how deeply these concepts are ingrained in 21st-century military strategy.

Suggested Reading

Orend, *The Morality of War*.

Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*.

Questions to Consider

1. What are the three aspects of just-war doctrine?

2. Which just-war strictures are the most difficult to satisfy? Was Operation Iraqi Freedom a just war?

Terrorism as Strategy

Lecture 22

Horrific though it may sound, there is an undeniable strategic logic to terrorism. In fact, terrorism might be the most strategic of all instruments of war. The tactical or operational significance of most terrorist acts is inconsequential, but their psychological impact can be enormous. In this lecture, we'll look at a model for objectively and strategically understanding terrorism and for measuring the likelihood that a terrorist movement will achieve its political objectives. We'll then use this model to explain how the Irish Republican Army was able to achieve partial Irish independence in the 1920s.

Defining Terrorism

- The first element of a definition of terrorism is that it is a tool used by political movements, primarily non-state actors.

- The second defining characteristic is that these political movements are weak; they seek strategic and political effects that are completely out of proportion both to their political legitimacy and to their relative economic and military strength.

- Finally, these movements must make direct and explicit connections between their acts of terrorism and their desired strategic and political effects.

Terrorism as Theater

- The five audiences model is premised on the idea that terrorism is first and foremost a form of political theater. Terrorists try to influence five audiences: (1) the incumbent government, (2) constituent population, (3) nonconstituent population, (4) members of the terrorist organization itself, and (5) international public opinion.

- Terrorist strategy is a matter of planning and executing attacks to elicit the desired responses from each targeted audience. The additional challenge or advantage is that individual acts will affect different audiences in different ways. Because they affect multiple audiences simultaneously, individual terrorist acts can be highly cost effective.

- The chances that a terrorist movement will succeed hinge on how well its acts of violence are crafted to have the desired effects on the five audiences and on favorable conditions in the general operating environment.

The Five Audiences

- With the incumbent government as an audience, terrorist attacks can have psychological, political, and practical effects. For example, an attack may be designed to paralyze a government to make it look weak in the eyes of other audiences, force incumbent leaders to make political concessions, or create some practical operating room for the terrorist movement.

- Within the constituent population, a terrorist movement seeks to narrow the range of identity choices so that the only identity available is the one the movement chooses for members of its natural constituency. Attacks here may threaten individuals directly or those with similar identities, or they may be designed to induce the government to launch an indiscriminate counterterrorism campaign.

- With regard to the nonconstituent population, terrorists seek to induce horror with the aim of making nonconstituents critical of the government or making them pressure the government to accede to terrorist demands.

- Successful terrorist attacks can also motivate or intimidate the rank and file of the terrorist movement itself. Threats of reprisals and demonstration killings of traitors keep the membership in line.

- From the fifth audience, international public opinion, terrorists seek to solicit support, both material and moral. The aim here is to get the international community to condemn the actions of the incumbent government.

The Anglo-Irish War of 1919–1921

- The story of the Anglo-Irish War begins in 1916 with the so-called Easter Rising, a badly planned revolt launched by Irish nationalists in central Dublin. Not only did the rising fail to spark a nationwide rebellion, but the actions of the rebels horrified the majority of their natural constituency.

- In the aftermath of the rising, the British placed hundreds of participants in a largely self-policing prison camp at Frongoch in Wales. There, the prisoners held lectures and seminars on the theory and practice of insurgency. The smartest "graduate" of Frongoch was Michael Collins.

- In late 1918, Collins ran on the Sinn Féin ticket and won election to the House of Commons. But Collins and the other 73 Sinn Féin candidates who had won seats refused to be seated in the British Parliament. Instead, they formed an Irish Parliament, proclaimed an Irish Republic, and declared war on Britain.

- Over the next two years, Collins served as the chief financier, chief intelligence officer, and a chief strategist for the Irish Republic. At the end of the war, he served as the lead negotiator with the British government, accepting a compromise settlement that left the six counties of Ulster under British control.

Collins and the Five Audiences

- In dealing with the incumbent government—the British—Collins knew that Ireland was too politically and strategically valuable for London to give it up without a fight. He also knew that the British had essentially two means of holding on to Ireland, civilian governance and military occupation.

- London was unlikely to opt for military occupation at first because that would legitimize Sinn Féin. By standing up as a republican government and a republican army, Sinn Féin was claiming sovereignty and legitimacy that were out of all proportion to its actual power.

- If the British rose to that bait and either declared war or opted for a highly militarized response, they would have tacitly accepted the Irish claims of statehood.

- Collins recognized that the most effective counterintelligence unit the British had was civilian law enforcement, the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) and the Dublin Metropolitan Police (DMP).
  - The Irish police were well staffed, well resourced, and highly professional and had both English and Irish officers with local knowledge and sources within Sinn Féin's constituent population. In terms of both manpower and assets, the police had the upper hand in the intelligence battle. Collins was out to shift that balance and to attack the British strategy by declaring war on the police.

  - In 1919, Collins set up the Squad, also known as the Twelve Apostles. The Squad set about intimidating and murdering the most effective officers in the DMP and RIC and murdering civilians who cooperated with the police. This campaign of terror gave the IRA operating room in Dublin.

  - Collins also recruited agents inside the police to alert him to counterintelligence operations and police spies within his own camp.

  - By incapacitating the intelligence service, denying it new Irish recruits, and infiltrating the organization with IRA agents, Collins undermined London's faith in the police force and denied intelligence-intensive solutions to the Irish problem. Collins's victory in the intelligence war left the British with only coercive and indiscriminate options.

- In 1920, the British began beefing up the ranks of the RIC and DMP with "auxiliaries" recruited from English, Scots, and Welsh veterans of the Great War. Unfamiliar with police work and hostile to the Irish, these auxiliaries became famous for their indiscriminate attacks on innocents in the name of flushing out the IRA.

- Across the board, the Squad succeeded in having precisely the effect Collins wanted on the British government: It forced the British into a cycle of violence and induced them to militarize the conflict.

- Collins was also sensitive to the nonconstituent population as an audience, especially the people back in England. He wanted to calibrate the terrorism campaign to keep this population largely neutral or critical of the British conduct of the war.
  - The nonconstituent population in Ireland, however, was another matter. The Ulstermen presented a tactical and operational problem, especially with their private army and their attacks on the IRA and Sinn Féin members.

  - But the excesses of the Ulstermen were a strategic asset that drove neutral Irishmen closer to Sinn Féin and tarnished the image of British rule.

- With regard to the constituent population, Collins was brilliant and brutal. He tolerated neutrality among the constituent population but tried to overcome it with an aggressive propaganda campaign. Pro-British sympathies and active support for British rule, however, were not tolerated; Irish "collaborators" were murdered.

- Collins was equally strategic when it came to the rank-and-file members of the IRA itself. He worked hard to keep morale up and advertised the exploits of the Squad to highlight IRA successes. He also made sure that traitors within the IRA were rooted out and dealt with summarily and publicly.

- As to the last audience, international public opinion, there, the IRA did not have to work too hard. Sinn Féin had a large and loyal constituency in the United States, and Woodrow Wilson's call for national self-determination made the international environment even more favorable to the Irish cause.

The IRA and al-Qaeda

- Before making a comparison between the IRA and al-Qaeda, it's important to look at the context in which Collins was operating.
    - Collins's adversary, the incumbent government, was weary and distracted. It was fresh out of a costly and protracted war but still enmeshed in a number of small wars and imperial policing operations.

    - The British people were also weary, distracted, and conflicted about the Irish crisis. Meanwhile, the nonconstituent population of Ulster, like the British government, proved to be a highly cooperative adversary, basically acceding to Collins's strategic script.

    - Sinn Féin offered a political objective—an Irish republic—that had wide appeal to a large natural constituency in Ireland.

    - The rank and file of the IRA was smart, motivated, well informed, and well led. Their institution was also highly resistant to penetration by counterintelligence.

    - Finally, the sympathies of a major foreign power, the United States, were with the cause of Irish independence.

- We can note some parallels and differences with the global war on terror.
    - The United States may be tired, cash-strapped, and distracted, but its situation is nowhere close to that of Britain in 1920.

    - The nonconstituent population, the vast majority of Muslims that do not ascribe to bin Laden's vision, are implacably hostile

As Americans learned on September 11, 2001, small groups of terrorists can temporarily paralyze advanced societies, but in the near term, these movements will likely be unable to radically alter the global balance of power.

to al-Qaeda. The natural constituency of al-Qaeda is actually a very narrow subgroup of Sunni Islam.

- Some rank-and-file members of al-Qaeda have been frighteningly impressive, especially the perpetrators of the September 11 attacks, but post–9/11, al-Qaeda is not nearly as impressive or disciplined and, like all terrorist groups, is prone to infighting and implosion.

- Finally, with the exception of certain military and intelligence services in a few countries, international public opinion is also hostile to al-Qaeda.

- It's not the case that terrorists and strategies of terrorism are a thing of the past, but in the near term, these movements are unlikely to enjoy conditions that are sufficiently favorable to allow them to radically alter the regional or global balance of power.

Suggested Reading

Crenshaw, "The Logic of Terrorism."

Gray, "The Anglo-Irish War, 1919–21."

National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report.*

Townshend, *The British Campaign in Ireland, 1919–1921*.

Questions to Consider

1. Describe the five audiences of terrorism.

2. What were Michael Collins's greatest strengths as a strategist? Can al-Qaeda replicate the success of the IRA/Sinn Féin?

Strategies of Counterterrorism

Lecture 23

In the last lecture, we looked at terrorism as a strategy for accomplishing specific political objectives, but in this lecture, we ask: What are the theories of counterterrorism? When we set out to answer this question, we're likely to find a number of grand and fairly ambiguous policy objectives, as well as counterterrorist tactics, techniques, and technologies, but little in the way of counterterrorism strategy. Further, there seems to be an analytical gulf between the tactics of counterterror and their larger political purpose. Fortunately, we don't have to reinvent the wheel when it comes to thinking strategically about counterterrorism; we can turn to our strategic masters.

Unique Challenges of Counterterrorism Strategy

- Whatever the counterterrorist does along the spectrum from capitulation and political concession to mass retaliation and militarization will invariably result in negative repercussions.

- Suppose we start at one end of the spectrum, with an incumbent government simply ignoring a terrorist problem and hoping it goes away. In that case, the government has ceded the struggle and the initiative to the terrorists.

- Moving a little further along the spectrum, the incumbent government might decide to accede to a terrorist demand, for example, to grant some concession by freeing a group of political prisoners or rescinding some odious decree. This action means that the government has bent to intimidation; any concessions prove that terrorism works, serve as an admission that the government is wrong, and embolden terrorists.

- Moving from concessions to the use of law enforcement, we've seen that this option is often reactive—law enforcement can't do much until an act is perpetrated. Further, because police officers are often lightly armed, they are relatively easy to outgun and intimidate.

- If the terrorist movement has a loyal constituency, then law enforcement will find it difficult if not impossible to conduct effective investigations and apprehend perpetrators.

- Local law enforcement may also be too local; it may be more loyal to the terrorist's cause than to the national government.

- If a terrorist is caught and brought to trial, he or she may use the courtroom as a grandstand for advertising the cause, railing against the inequities of the system, and inspiring a new generation of believers. It's also unlikely that law enforcement will catch the leaders of the movement.

- Beefing up the police and the law enforcement response—giving the police better weapons, loosening the rules of engagement, and so on—implies a failure of normal procedures and could result in criticisms related to constitutional rights.

- The next step on the spectrum of counterterrorism options is the paramilitary response: bulking up the police to a greater degree, distancing police officers from legal constraints, and recruiting local allies into paramilitary groups and community policing. The problem here is that such groups are difficult to control and can quickly devolve into vigilantism and rogue behavior.

- The next step is the declaration of martial law, but militarizing the conflict is an admission that civil institutions have failed and may legitimize the terrorists' cause. In addition, military techniques are likely to be disruptive and may drive some constituents into the terrorist camp.

- Finally, at the extreme active end of the counterterrorism spectrum, the government can establish full militarization, including curfews, checkpoints, resettlement, border fences, 24/7 street and air patrols, regular sweep-and-screen operations, and so on. This option might promise the highest level of preemptive security, but the associated

Options for counterterrorist strategy run the spectrum from capitulation and political concession to mass retaliation and militarization.

activities are expensive, are largely indiscriminate, and can alienate domestic and international opinion.

The Five Audiences for Counterterrorism

- Like the terrorist, the actions of the counterterrorist must be crafted toward a range of audiences.

- Given that the counterterrorist is the incumbent government, the counterpart audience for the government is the command and control nexus of the terrorist movement. Actions designed to address this audience might seek to induce a strategic blunder.

- The terrorist's nonconstituent population is the incumbent government's natural constituency. The government might take actions to make this audience feel safer and to enhance its own legitimacy. It might also attempt to prevent this audience from giving material and moral support to the terrorists.

- To address the terrorist's constituent population, the government might consider physically and psychologically isolating its members from the movement and looking for allies within the population.

- The fourth audience is the same for the government and the terrorists: the movement's rank and file. The government's aim here is to shock, terrorize, or demoralize the members. The government may also seek to turn some of them into intelligence assets, to make their leadership look bad, or to induce them to attempt unsanctioned attacks that defy the orders of their superiors.

- Finally, the government must calibrate all its actions under the scrutiny of the fifth audience—international public opinion.

- As politicians and military leaders think about counterterrorism options within this five-audience framework, they need to identify which combination of actions and reactions gives them the greatest chance of achieving their political objectives with the lowest probability of negative strategic and political consequences.

Crime v. War

- Whether terrorism is treated as a law enforcement problem or as a war depends on the context in which it takes place and the capabilities available to address it.

- Terrorism may be treated as a law enforcement issue if robust and capable law enforcement mechanisms are in place, the terrorist movement is vulnerable to disruption and intelligence penetration, and the legal system can handle the unique challenges of a terrorism trial. The operations of the New York City Police Department's counterterrorism unit represent a good example of this approach.

- If, on the other hand, the terrorist network operates largely in ungoverned space, where law enforcement is not robust or might be corrupted, where the terrorists mass in identifiable locations, and where the negative repercussions of military actions are

manageable, then terrorism may be treated as a war. The highly militarized campaign of the Sri Lankan government against the Tamil Tiger terrorist group serves as an example here.

Strategic Counterterrorism Options

- Regardless of how depraved and horrific their acts of terrorism may be, the most dangerous terrorists are the ones who keep these acts subordinate to political purpose. The counterterrorist's response must be even more strategic.

- From the *Sunzi*, one approach might be to attack the terrorists' strategy by refusing to be a cooperative adversary or to attack their alliances to deny them external support. These options require a high degree of intelligence and all five types of spies, especially turned spies.

- If sufficient intelligence isn't available, another approach might be to focus counterterrorist energies on a Jominian or Clausewitzian decisive point. Afghanistan in 2001, where the Taliban and al-Qaeda tried a stand-up fight, and Sri Lanka are probably the best examples of this sort of approach.

- Galula's approach represents another option. Are there ways to resolve longstanding grievances and rebuild political institutions from the population up?

- If Galula's approach is too costly and time consuming, the government might opt for a direct strategy—going after the people, materiel, and money that constitute the enemy's means. Even more direct is to attack the command and control functions of the movement; this was what Trinquier had in mind.

- Alternatively, a counterterrorist might want to consider a more Corbettian approach. This would involve using the incumbent government's greater strategic mobility to open a new theater in the struggle, which might induce the enemy to commit a strategic blunder.

- In thinking about the approaches of our masters of strategy, it becomes apparent that a war on terrorism, like all other wars, requires us to think interactively and jointly.
    - In the Anglo-Irish War, the British were right to rely on law enforcement in Ireland, but the vicious attacks of Collins forced adaptation of that strategy.

    - In terms of joint action, the British were also right at first not to overwhelmingly militarize the crisis in Ireland. The army had a role to play but as an adjunct to law enforcement.

- If a conflict escalates and if the value of the object justifies it, the government might have to migrate from the intelligence-intensive law enforcement end of the spectrum to the firepower-intensive population control end of the spectrum. But as it builds security and institutional capacity, the government may migrate back toward intelligence-intensive operations.

Allies

- There is one constant across the spectrum of counterterrorism responses: allies.

- International allies can bring advantages in capabilities or may provide access to a particular theater. Local allies may offer better local intelligence and the opportunity to be more strategically effective.

- At the same time, and as we have seen repeatedly in the decade since 9/11, both state and sub-state allies can be problematic. They can both expand and limit strategic options. Allies can also embroil the government in regional squabbles and tribal vendettas that divert attention from its policies and strategies.

Political Objectives

- In the end, whatever counterterrorism strategy is chosen, it must serve the government's political objectives.

- Such objectives might be unlimited—complete destruction of the movement and the repudiation of its political aims—or limited—degradation of the movement and no significant alteration in the status quo.

- If both terrorist and counterterrorist have maximalist objectives, then a negotiated settlement is unlikely. But if there is a possibility of convergence, then the approach to counterterrorism should contemplate terminating the war short of the total defeat of the enemy.

- In some circumstances, negotiating with terrorists, as Winston Churchill did in the Anglo-Irish War, may be an option. The government may also choose to make concessions without negotiating to undercut the grievances of the terrorists' constituent population.

- It may even be possible to ignore the actions of a particular terrorist group and hope the group goes away. Some movements are so fringe and isolated that they are not worth government attention.

- Even if a struggle against a terrorist movement is not a war in the strict and legal sense of the term, terrorism and counterterrorism are both means to bend an enemy to one's political will, and as such, both are still amenable to the types of strategic analysis we have seen throughout this course.

Suggested Reading

Dickey, *Securing the City*.

Ganor, *The Counter-Terrorism Puzzle*.

Smith, "Understanding Sri Lanka's Defeat of the Tamil Tigers."

Trinquier, *Modern Warfare*.

Questions to Consider

1. How can counterterrorists avoid blowback with one or more audiences?

2. When is law enforcement an effective counterterrorism strategy? When is military action an effective counterterrorism strategy?

From the Jaws of Defeat—Strategic Adaptation

Lecture 24

In the past 23 lectures, we've covered a great deal of ground, from the hoplites and triremes of ancient Greece, to marines and aircraft carriers in World War II, to nuclear weapons in the Cold War, and terrorism and counterterrorism in the 21st century. Along the way, we have stuck close to our first definition of strategy: the process by which political purpose is translated into military action. In this final lecture, we'll look at the second definition of strategy: a process of adapting, of seizing opportunities in the midst of a war to link unanticipated military opportunities to desired political outcomes.

The Battle of Long Island, August 1776

- In the spring of 1776, after the colonists had driven the British out of Boston, George Washington set his mind to the defense of New York. Based on the lessons of Bunker Hill, Washington assumed that the Continentals could hold their ground against the Redcoats and inflict unacceptable costs on the British.

- In a sense, Washington was predicting how the American Revolution might play out: If he could offer a staunch enough defense of New York, the war might end there, with the British offering terms. But Washington was also guilty of script-writing, that is, assuming that an adversary will act in predictable ways.

- What advice might our masters have offered to Washington?
  - Sun Tzu might have asked him whether he really knew himself, the enemy, and the terrain he would be fighting on.

  - Machiavelli would have admired Washington's citizen-army but warned him about going toe-to-toe with British and Hessian professionals.

- Clausewitz would probably have agreed that the British army was the strategic center of gravity but questioned whether Washington would have enough mass at the decisive point.

- Corbett would have warned him that Britain had complete command of the sea and the strategic mobility that comes with that level of command.

- As it turned out, the British were anything but a cooperative adversary. Washington's 10,000 Continentals and 9,000 militiamen were no match for the huge force of British and Hessians massed in New York.

- Only by a stroke of good fortune was Washington able to evacuate his army from Brooklyn and wage a fighting retreat. The Americans lost two more battles in quick succession, and by December 1776, Washington's army was reduced to about 3,000 men.

- Washington's script for some kind of Jominian or Clausewitzian decisive battle turned out to be a colossal failure. But it was also the turning point of the war, because Washington had the ability to reassess his strategic options and adapt his strategy from one that sought a decisive result in the near term to something more akin to Mao: play for time, wear down the means and will of the enemy, and try to get some outside assistance.

- In the end, Washington's strategic adaptation paid off. His well-executed Fabian strategy, along with luck, great operational and strategic leadership, and French assistance, culminated in the Battle of Yorktown in 1781, where Washington finally achieved the decisive blow that shattered Britain's political will.

- Washington and his aide at the time, Alexander Hamilton, serve as examples to illuminate what the British strategic theorist Colin Gray meant when he said that strategy is the bridge between politics and war. The best strategists from the policy side are conversant in military operations—Pericles, Lincoln, FDR, and Churchill. The

The colonial victory at Yorktown in 1781 represented the culmination of a successful strategic adaptation on the part of George Washington, forced by the Battle of Long Island in August 1776.

best strategists from the military side are conversant in policy—Washington and Hamilton, Ulysses Grant, and Eisenhower.

The Civil-Military Nexus

- In the comparative lecture on Clausewitz and Jomini, we touched on Eliot Cohen's "unequal dialogue," in which, contrary to normal theory, the political leader engages in judicious supervision of war. One of Cohen's archetypes of civilian leadership in war was Abraham Lincoln, a president who relentlessly pestered his military commanders and offered his own operational and sometimes tactical suggestions.

- We saw FDR engaged in unequal dialogue when he overruled General Marshall on Operation Torch. In the end, Torch vindicated the president's strategic opportunism, delivering on everything FDR had argued to justify the decision and more: Hitler committed precious resources to a secondary theater, and the Mediterranean

evolved into a theater of strategic opportunity that opened up another avenue of advance on Axis-dominated Europe.

- In the Pacific War, the Europe-first strategy and the damage wrought at Pearl Harbor demanded strategic adaptation, but there, FDR didn't have to overrule the military. The goal of the offensive-defensive, on which the president and Admiral King agreed, was not merely holding on the defensive but capitalizing on opportunities to weaken Japan by sinking more ships and downing more planes than the Japanese could replace.

- In Korea, the dispute between President Truman and General MacArthur over both political objectives and the means necessary to achieve them represented a breakdown of the civil-military dialogue and threatened a total collapse of the strategy bridge.

- In Vietnam, the military and civilians talked past each other, squandering opportunities for reassessment and adaptation. Our failure there was the result of violating the Clausewitzian maxim of understanding the nature of the war and, in contrast to popular thought, too little civilian oversight.

The Weinberger-Powell Doctrine

- In 1984, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger laid out the argument that the United States should commit to a war only in situations in which its core interests were threatened, the political and military objectives were clear and attainable, military force could be overwhelming and unfettered, the will of the American people was robust, and there would be a clear idea of when victory was achieved. General Colin Powell later expanded on this list of metrics in what has come to be called the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine.

- Such a set a metrics is a good place to start thinking about strategy, but if it becomes a checklist, it can stifle strategic imagination and deny the interactive nature of war. We know, for example, that clear

and attainable military objectives are a good place to start, but no plan survives first contact with the enemy.

- This linear linking of policy, to strategy, to operations, to tactics is the essence of war planning, and it is absolutely critical, but in the end, it is not the entirety of strategy. Policy and strategy must match each other and the context, but the conduct and outcome of any war rarely correspond to what either belligerent predicted.

America's Recent Wars

- Washington, Lincoln, and FDR were all forced to adapt based on the hard realities of their circumstances. In the Iraq War, it took several years of creeping uncertainty about the appropriateness of U.S. strategy before President Bush was forced to reassess and adapt; the result was the "surge."

- The surge wasn't a product of the civil-military dialogue within the administration; it was the brainchild of Fred Kagan, an analyst at the American Enterprise Institute and the son of the Thucydides scholar Donald Kagan. In translating Kagan's strategic vision into operational reality, Bush was able to rely on General David Petraeus.

- In this instance, we see a system at work in engaging the energies of the best and the brightest on both sides of the strategy bridge and forcing reassessment and strategic adaptation in the midst of war.

The Strength of the Strategy Bridge

- The damage to civil-military relations caused by the war in Iraq seems to have resulted in the weakening of "strategy" as a unifying concept between the professional military and senior civilians.
    - The general sense among the military was that the Bush administration ignored military advice and punished those officers who raised concerns about mismatches between political ends and military means. This characterization is not entirely accurate, but it is pervasive.

- The most troubling effect of that may be that new officers, having seen the fate met by their superiors, may now demure on most strategic issues and prefer to limit themselves to their comfort zone: the tactical and operational levels of war.

- At the same time, we might also see the next generation of senior civilians staying in their professional comfort zone and shying away from the messy and contingent business of strategy. In the aftermath of bruising civil-military clashes, the civilians might opt to defer to the military on the application of force.

- This mutual dereliction of duty could be catastrophic, but it seems unlikely. There is a vibrancy of strategic education in the United States. In peacetime, building strategic literacy depends on the three-way dialogue among academics, policymakers, and military officers, and in many ways, that trinity is quite robust.

The Charms of Technology

- Strategy has to adapt to technology, both in terms of new threats and new capabilities, but technology is not likely to transform strategy into a science.

- The embrace of technology and innovative doctrine in America is wonderful, but at the same time, we must avoid assuming that the high-tech instruments used in recent conflicts will provide a formula for winning the next war.
  - As we saw, early air-power theorists made bold predictions about future wars based on scant evidence from World War I that came up conspicuously short.

  - Cyber-war theorists are engaged in a similar kind of prognostication today and may be overselling the technological transformation of war.

- Many of the classics of strategy were written in response to dramatic institutional, social, and technological changes that transformed warfare. The great strategic thinkers appreciated technological and

tactical innovations but were not seduced or blinded by innovation. They were aware of what had changed and knew what had endured.

Summing Up Strategic Thinking

- A close study of the classics of strategic theory overlaid on a foundation of military and political history is rewarding in and of itself. It is also the best way to cultivate those habits of strategic analysis that are most precious for our senior military and civilian decision makers.

- As citizens, understanding classic strategic thought gives us the confidence to become informed and insightful participants in future debates over policy and strategy.

- The ultimate benefit of studying strategic theory lies not in providing pat answers to the questions pondered by politicians, soldiers, and citizens but, rather, in equipping us all with habits of critical thought that allow us to turn a clear eye on the infinite complexity of our current and future struggles.

Suggested Reading

Fischer, *Washington's Crossing*.

Gray, *Fighting Talk*.

International Security (journal).

Journal of Strategic Studies.

McPherson, *Tried by War*.

Questions to Consider

1. Has "strategy" lost its meaning?

2. Which two or three masters of strategy should the president of the United States keep on his nightstand? Why? Which two or three masters should the president of China keep on his nightstand? Why?

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Calhoun, Mark T. "Clausewitz and Jomini: Contrasting Intellectual Frameworks in Military Theory." *Army History* PB 20-11-3, no. 80 (2011): 22–37. Calhoun tends to fall into the camp of Clausewitz fans, but this is still a concise overview of both masters' analytical superstructures and theoretical contributions.

Chandler, David G. *The Campaigns of Napoleon: The Mind and Method of History's Greatest Soldier.* New York: Macmillan, 1966. Of all the ink that has been spilled on Napoleon, Chandler's single comprehensive volume is hard to beat among the English-language scholarship. Chandler covers all of the major campaigns of revolutionary and Napoleonic France and keeps his focus at the strategic and operational levels of war.

———. *Jena 1806: Napoleon Destroys Prussia.* Oxford: Osprey, 1993. This exceptionally concise and nicely illustrated volume is ideal for those looking for an approachable account of the pivotal campaigns of 1806, those that figure so singularly in the strategic prescriptions of Jomini and Clausewitz. The other volumes in Osprey's *Campaign Series*, such as the ones on Marengo, Austerlitz, and Waterloo, are also worth a look.

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dereliction of the duties of political leaders in wartime. In contrast to letting the generals exercise professional autonomy, it was incumbent on the politicians to be knowledgeable about military affairs, to question, and even to second-guess the military judgments of the soldiers. *Supreme Command* was reportedly on President Bush's reading list the summer before the Iraq War began.

Corbett, Julian S. *Maritime Operations in the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–1905*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press/Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1994. Corbett's real-time assessment of what went right for Japan and what went terribly wrong for Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. Where Mahan's essay is a short critique of Russian mistakes, Corbett's analysis covers two volumes. I suggest the closing summary in volume II, specifically pages 382–411.

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Esdaile, Charles J. *The Peninsular War*. London: Penguin Books, 2003. There is no shortage of excellent scholarship on Napoleon's disaster in Spain. Among the newest "classics" is Esdaile's sweeping account of the seemingly endless war that ground down Napoleon's grand army. This book is a useful primer for our discussion of Sir Julian Corbett. Esdaile goes into rich detail on the land operations side of the war in Spain and Portugal. It is an essential complement to Corbett's maritime focus.

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Gilbert, Felix. "Machiavelli: The Renaissance of the Art of War." In *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, edited by Peter Paret, 11–31. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986. Gilbert's essay, updated from the first version in the Earle edition of *Makers*, covers the humanist origins and summarizes the content and influence of the only major text published during Machiavelli's lifetime. It is a balanced evaluation of Machiavelli's strengths and weaknesses as a military thinker.

Gray, Colin S. "The Anglo-Irish War, 1919–21: Lessons from an Irregular Conflict." *Comparative Strategy* 26, no. 5: 371–394. Gray makes a 28-point case for what contemporary counterinsurgents and counterterrorists can learn from this little-known conflict. He also provides a clear narrative of the causes, conduct, and termination of the Anglo-Irish War, as well as the pivotal role of Michael Collins.

———. *Fighting Talk: Forty Maxims on War, Peace, and Strategy*. Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2009. Pithy and provocative, Gray's 40 short essays make a persuasive case for the classics of strategic theory and for the rigorous study of military and political history.

———. *The Leverage of Sea Power: The Strategic Advantage of Navies in War*. New York: Free Press, 1992. A comprehensive overview of the relative advantages in strategic mobility and resiliency enjoyed by sea powers. Gray posits that the strategic trends that prevailed in the 19th and 20th centuries will endure into the future.

———. "Strategy in the Nuclear Age: The United States, 1945–1991." In *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War*, edited by Williamson Murray, Alvin Bernstein, and MacGregor Knox, 579–613. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Gray situates the nuclear strategy debate within the larger framework of American strategic inclinations. He argues that U.S. nuclear strategy is best seen in the context of protecting the Eurasian periphery as an American sphere of influence.

Hale, John R. *Lords of the Sea: The Epic Story of the Athenian Navy and the Birth of Democracy*. New York: Viking, 2009. Hale discusses the dialectical relationship between Athens' political institutions and its maritime power. This is a gripping inside examination of the foundations of Athenian sea power. Hale's account also covers the period of Athenian recovery after the disasters of the late 5th century B.C.

Handel, Michael I. *Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought.* London: Frank Cass, 2001. The final edition of Handel's brilliant survey of Sun Tzu, Machiavelli, Clausewitz, Jomini, and Mao. Handel emphasized the universality of strategic thought even when its leading authors were

divided by huge gulfs of time and culture. This course is an homage to Handel's legacy, and this book is an invaluable reference for the study of strategic thought.

Hanson, Victor D. *A War Like No Other: How the Athenians and Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War*. New York: Random House, 2005. Hanson's blow-by-blow account of the tragic implosion of ancient Greece stands as a metaphor for the contemporary United States.

Heuser, Beatrice. *The Evolution of Strategy: Thinking War from Antiquity to the Present*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Heuser offers a rich and provocative survey of the foundations of Western strategic culture and its evolution from ancient Greece and Rome, through the Middle Ages, to the age of Napoleon, and on to the contemporary world.

———. *The Strategy Makers: Thoughts on War and Society from Machiavelli to Clausewitz*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger/ABC-CLIO, 2010. True to her title, Heuser provides the bridge between European military theorists of the late Renaissance and the age of Napoleon. It is a valuable corrective to the idea that our small roster of masters stands alone in an intellectual wasteland.

Horne, Alistair. *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954–1962*. New York: New York Review Books, 2006. In 2007, President Bush invited Horne to a face-to-face meeting at the White House to discuss *A Savage War of Peace*, the definitive history of the war for Algerian independence.

Hornqvist, Mikael. "Machiavelli's Military Project and the *Art of War*." In *The Cambridge Companion to Machiavelli*, edited by John M. Najemy, 112–127. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. A brief but illuminating essay from the *Cambridge Companion*, this chapter links Machiavelli's prescriptions in the *Art of War* to his experiences recruiting and training the Florentine militia in the late days of the republic.

Huntington, Samuel P. *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995. No discussion of civil-military relations would be complete without a reference to Huntington's classic of the late 1950s. Generations of civil-

military theorists have had to engage with Huntington's discussion of the theory of objective civilian control of the professionally autonomous military: the so-called "normal theory" of civil-military relations.

International Security. http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/project/58/quarterly_journal.html. If you want to continue your self-education on the classics of strategy and their real-world applications, you cannot go wrong in regularly perusing this consistently excellent journal.

James, D. Clayton. "American and Japanese Strategies in the Pacific War." In *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, edited by Peter Paret, 703–732. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986. This is the single best theory-centric overview of the competing naval strategies of these two belligerents.

Jomini, Antoine-Henri. *The Art of War*. Translated by G. H. Mendell and W. P. Craighill. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1862. Although a bit dated and heavy on military terminology, this early translation of Jomini has stood up remarkably well for more than a century and a half.

———. *Jomini and His Summary of the Art of War: A Condensed Version*. Edited by J. D. Hittle. Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1987. The overwhelming volume of Jomini's military writings is difficult to cover in any comprehensive way. His *Summary of the Art of War* is widely available in translation, and e-texts of it are readily available online.

Journal of Strategic Studies. http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/01402390.asp. If you want to continue your self-education on the classics of strategy and their real-world applications, you cannot go wrong in regularly perusing this consistently excellent journal.

Kagan, Donald. *The Peace of Nicias and the Sicilian Expedition*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981. You cannot go wrong with Kagan on the events in the Peloponnesian War. His interpretation, however, is often at odds with that of Thucydides himself. Nowhere is this more the case than with their competing takes on the Sicilian expedition.

———. *The Peloponnesian War*. New York: Penguin Publishing, 2003. This single volume is a condensed version of Kagan's epic four-volume treatment of the Peloponnesian War. Impeccably sourced and masterfully written, it is a favorite of students and faculty.

———. *Thucydides: The Reinvention of History*. New York: Viking, 2009. If you don't have the time to dig through Kagan's larger works, this shorter version is a lucid and critical evaluation of where Kagan sees Thucydides's pro-Periclean biases most fully on display.

Lake, Daniel R. "The Limits of Coercive Airpower: NATO'S 'Victory' in Kosovo Revisited." *International Security* 34, no. 1 (2009): 83–112. Lake argues that it was primarily the indirect erosion of Milosevic's domestic power base and elite dissatisfaction as a result of the bombings that drove him to capitulate, not the direct effects of the NATO air campaign itself.

Machiavelli, Niccolò. *The Chief Works and Others*. Translated by Allan H. Gilbert. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1965. There are many different versions of Machiavelli's works, but the Gilbert collection is notable both for its quality and for the fact that it includes *The Art of War*, along with *The Prince* and the *Discourses on Livy.*

MacIsaac, David. "Voices from the Central Blue: The Airpower Theorists." In *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, edited by Peter Paret, 624–647. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986. The first section of MacIsaac's essay is an extended review of the Warner chapter below, to which he adds a brief section on Trenchard, a discussion of strategic bombing in World War II, and a concise examination of the theory and practice of air power in the Cold War.

Mahan, Alfred Thayer. *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1890. Mahan was a remarkably prolific and popular author during his lifetime, and it would take years to work through all of his writings. The two *Influence* volumes represent Mahan at his most historically focused. This work covers the rise of Britain as the world's dominant sea power.

———. *The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire, 1793–1812*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1912. This volume details the exercise of British sea power during the titanic struggle with Napoleonic France.

———. *The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1897. Showcases Mahan the grand strategist and full-throated advocate of embracing America's sea-power destiny.

———. "Retrospect upon the War between Japan and Russia." In *Naval Administration and Warfare*, 133–173. Boston: Little, Brown, 1918. Mahan's real-time assessment of what went right for Japan and what went terribly wrong for Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. Where Mahan's essay is a short critique of Russian mistakes, Corbett's analysis covers two volumes.

Mao Tse-tung. "On Protracted War." In *Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-tung*, 143–144. Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967. For all of its political jargon and ideological baggage, "On Protracted War" is justifiably pointed to as a classic of insurgency. Writing in the late 1930s, Mao lays out a three-stage strategy by which an initially weak non-state actor can overthrow the incumbent government and seize absolute power.

Marks, Thomas, ed. *Maoist Insurgency since Vietnam*. London: Frank Cass, 1996. Unfortunately, the Marks volume covers Mao's influence only through the 1990s. If you're interested in mining more recent news, anything on the Unified Communist Party of Nepal, the most "successful" Maoist movement of the last decade, is well worth your attention.

Marston, Daniel, ed. *The Pacific War Companion: From Pearl Harbor to Hiroshima*. Oxford: Osprey, 2005. This collection of 13 wonderful essays that cover all the major land, air, sea, and amphibious operations in the Asian theater was published on the 60th anniversary of the end of the Pacific War. Pay particular attention to the chapters on Japanese and American naval strategies and to chapter 13, "Ending the Pacific War." That last chapter figures prominently in the second half of the lecture on air power.

McPherson, James M. *Tried by War: Abraham Lincoln as Commander in Chief*. New York: Penguin, 2008. We might re-title this new classic of military history *The Strategic Education of Abraham Lincoln*. A president with almost no military experience teaches himself the essentials of strategy and succeeds in imposing his vision on a resistant U.S. Army. You may want to read it in tandem with Eliot Cohen's chapter on Lincoln in *Supreme Command*.

Meilinger, Philip S., ed. *The Paths of Heaven: The Evolution of Airpower Theory*. Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 1997. The first seven essays in this rare survey of air-power theorists cover the leading theoretical lights of the air-power debates in the interwar period. The second half of the volume covers air theory and doctrine since 1945.

Meyer, Andrew, and Andrew R. Wilson. "*Sunzi Bingfa* as History and Theory." In *Strategic Logic and Political Rationality: Essays in Honor of Michael I. Handel*, edited by Bradford A. Lee and Karl F. Walling, 99–118. London: Frank Cass, 2003. This essay offers an expanded discussion of why historical context is so critical to understanding the analytical strengths and weaknesses of the *Sunzi*.

Murray, Williamson, Alvin Bernstein, and MacGregor Knox, eds. *The Making of Strategy: Rulers, States, and War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. This volume is more on the practice of strategy than on strategic theory. It contains rich and illuminating case studies on nations at war.

Najemy, John M. "Society, Class, and State in Machiavelli's *Discourses on Livy*." In *The Cambridge Companion to Machiavelli*, edited by John M. Najemy, 96–111. *Cambridge*: Cambridge University Press, 2010. This is a short but thorough introduction to the main tenets of Machiavelli's republican vision as reinforced by his reading of Livy. Najemy is one of the leading Machiavelli experts active today. His *Cambridge Companion* is an invaluable desk reference for fans and detractors of the Florentine.

National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States. *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2004. No discussion of terrorism is complete without a clear understanding of the nature and motivations of al-Qaeda. *The 9/11 Commission Report* is one of the best ways to know this enemy.

Orend, Brian. *The Morality of War*. Peterborough, Ontario, Canada: Broadview Press, 2006. Widely considered the Walzer of his generation, Orend expands upon and codifies the concept of *jus post bellum*, the just termination of war. Orend applies all three elements of just war to Afghanistan, Iraq, and the broader war on terror.

Pape, Robert A. *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996. In chapter 4, Pape attempts to weight the relative impact of conventional bombing, the atomic bombs, and the Allied land and the sea campaigns in driving Japan to seek terms in August 1945. He concludes that it was the combination of the atomic bombs and the Soviet invasion of Manchuria that tipped the scales. Nonetheless, he offers four potential alternative explanations of the outcome that view the impact of air power differently. Throughout, Pape returns to Douhet and looks forward to a theorist from the nuclear strategy lecture, Thomas Schelling. Pape also has a good chapter on the air campaign against Germany that complements the Emerson essay. In chapter 6, Pape critiques the flawed assumptions about North Vietnamese morale that undergirded the Rolling Thunder and Linebacker air campaigns. As the leading skeptic of the Warden school of air power, Pape is equally critical of the assumptions and execution of the air campaign against Iraq (chapter 7).

Paret, Peter. "Clausewitz." In *Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler*, edited by Edward M. Earle, 186–213. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1943 (1971, 1973 paperback editions). For those in the market for a quick overview of the life, writings, and influence of Clausewitz, the two *Makers* volumes are a great place to start.

———, ed. *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986. Paret's updated version of *Makers* is as much a classic as its predecessor. In addition to the chapters on individual masters, later chapters are more thematic and cover types of warfare: air power, nuclear strategy, insurgency, and so on. These two volumes could be considered the baseline texts for our course.

———. "Napoleon and the Revolution in War." In *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, edited by Peter Paret, 123–142. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986. Written for the second edition of *Makers*, Paret's essay is designed as a lead-in to the two subsequent essays on Jomini and Clausewitz in that volume. It is an excellent synthesis of the major tactical, technological, organizational, and political changes that took place during the French Revolution and the wars of Napoleon.

Plutarch. *The Rise and Fall of Athens: Nine Greek Lives*. Translated with an introduction by Ian Scott-Kilvert. New York: Penguin, 1960. Thucydides died before he completed his great history. Plutarch's biographies of the leading Athenian and Spartan strategists of the war's last decade fill in what the master could not.

Pocock, J. G. A. *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975. The classic treatment of the context and content of the *Discourses*. Machiavelli's search for inspiration in the early Roman Republic was also undertaken by his contemporaries. Pocock provocatively links those thinkers to the "Atlantic republican tradition" that includes notable American founders.

Pontecorvo, Gillo, director. *The Battle of Algiers*. Algeria: Casbah Films, 1966. Beginning in 2000, Pontecorvo's classic was being screened at the Pentagon. The film chronicles the cycles of terrorism and counterterrorism that gripped Algiers and follows the tactically successful but strategically counterproductive French counterinsurgency campaign.

Rothfels, H. "Clausewitz." In *Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler*, edited by Edward M. Earle, 93–113. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1943 (1971, 1973 paperback editions). One of the leading German scholars of his day, Rothfels explores the connections between Clausewitz's theories and the transformation of European warfare and clarifies some of the thornier concepts in *On War*.

Sawyer, Ralph. *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993. Sawyer includes translations of seven classics and situates the *Sunzi* within the canon of Chinese/Asian strategic literature.

Shy, John. "Jomini." In *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, edited by Peter Paret, 143–185. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986. While these classic overview essays are a bit suspicious of Jomini's motivations and dismissive of his theoretical insights, they nonetheless are a fine introduction to the life and works of our Swiss master.

Smith, Niel A. "Understanding Sri Lanka's Defeat of the Tamil Tigers." *Joint Forces Quarterly* 59 (2010): 40–44. Smith highlights the rare convergence of domestic and international factors that explain the success of Sri Lanka's highly militarized campaign against the Tamil Tigers.

Sprout, Margaret Tuttle. "Mahan: Evangelist of Sea Power." In *Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler*, edited by Edward M. Earle, 415–445. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973. Provides the necessary background on Mahan's career, writings, and remarkable celebrity.

Strachan, Hew. *Clausewitz's On War: A Biography*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2007. The immense popularity of the Howard and Paret version of *On War* has motivated a new generation of scholars to revisit the original and to question critical interpretive points. Among the best of these "revisionists" is the British military historian Hew Strachan. In particular, most people consider Clausewitz an advocate of the idea that war should be a rational instrument of policy. Strachan shows that for Clausewitz, real war could never be truly rational or absolutely subordinate to political purpose.

Strassler, Robert B., ed. *The Landmark Thucydides*. New York: Free Press, 1996. There are many versions of Thucydides, but the *Landmark* is the gold standard. The translation is an update of Richard Crawley's masterful 19th-century version with the invaluable addition of maps, a running summary, and illuminating appendices on everything from Greek naval warfare to Spartan politics. Pages 350–357 of Book V cover the Melian Dialogue, and Books VI and VII detail the decision to go to Sicily and the disaster that befell the Athenians at Syracuse.

Strauss, Barry. "Sparta's Maritime Moment." In *China Goes to Sea: Maritime Transformation in Comparative Historical Perspective*, edited by Andrew S. Erickson, Lyle J. Goldstein, and Carnes Lord, 33–61. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2009. Strauss is one of the few classicists to treat seriously Sparta's effort to match Athens' maritime dominance.

Strauss, Leo. "Thucydides: The Meaning of Political History." In *The Rebirth of Classical Political Rationalism: An Introduction to the Thought of Leo Strauss*, edited by Thomas L. Pangle, 72–102. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989. Strauss is often tarred with the broad brush of neoconservatism. This short essay is a good introduction into what he actually thought about Thucydides rather than what many think he thought.

Sumida, Jon Tetsuro. *Inventing Grand Strategy and Teaching Command: The Classic Works of Alfred Thayer Mahan Reconsidered*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999. Sumida's great achievement lies in rescuing Mahan the grand strategist and innovative strategic theorist from the battle-fleet-obsessed caricature that he has become.

Sun Tzu. *The Art of War.* Translated by Samuel B. Griffith. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980. There are several excellent translations of the *Sunzi*, among which Griffith's classic version stands out. Griffith's translation is written from the perspective of a general officer in the U.S. Marine Corps (and a former member of the Naval War College faculty), who had seen combat in World War II and had lived and studied in China. This is a scholarly and approachable version.

———. *The Art of Warfare*. Translated by Roger Ames. New York: Ballantine Press, 1993. This is the first English translation to incorporate archaeological evidence unearthed in the 1970s. Stylistically, Ames is quite spare in his rendering of the text, and he omits the later commentaries that appear in many other versions. For those familiar with Chinese, the counter-position of the original text with the translation is welcome. Ames's introductory essay situates the *Sunzi* within both the military ethos and the philosophical universe of Warring States China.

Townshend, Charles. *The British Campaign in Ireland, 1919–1921: The Development of Political and Military Policies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975. Where Gray emphasizes the remarkably effective IRA strategy, this classic by Townshend offers a competing view of the innate weaknesses of the IRA and the efforts of the British to exploit those critical vulnerabilities.

Trinquier, Roger. *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency.* Translated by Daniel Lee. Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006. Trinquier was a prolific theorist and commentator, but this is his best work. *Modern Warfare* is particularly strong on the interrelation between terrorism and insurgency, as well as the unique ability of urban insurgents to exploit the institutions of civilian governance. Trinquier is very good on how to get inside and shatter the clandestine organization of a terrorist movement, but the question remains whether his methods inevitably carry negative strategic and political repercussions.

Tucker, Spencer C. *Handbook of 19th Century Naval Warfare*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2000. In this well-written and nicely illustrated volume, Tucker covers all of the military-technological changes in the transition from sail to steam. The concluding chapter contains a useful summary of the major operations of the naval wars at the turn of the last century, including the Spanish-American and the Russo-Japanese wars.

U.S. Army. *Counterinsurgency* (FM 3-24). www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-24.pdf. I do not recommend trying to grind through all the jargon and acronym-laden detail of FM 3-24, but even a cursory survey will reveal the unmistakable influence of Galula and Trinquier.

Walling, Karl F. “Thucydides on Democratic Politics and Civil-Military Relations.” In *Strategic Logic and Political Rationality: Essays in Honor of Michael I. Handel*, edited by Bradford A. Lee and Karl F. Walling, 139–163. London: Frank Cass, 2003. Walling, a second-generation student of Leo Strauss, sees valuable lessons in Thucydides for the future of American democracy and the health of American civil-military relations.

Walzer, Michael. *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations.* 4th ed. New York: Basic Books, 2006. In print for three and a half decades, this is the seminal study of the core tenets of the just-war tradition, elegantly laid out and systematically applied to a series of case studies.

Warden, John A. “The Enemy as a System.” *Airpower Journal* 9, no. 1 (1995): 40–55. As a counterpoint to Pape, I will let Warden make his own case.

Warner, Edward. “Douhet, Mitchell, Seversky: Theories of Air Warfare.” In *Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler*, edited by Edward M. Earle, 485–503. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973. Warner counterpoints Douhet’s career and writings with those of Mitchell. Given that it was written at the height of World War II, the essay’s conclusions are tentative at best, although the overview of the theorists is very good.

Warner, Michael. “The Divine Skein: Sun Tzu on Intelligence.” *Intelligence and National Security* 21, no. 4 (2006): 483–492. At the time that Warner wrote this essay, he was a historian in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. I had the pleasure of contributing feedback and translation advice on early drafts.