

HOW WARS ARE WON

Learn the battlefield secrets of history's greatest combat leaders!

SPECIAL FEATURE

BY BEVIN ALEXANDER

Despite vast changes in the technology of warfare across the centuries – especially in the past few decades – the “rules” for winning wars have changed very little over thousands of years. This is because the *aim* of war is constant: War is an act of violence to impose one’s will on the enemy.

THE NATURE OF WAR

(Read)
Warfare is an organized effort by a cell, band, tribe, nation or coalition to force another group to do what it does *not* want to do. Most of the rules of war were likely conceived as early as the Stone Age and passed down by word of mouth to ancient writers such as Homer (*Iliad* and *Odyssey*), Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon. However, only one ancient writer – the great Chinese strategist Sun Tzu – produced an orderly and coherent summary of the rules of war. Sun Tzu’s interpretation, written around 400 B.C., constitutes the most profound, succinct and systematic treatise ever produced on the prosecution of successful war. (See sidebar, “Sun Tzu 101,” page 79.)

Key: THE INDIRECT APPROACH

Sun Tzu’s teachings advocate indirect solutions in warfare, counseling commanders to achieve victory by avoiding the enemy’s strength and attacking at an unexpected place and time. Moreover, he advises properly “preparing” the battlefield, noting that a successful general can win a battle before it even begins. Sun Tzu’s writings help us to see more clearly the true purpose of war – which is not *battle* at all. Instead, war’s purpose is to attain a more perfect *peace*. No nation goes to war to fight; rather, it does so to attain its national purpose. While a nation might destroy the enemy’s army to achieve this purpose, the destruction of that army is only a means to the end, it is not the goal. By striking at targets that destroy the enemy’s desire or ability to wage war, a commander can find ways to attain peace while avoiding the enemy’s main force.

On the other hand, the most influential Western writer on war, the 19th-century Prussian strategist Karl von Clausewitz, emphasizes the direct challenge of battle. Although Clausewitz writes, “War is a continuation of national policy by other means,” he also notes, “The bloody solution, destruction of the enemy forces, is the firstborn son of war,” and “Let us not hear of generals who conquer without bloodshed.”

While scholars still study Clausewitz, Sun Tzu’s influence is growing. His admonitions present practical ways to solve the incredibly complex challenges associated with deflecting an opponent’s purposes and attaining one’s own goals in warfare.

Sun Tzu and Clausewitz each tried to make warfare less deadly and more effective. Their writings can be studied to determine the “rules of war.” These rules form a vital link to the two great *operational* divisions of warfare – strategy and tactics. “Strategy,” taken from the Greek word “*strategos*,” or “general,” refers to the plan behind an entire campaign or war. “Tactics” refers to the methods for winning victories on the battlefield in close combat. While the specifics of strategy and tactics are crucial to the outcome of any war, they must be balanced by the underlying rules of war that are the fundamental keys to victory.

THE 13 RULES OF WAR

It is important to remember that the rules of war are not *general* prescriptions always to be applied in all situations. Rather, they are guidelines for determining solutions based on the *specific* circumstances in which a commander finds himself. The commander must evaluate every new situation with great care and *then* choose the rule(s) he will employ to achieve success. In fact, applying a rule in the wrong situation can lead to disaster – as history has demonstrated.

Thirteen “rules” embody the vast bulk of the wisdom of warfare handed down by the ancients and interpreted by history’s great leaders. While the traditional “Principles of War” may be convenient for analyzing past campaigns, here is how wars are *really* won:

1 STRIKE AT ENEMY WEAKNESS

The aim of this rule is to nullify an enemy’s strength. It is the basis of both guerrilla warfare and international terrorism. Successful guerrilla warfare avoids direct confrontation with the enemy and focuses instead on small but frequent violent attacks against essentially undefended enemy targets – towns, bases, depots, lines of communication and isolated enemy units. These blows force the enemy to disperse his troops widely, allowing the guerrillas to hold the initiative and pushing the enemy into a reactive role. Over time, the enemy dies a “death of a thousand cuts.”

2 DEFEND, THEN ATTACK

Historically, weaker forces have used this rule to defeat stronger forces. However, any commander who has a better weapon or a superior tactical system can employ it and defend so successfully that the attacker is weakened and demoralized. The defender can *then* transition to the attack, swing around the defeated enemy and destroy him.

Prussian strategist Karl von Clausewitz, one of the most influential writers on warfare, wrote, “War is a continuation of national policy by other means.”

A superior tactical system was the method that Confederate general Stonewall Jackson devised to defeat larger Union forces in the American Civil War. Jackson realized that the minié-bullet rifle, with a range three to four times that of the old smoothbore musket, threatened to foil all attacks against a well-emplaced force. He sought to induce Federal forces to attack and lose, knowing he then could sweep around and destroy them.

3 HOLD ONE PLACE, ATTACK ANOTHER

Probably the oldest tactical technique is to attract attention to one place while taking decisive action elsewhere. Sun Tzu summarized its essential nature when he spoke of the *zheng* element, which fixes the enemy in place and the *qi* element, which flanks or encircles the enemy (physically or psychologically). If the *qi* succeeds beyond all expecta-

tion, however, it can be transformed into the *zheng* and the *zheng* into the *qi*. The two are mutually supportive. This combination has always been important, especially in achieving the commander’s greatest imperative – to hit a decisive point with a force powerful enough to vanquish opposition. To do this, the commander typically must deceive his enemy so that the blow is not expected, or he must hold the enemy at another place with enough force to keep him from moving.

American forces, defending the Kum River, north of Taejon, fell for this tactic in the early stages of the Korean War when the North Koreans locked U.S. forces onto the river with attacks at two places – Kongju and Taepyeong-ni – and then swept behind them to cut off their retreat.

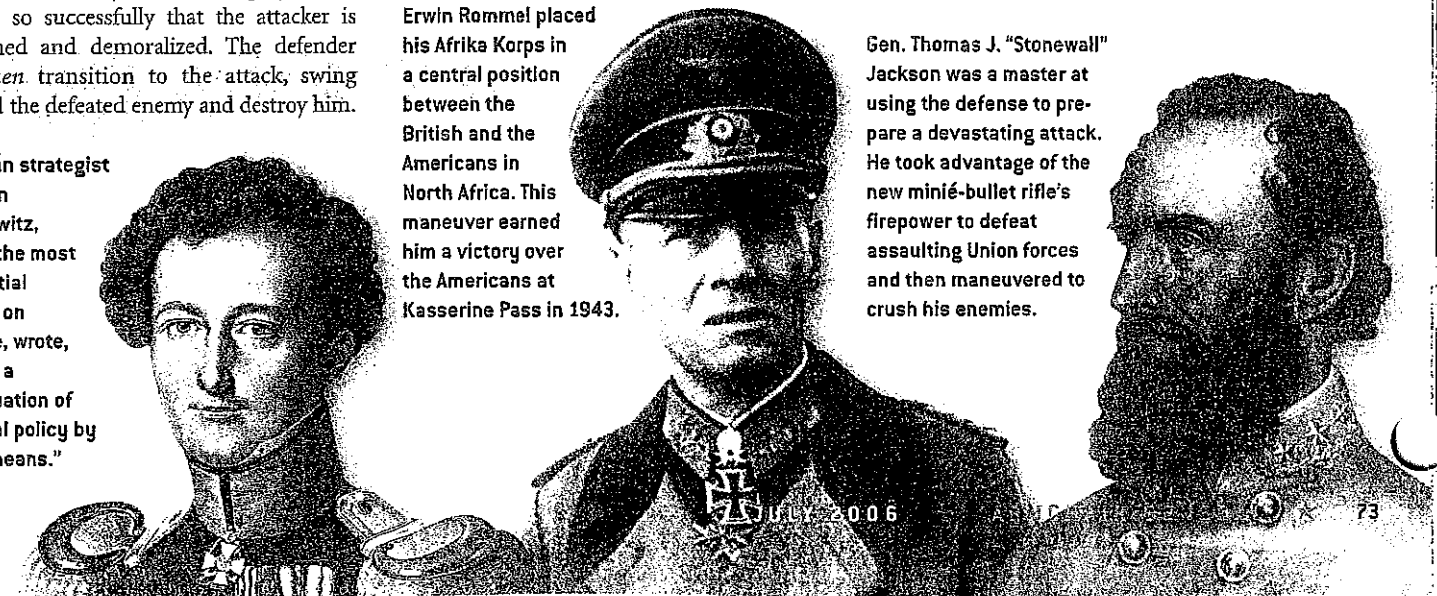
In World War II, Gen. Erwin Rommel placed his Afrika Korps in a central position between the British and the Americans in North Africa. This maneuver earned him a victory over the Americans at Kasserine Pass in 1943.

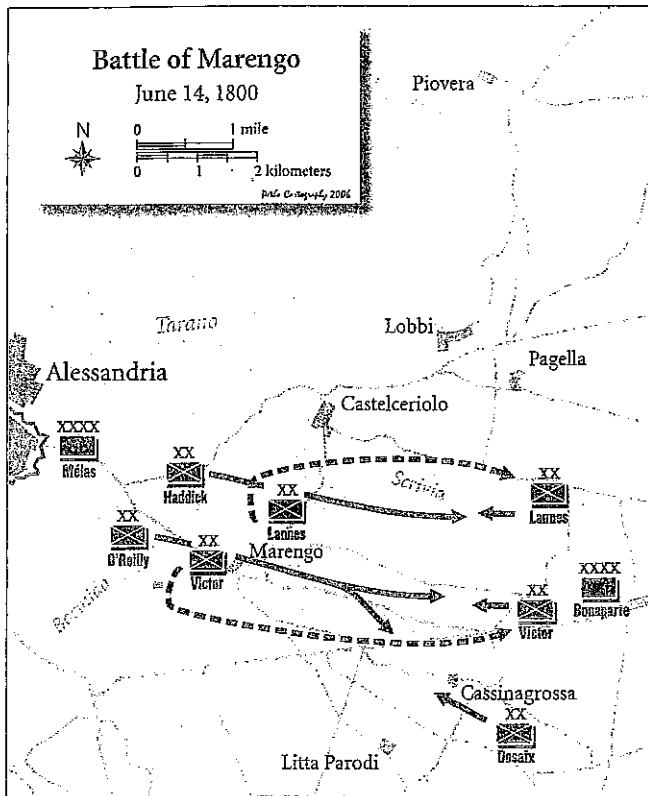
4 FEIGN RETREAT

The feigned retreat – pretending to run away and then ambushing the supposedly victorious pursuers – has been practiced throughout the history of human conflict. Its purpose is to draw an enemy out of his defensive positions so that he can be attacked and defeated. It is difficult to pull off, however, because troops are easily demoralized when asked to withdraw. Therefore, success requires a tremendous level of confidence and discipline.

The greatest exemplars of the feigned retreat were the nomadic horse-archers from the steppes of Eurasia beginning over two millennia ago. Selected horsemen rushed the

Gen. Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson was a master at using the defense to prepare a devastating attack. He took advantage of the new minié-bullet rifle’s firepower to defeat assaulting Union forces and then maneuvered to crush his enemies.





MANEUVERS ON THE REAR
 At Marengo, Bonaparte soundly defeated an Austrian army that he had already isolated when he descended on it from the St. Bernard Pass.
 (See Rule of War #13)

enemy in a furious charge, and then, pretending that the onslaught had failed, withdrew, seemingly in a panic. If the ruse succeeded, the enemy forces – believing that they were winning – rushed after the supposedly fleeing horsemen, losing their own order and cohesion. Waiting for them in ambush positions were the regrouped horse-archers, who then encircled isolated elements of the advancing enemy and destroyed them one by one.

5 SEEK THE CENTRAL POSITION

By maneuvering one's army so that it stands between two smaller enemy forces, it is possible to eliminate one force before dealing with the other. Although the rival army may be more powerful overall, it can be more easily conquered if divided.

Most generals are reluctant to put this rule into practice, fearing that they will be destroyed between the two enemy forces. However, it has been employed by great generals who had confidence in their abilities. Notable

examples are Stonewall Jackson, who took up a central position in 1862 to rout Union forces in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley; and German general Erwin Rommel, who placed his force between the British 8th Army in Libya and an American corps in Tunisia, leading to his devastating defeat of American forces at Kasserine Pass in February 1943.

6 EMPLOY A SUPERIOR WEAPON

While armies most often fight "symmetrical" conflicts by employing weapons similar to those used by their enemy, *asymmetry* has frequently played a key role. For instance, although World War II, history's greatest conflict, mainly featured symmetry of weapons, asymmetry did occur. One important example was the German panzer division, a "weapon" which the Allies were unable to match for over two years. Another example was the Allies' sea and airpower, which grew so overwhelming that Germany and Japan had no hope of countering it. Perhaps the ultimate asymmetrical weapon, as Hiroshima

and Nagasaki demonstrated, was atomic warfare. Of course, since World War II, nuclear weapons have only been deterrents.

Commanders have often won battles by employing a superior weapon against an enemy who was unable to recognize or to counter it. William the Conqueror's victory at Hastings in 1066 is one example. William was able to seize the crown of England because he used two technologically superior weapons – bows and arrows, and armored, lance-bearing knights on horseback. The English fought mainly on foot behind a "shield wall" – a tight formation, usually on a hill, where they awaited attack. William's arrow storms weakened the English line and then his mounted knights finished the job.

Another example occurred during World War II's desert battles when Rommel used the technologically superior, high-muzzle velocity 88 mm anti-aircraft gun as a superb tank killer, reserving his few tanks for the final stages of a battle. Although outnumbered, Rommel nearly captured the Suez Canal in 1942.

7 DRIVE A STAKE IN THE ENEMY'S HEART

One of the most decisive rules of war is to press straight into an enemy's vitals, destroying the very means by which he can resist. This is exactly how the Allies defeated Germany and Japan in World War II – by physically overrunning Germany, and by using blockade, firebombs, and atomic bombs on Japan.

Yet overwhelming power is no guarantee of victory. A successful campaign depends on careful analysis, firm action, and intelligent execution of valid plans. A notorious example of a flawed execution of this rule was Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812. When Napoleon drove his army into the heart of Russia and captured Moscow, his Russian opponents refused to acknowledge defeat. They completely changed the parameters of the campaign by depriving the French invaders of shelter, supplies and sustenance – the Russians even burned Moscow to the ground. Facing a grueling winter with no secure base and no means of supply, Napoleon was forced to order a retreat during which his army was destroyed.

In 1941-1942, Adolf Hitler made an

While a nation might destroy the enemy's army to achieve a national purpose, the destruction of that army is only a means to the end, it is not the goal.

equally disastrous decision. His aim was to drive a stake into the Soviet Union's heart by occupying the most productive western third of the country and by seizing its oilfields in the Caucasus. But the Soviets' "scorched earth" policy and Hitler's military mistakes combined to produce a Nazi catastrophe. The Soviets destroyed an entire German army at Stalingrad, seized the strategic initiative at Kursk, and so weakened Germany that it was doomed to defeat.

America's Winfield Scott, however, successfully used this rule when he led a small American force directly overland to Mexico City in 1847. Scott countered fierce guerrilla attacks on his supply line by simply abandoning it. He required his army to live off the land while he captured Mexico's capital and forced his enemy to make peace.

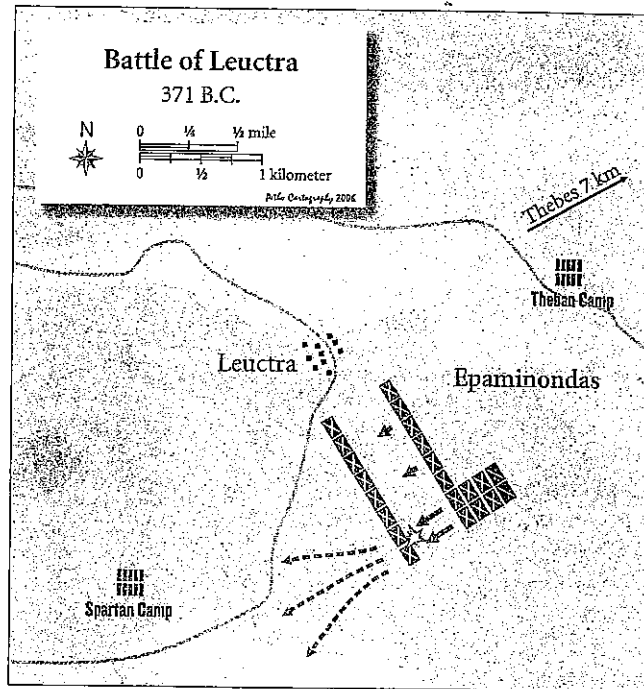
8 BLOCK THE ENEMY'S RETREAT

Cutting off an enemy's means of withdrawal and supply can lead to the outright destruction of the enemy force. In 1777, for example, Americans at Saratoga isolated General John Burgoyne's British army when Patriot militia cut off his line of retreat and destroyed a supporting column in New York's Mohawk Valley. When a third British column failed to move from New

★ ★ War-Winning Battlefield Technology

The top 10 technological advancements exercising the greatest influence on 19th- and 20th-century battlefield tactics, and the approximate dates of their introduction to a major war in which each saw widespread use:

- Napoleonic artillery (1800)
- Minié bullet (1854)
- Breech-loading rifle (1870)
- Machine gun (1888)
- Indirect fire artillery (1904)
- Radio communications (1904)
- Airplane (1914)
- Armored fighting vehicles (1917)
- Radar (1940)
- Atomic weapons (1945)



LAND AN OVERWHELMING BLOW
Epaminondas' strong left wing overpowered the Spartan right and routed the enemy army.
(See Rule of War #9)

York City to Burgoyne's aid, he was forced to surrender. His defeat helped convince England that it would be unable to conquer the 13 colonies and led directly to French intervention in the war.

However, it is possible for a skilled and determined enemy to escape or to prevent his opponent from cutting him off and surrounding him. In 1950 during the Korean War, the U.S. 1st Marine Division and elements of the 7th Infantry Division were cut off by a Chinese ambush at the Chosin (Changjin) Reservoir in North Korea. The Americans, however, fought determinedly during their "breakout to the coast" and overcame numerous Chinese roadblocks and ambushes along the narrow mountain road from the reservoir to the Sea of Japan, where they were safely evacuated.

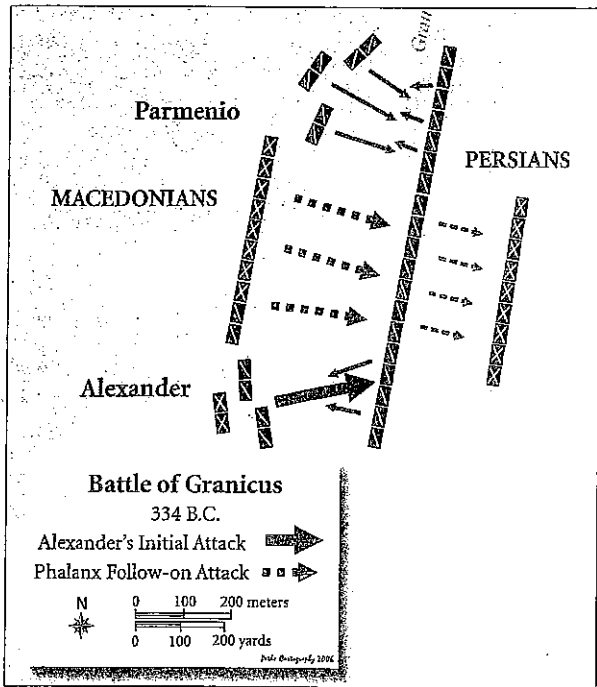
★ 9 LAND AN OVERWHELMING BLOW

With this rule, the main issue for the commander is deciding *where* he should strike in order to inflict the most damage. Another important matter is *what* to do about the rest of the enemy force. This double-faceted problem has bedeviled commanders since ancient times.

The Theban general Epaminondas at Leuctra in 371 B.C. is a classic example of a commander who successfully resolved these issues. Ancient Greek warfare was characterized by two opposing battle lines facing each other as phalanxes; therefore, it was difficult to launch an overwhelming blow against an enemy since his line typically appeared equally strong at all points. Epaminondas, however, solved this problem with an innovative tactical disposition of his *own* battle line. He drew up three detachments of his phalanx – the two detachments on the right were shallow formations only eight men deep, but the one on the left was 50 men deep. Epaminondas' weaker right detachments advanced against the Spartans at a slower pace than the left one, but – by their threat – held in place the opposing Spartan detachments. The strong Theban left-wing detachment, vastly superior to the opposing Spartan right wing, struck the weaker enemy phalanx, rolled up the Spartan line, and forced the entire enemy army to retreat.

Prussia's Frederick the Great used Epaminondas' simple tactic to achieve huge victories in mid 18th-century Europe. Frederick's modification – called the "attack in oblique" order – threatened one end of an enemy line with attack, thereby holding it in place, while he assaulted the opposite end

SPECIAL FEATURE



STRIKE AT A WEAK SPOT
 Alexander defeated a much larger Persian force at the Battle of the Granicus River by hitting a weakened portion of the enemy line created by his opening maneuvers.
 (See Rule of War #10)

against a much larger Roman army at Cannae in southern Italy in 216 B.C. (See map on page 79.) Hannibal lined up his Carthaginian army near the bend of a small river and then pushed forward his least-reliable troops in the center. This created a convex line with his best troops farther back on either side, and his superior cavalry on each flank. When the Roman commander saw the Carthaginian line pushed forward in this fashion, he perceived it as a sign of weakness and sent his entire army charging forward. The Romans pushed back Hannibal's center until it sagged in an ominous concave shape. Believing they were on the verge of victory, the Romans pressed their attack further. At that moment, Hannibal signaled for his more reliable infantry on his flanks to descend on the Romans. Meanwhile, Hannibal's cavalry, having driven away the Roman horse, attacked into the enemy's rear. The Romans were surrounded and massacred; out of 76,000, as few as 6,000 survived.

In emulation of Hannibal's victory, Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941 was characterized by a strategy of breaking through the Soviet Front at selected points and then swinging back on either side of bypassed pockets of Russian troops to form cauldrons. Although the Germans killed or captured millions of Soviet soldiers in this manner early in the war, Hitler's misapplication of rule #7 – drive a stake through the enemy's heart – allowed the Russians to recover from the 1941 disasters and to eventually win the war.

with his advanced regiments who were closer to the foe's battle line. Frederick scored an overwhelming victory using this technique at Leuthen in 1757.

a classic example. While his Persian opponents were drawn up on the eastern bank of the river, Alexander appeared with his entourage on the southern part of his line, in clear view of the enemy. He then took 3,000 infantry and cavalry from the center of where he was positioned and charged them diagonally across the front to strike the southern end of the Persian line. Alexander's presence and the attack focused the Persians' attention on this sector, and they moved troops from the center of their line to help defend it. As soon as they had thus weakened their center, Alexander launched his main cavalry force, followed by his infantry, directly at the vulnerable spot. This maneuver allowed him to breach the Persian line and destroy the army's formation, causing the Persians to flee.

10 STRIKE AT A WEAK SPOT

Penetrating a weak point in the enemy's line is as old as warfare itself, but it invariably involves a frontal assault. Most American Civil War battles featured attacks of this sort; however, five out of six failed.

When executed properly, this rule offers a daring alternative to the standard "fire-and-maneuver" method of winning a tactical engagement – holding the enemy in place while sending a force around his flanks or rear. Breaking a hole in an enemy line is more difficult than fire-and-maneuver because an assault into the heart of the defense will generate a powerful response. The reward for success, however, can be the destruction of the opposing main battle line. Winning battles this way has only been achieved by the most skillful of history's Great Captains – notably Alexander the Great and Napoleon.

Alexander employed this rule in three of his four most decisive victories. His battle at the Granicus River in Anatolia in 334 B.C. is

11 CREATE CAULDRON BATTLES

This rule seeks to envelop an enemy on all sides and then destroy him. In primitive warfare, it was common practice to surround an isolated group or village – typically at night – and then move in from all sides.

The all-time classic example of the cauldron battle is Hannibal's crushing victory

12 MAKE AN UPROAR IN THE EAST, ATTACK IN THE WEST

Sun Tzu advises commanders to induce the enemy to believe a blow is coming at one place and then to deliver the blow at another place. Warfare is replete with generals who have ignored this rule – with disastrous results. The most notorious example in American history might well be Robert E. Lee and his insistence on Pickett's Charge on July 3, 1863. On the third day of the Battle of Gettysburg, 13,000 Confederates attacked directly into the waiting guns of Union forces on Cemetery Ridge.

Hopeless frontal assaults reached the ultimate level of madness in World War I.

Sun Tzu's interpretation, written around 400 B.C., constitutes the most profound, succinct and systematic treatise ever produced on the prosecution of successful war.

The most flagrant case occurred on the Western Front's Somme River, where on July 1, 1916, the British lost 60,000 men – 19,000 of them killed – in a single day. Such attacks are tragic, counterproductive and unnecessary.

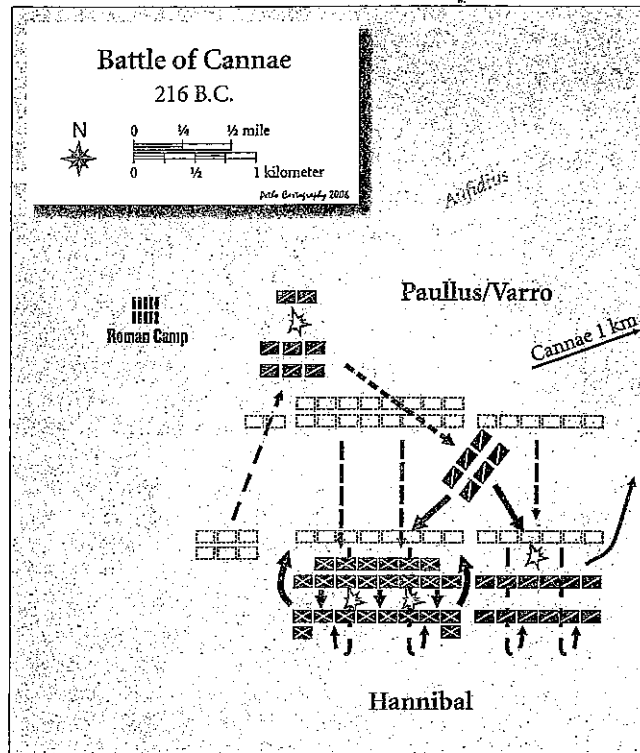
"Uproar east, attack west" offers a brilliant alternative using an indirect approach. Perhaps the most successful 20th-century example is the German blitzkrieg against France in May 1940. The invasion's planner, Erich von Manstein, convinced Hitler to

Sun Tzu 101



A summary of Sun Tzu's axioms from *The Art of War*:

- Careful planning and accurate information about the enemy are the keys to victory.
- The commander's primary target is the mind of the opposing general.
- All war is based on deception.
- The successful general must conceal his dispositions and intent. He feigns incapacity.
- When near, the general makes it appear he is far away; when far away, that he is near.
- The general approaches his objective indirectly. Make an uproar in the east, but attack in the west.
- The general seeks a quick victory, not lengthy campaigns; extended operations exhaust the treasury and the troops.
- The commander attacks only when the situation assures him victory.
- By threatening in many directions, the commander seeks to disperse the enemy to defend everywhere. If defending everywhere, the enemy is weak everywhere.
- When the enemy prepares to defend in many places, those that must be fought in any one place will be few.
- The way to avoid what is strong is to strike what is weak.
- As water seeks the easiest path to the sea, so armies should avoid obstacles and seek avenues of least resistance.



CAULDRON BATTLE
Hannibal's clever troop disposition lured the Roman center forward, where Carthaginian flank attacks surrounded and overwhelmed it.
[See Rule of War #11]

carry out a huge uproar in northern Belgium and Holland to deceive the British and French into believing that the main blow was coming *there* while, in fact, seven panzer divisions made the actual strike through the supposedly impassable but weakly held Ardennes region. The German attack sliced through the Allied line and then turned abruptly *west* to the English Channel, cutting off all Allied forces in Belgium. This led to the evacuation of British and French forces from Dunkirk and the surrender of France in just six weeks.

13 MANEUVERS ON THE REAR

While the strategy of striking the enemy's rear is usually carried out on a limited scale in smaller tactical engagements, a more sweeping version of it can have war-winning results. Conducted at the operational or strategic level, this rule involves a descent on the enemy's rear area with one's entire army, or a significantly large part of it, thereby blocking lines of communication and avenues of retreat.

Napoleon Bonaparte employed this

rule in Italy during the Marengo campaign in 1800. (See map on page 76.) He unexpectedly marched against the opposing Austrian army by way of the St. Bernard Pass through the Alps, cutting off and isolating his enemy in northwestern Italy. The actual battle, therefore, was nearly anticlimactic since Bonaparte's "maneuver on the rear" set up his enemy for defeat before the battle even began.

One of the most famous modern examples of this rule was the American campaign in the Pacific Theater, 1942-1945. Instead of attacking each of the hundreds of heavily fortified Japanese-occupied islands in this huge theater, the Americans bypassed most of them and struck only at the crucial "stepping-stones" to the Mariana Islands, from which the war-winning B-29 bombing campaign against the Japanese home islands was launched. Nearly 2 million Japanese were left stranded on the islands and were essentially prisoners of war. ★

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For Excused Students

The Principles of War and Operations

★ The Nine Principles of War ★

① Objective

objective

the clearly defined, decisive, and attainable goals toward which every military operation should be directed

Objective means purpose. The fundamental purpose of war is the destruction of your enemy's armed forces and their will to fight. Each operation in military planning must contribute to this ultimate strategic aim and to the defense of the United States and its allies. The ultimate objectives of operations in peacetime, as well, must contribute to the readiness, agility, and capability of the Army to respond defensively or offensively to accomplish its overarching mission: the security of the United States and the American people at home and abroad. Army planners, therefore, determine objectives with this ultimate end in mind and these objectives inform operations and missions down through the ranks, even to your platoon and squad level.

② Offensive

offensive

seizing, retaining, and exploiting the initiative

Offensive action—moving toward and engaging your enemies and their assets, including lines of supply and communication—is the most effective and decisive way to attain a clearly defined common objective. Offensive operations are the way you seize the initiative while maintaining freedom of action and achieving decisive results. This principle of offensive action is critical to all levels of war you might experience.

③ Mass

mass

concentrating the effects of combat power at the decisive place and time

A hammer drives nails because of its **mass**. Achieving mass means organizing all the elements of combat power at your disposal to have decisive effect on your enemy very quickly. Massing means that you hit the enemy with a closed fist; you don't poke at him with open fingers. Thus, mass seeks to smash the enemy, not to sting or harass him. Military leaders from Stonewall Jackson to Dwight D. Eisenhower to Norman Schwarzkopf all understood and applied this principle successfully. The massing effect has two distinct advantages: It allows a numerically inferior force to achieve decisive results and limits your unit's exposure to enemy fire.

④ Economy of Force

economy of force

allocating minimum essential combat power to secondary efforts

Sometimes, less is more. To achieve mass effectively at the decisive point and time on the battlefield, you need to effectively coordinate and allocate your force. **Economy of force** is the principle that helps you to judiciously employ and distribute your force. In battle, all parts of your force must act. You should never leave part of the force without a purpose. That doesn't mean everyone has to do the same thing. You need to coordinate and employ your Soldiers using all available combat power, even while you are engaged in such tasks as limited attacks, defense, delays, deception, or retrograde operations.

5

Maneuver

It's very difficult to aim at, fire at, and hit a moving target. The nature of movement itself is unpredictable. So effective maneuvering keeps your enemy off balance and protects your force. You use your ability to **maneuver** to exploit your successes, to preserve your freedom of action, and to reduce your vulnerability. When you maneuver, you continually create new problems for your enemies by thwarting their planning and actions, eventually leading to their retreat or defeat. At all levels of warfare, successful maneuvering requires that you demonstrate agility in thinking, planning, operating, and organizing.

maneuver
placing the enemy in a disadvantageous position through the flexible application of combat power

6

Unity of Command

One of GEN Robert E. Lee's fundamental principles was that he hated to divide his forces (although he did it from time to time as the situation demanded). **Unity of command** means that all of your forces are acting under one responsible commander. Unity of command and unity of effort at all levels of war refer to using your military forces to mass combat power toward a common objective. Success on the battlefield demands that a single commander hold the authority to direct all forces toward the objective in a unified, coordinated effort.

unity of command
for every objective, ensuring unity of effort under one responsible commander

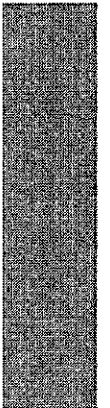
At the Civil War Battle of Antietam (Sharpsburg), in Maryland, Union GEN George McClellan divided his forces, did not coordinate his attacks, and failed to seize the initiative when Union troops broke through Confederate lines. McClellan failed to deliver the decisive blow that would have won the battle and perhaps ended the Civil War in 1862.

McClellan Lets Lee Off the Hook

When [Confederate LTG Thomas "Stonewall"] Jackson's troops reached Sharpsburg [Maryland] on September 16th . . . Lee consolidated his position along the low ridge that runs north and south of the town—stretching from the Potomac River on his left to the Antietam Creek on his right. "We will make our stand on these hills," Lee told his officers.

General Robert E. Lee had placed cannon on Nicodemus Heights to his left, the high ground in front of Dunker Church, the ridge just east of Sharpsburg . . . and on the heights overlooking the Lower Bridge. Infantry filled in the lines between these points, including a sunken lane less than a half mile long with worm fencing along both sides. . . . A handful of Georgia sharpshooters guarded the Lower Bridge (Burnside Bridge).

By the evening of the 16th, Gen. George McClellan had about 60,000 troops ready to attack—double the number available to Lee. The battle opened at a damp, murky dawn on the 17th when Union artillery on the bluffs beyond Antietam Creek began a murderous fire on Jackson's lines near the Dunker Church. . . .



security

never permitting the enemy to acquire an unexpected advantage

Security

Security results when you take measures to protect your forces. At Antietam, GEN Ambrose Burnside failed to protect his flank, allowing the Confederates to repulse his attack.

Appropriate security allows freedom of action by reducing your vulnerability to your enemy's actions. Intelligence—the knowledge and understanding of enemy doctrine, planning, strategy, and tactics—enhances security.

War is a risky business. To be successful, you need to be willing to take necessary, calculated risks to preserve your force and defeat your enemy. Protecting and securing your force, in turn, leaves you free to take those risks.

surprise

striking enemy forces at a time or place or in a manner for which they are unprepared

Surprise

For a traditional military force, **surprise** in warfare today is more difficult than ever. Rapid advances in surveillance technology and communication have compounded the difficulty of masking or cloaking the movements of large forces in the field. As recent battle experience in Iraq and Afghanistan has shown, surprise can decisively shift the balance of combat power for you or for your enemy. Remember that the element of surprise can work both ways—you can be surprised, too.

By seeking surprise, you can achieve success greatly out of proportion to the effort you expend. Surprise can come in size of force; direction or location of main effort; and timing. Factors that contribute to surprising your enemy include effective intelligence, deception, speed, application of unexpected combat power, operations security (OPSEC), and variations in tactics and methods of operation. So, as you can see, coordination of effort is a huge part of surprising an enemy.

simplicity

preparing clear, uncomplicated plans, and clear, concise orders to ensure thorough understanding

Simplicity

Simplicity contributes to successful military operations. Simple plans lead to better understanding of a commander's intent and assist leadership at all levels to accomplish the mission. Simple plans and clear, concise orders minimize the possibility of misunderstanding and can limit confusion.

It pays to remember to simplify a plan or operation by “finding the longest pole in the tent”—addressing priorities first and not sweating less significant details until later. Simplicity is especially critical when you and your Soldiers are tired or stressed. So keep the number of moving parts to a minimum. All things being equal, the simplest plan is usually the best.

Additional Principles of Joint Operations**Perseverance**

Commanders prepare for measured, protracted military operations in pursuit of the desired national strategic end state. Some joint operations may require years to reach the desired end state. The solution to a crisis's underlying causes may be elusive, making it difficult to achieve conditions that support the end state. The patient, resolute, and persistent pursuit of national goals and objectives often is a requirement for success. In the end, the will of the American public, as expressed through their elected officials and advised by expert military judgment, determines the duration and size of any military commitment.

