

## Publisher's Note

*Defining Documents in World History* series, produced by Salem Press, offers readers a selection of important documents that relate to broad range of subjects. These documents are accompanied by essays written especially for the series by a diverse range of writers. This established series includes *Ancient World* (2700 BCE–c. 500 CE), *Middle Ages* (476–1500), *Renaissance & Early Modern Era* (1308–1600), *The 17<sup>th</sup> Century* (1601–1700), *The 18<sup>th</sup> Century* (1701–1800), *The 19<sup>th</sup> Century* (1801–1900), *The 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (1900–1950) and the newest volume—*Asia*.

*Defining Documents in World History: Asia* explores the history of Asia, including China, Japan, Korea, India, and Southeast Asian societies including Vietnam, .

The material is into four geographic and each section begins with a brief timeline that includes important events and the documents featured in each region:

- **China**, begins with the *The Art of War*, an important treatise military strategy that is still in wide use today and includes “Lessons for Women” by Ban Zhao, an important female intellectual writing during the Han dynasty, around 80 CE, The Boxer Protocol, the Chinese revolution of Sun Yat-sen, and concludes with U.S. Embassy Cables Concerning the Crackdown in Tiananmen Square;
- **Japan and Korea** includes such important writing as *The Tale of Genji*, often called the world’s first novel; *The Tale of the Heike* as a dramatized version of the the clash of two warrior clans at the end of the late Heian period; Fourteen-Part Message from Japan to the United States delivered to U.S. Secretary of State Hull at the same time that Japanese pilots were bombing Pearl Harbor; Korean Declaration of Independence; and Kim Il Sung’s speech, “On Eliminating Dogmatism and Formalism and Establishing Juche in Ideological Work”;
- **India** offers documents such as The Edicts of King Ashoka, inscribed on pillars spread across India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Nepal; the India Regulating Act of 1773 that gave the British government partial control of the East India Company; and Indira Gandhi’s speech, “What Educated Women Can Do”;
- **Southeast Asia** includes Henry Cabot Lodge’s Speech on the Retention of the Philippine Islands; conversations and speeches related to the war in Viet Nam such as President Ngô Đình Diệm’s address to the U.S. Congress and a 1969 conversation between Presidents Nixon and Thiệu; and a report from the Khmer Rouge Killing Fields.

These documents provide a compelling view of the events and policies that shaped the rise and fall of empires, societies, and nations across Asia.

Designed for high school and college students, the aim of the series is to advance the study of primary source historical documents as an important activity in learning about history.

### Essay Format

*Asia* features fifty-two documents that span the history, politics, ethics, wars, and struggles for independence from China to Korea to Cambodia. Each document is supported by a critical essay, written by historians and teachers, that includes a Summary Overview that offers a brief introduction to the document; a Defining Moment that provides important historical context; an Author Biography that offers insight into the background and philosophy of the author of the primary document; and Document Themes and Analysis that put the document into perspective and provide a close reading and analysis of the primary source to develop its broader themes, such as the author’s rhetorical purpose, social or class position, point of view, and other relevant issues.

Each essay also includes a Bibliography and Additional Reading section for further research.

### Appendixes

- **Chronological List** arranges all documents by year.
- **Web Resources** is an annotated list of websites that offer valuable supplemental resources.
- **Bibliography** lists helpful articles and books for further study.

### Contributors

Salem Press would like to extend its appreciation to all involved in the development and production of this work. The essays have been written and signed by scholars of

history, humanities, and other disciplines related to the essays' topics. Without these expert contributions, a project of this nature would not be possible. A full list of contributor's names and affiliations appears in the front matter of this volume.

## ■ Excerpt from *The Art of War*, Chapter 1

**Date:** c. 500 BCE

**Author:** Sun Tzu; translator: Lionel Giles

**Genre:** Book excerpt

### Summary Overview

This passage consists of the first chapter of *The Art of War*, a landmark work attributed to Chinese author Sun Tzu. The document, lauded by some as the oldest treatise on military strategy in the world, makes a close investigation of military tactics and conduct; the ties between the military, political policy, and leadership; and the most critical factors influencing warfare. This excerpt from the first chapter, translated as “Laying Plans” by translator Lionel Giles, introduces the text by focusing attention on the gravity of warfare and the deliberation required to successfully fight a war. It lays the groundwork for the remainder of the document. As a text representative of its era, *The Art of War* reflects the conflict that pervaded China during the pre-imperial centuries under the Zhou dynasty. However, the influence of the document over military and political theory has spanned millennia and guided leaders across the globe.

### Defining Moment

Around 1046 BCE, the Zhou dynasty rose in China. (Some scholars suggest an earlier date of ascendancy, according to traditional accounts.) The Zhou first emerged in what would later become the province of Shaanxi in northwestern China. There, they battled off and on with their neighbors, the Shang, before defeating the Shang and establishing their rule over much of the territory around the Yellow and Yangtze rivers. The Zhou dynasty would span centuries, lasting until 256 BCE, when the Zhou gave way to a new dynasty, the Qin. However, much of their rule was fraught with conflict. The Zhou built a great kingdom and their dynasty lasted longer than any other in Chinese history, but their kingdom was feudal and left much governance to local rulers. These lords constantly vied for more power and influence.

The military treatise known as *The Art of War* has long been attributed to a military general, Sun Tzu, who is thought to have lived during an especially contentious time known as the Spring and Autumn Period, which

lasted from 770 to 476 BCE. During this era, Zhou leadership and control over China weakened amid fighting among various feudal states, but many technological and intellectual advances were made. However, some historians believe that *The Art of War* was actually written later, during the even more volatile Warring States Period (475 to 221 BCE). During this time, smaller feudal states joined into several larger kingdoms and fought to displace the Zhou and establish their own dynastic rule over the region. From these wars, the Qin kingdom emerged victorious and declared the first Chinese empire.

### Author Biography and Document Information

Chinese author and general Sun Tzu, also spelled as Sun Zi or Sunzi, has long been credited as the author of *The Art of War*. Sun Tzu lived during the Spring and Autumn Period of the Zhou dynasty, and served the state of Wu, in eastern China along the East China Sea. Wu was frequently at war with its neighbors during this time, and Sun Tzu would have had ample cause for expounding on themes of war. The complete text of *The Art of War* comprises thirteen chapters that examine various aspects of warfare, military strategy, and leadership. However, some historians question the text’s authorship and suggest that the text was written after Sun Tzu’s lifetime, during the later Warring States Period. Others suggest that the historic figure Sun Tzu, as one man, did not exist and that the text evolved over several centuries from the writings of many contributors.

Modern English versions of *The Art of War* derive from several key translations, with the first complete translation done by British scholar Lionel Giles in 1910. Giles’s father, Herbert Giles, had collaborated with British diplomat Sir Thomas Wade to develop a method of transliteration from Chinese to English known as the Wade-Giles Chinese romanization system; this was the main system in use for much of the twentieth century, before being replaced by pinyin.

A notable later translation of *The Art of War* was done by scholar Ralph D. Sawyer, first published in 1993.

## HISTORICAL DOCUMENT

### I. Laying Plans

1. Sun Tzu said: The art of war is of vital importance to the State.

2. It is a matter of life and death, a road either to safety or to ruin. Hence it is a subject of inquiry which can on no account be neglected.

3. The art of war, then, is governed by five constant factors, to be taken into account in one's deliberations, when seeking to determine the conditions obtaining in the field.

4. These are:

1. The Moral Law;
2. Heaven;
3. Earth;
4. The Commander;
5. Method and discipline.

6. The Moral Law causes the people to be in complete accord with their ruler, so that they will follow him regardless of their lives, undismayed by any danger.

7. Heaven signifies night and day, cold and heat, times and seasons.

8. Earth comprises distances, great and small; danger and security; open ground and narrow passes; the chances of life and death.

9. The Commander stands for the virtues of wisdom, sincerely, benevolence, courage and strictness.

10. By method and discipline are to be understood the marshaling of the army in its proper subdivisions, the graduations of rank among the officers, the maintenance of roads by which supplies may reach the army, and the

control of military expenditure.

11. These five heads should be familiar to every general: he who knows them will be victorious; he who knows them not will fail.

12. Therefore, in your deliberations, when seeking to determine the military conditions, let them be made the basis of a comparison, in this wise:—

13. (1) Which of the two sovereigns is imbued with the Moral law? (2) Which of the two generals has most ability? (3) With whom lie the advantages derived from Heaven and Earth? (4) On which side is discipline most rigorously enforced? (5) Which army is stronger? (6) On which side are officers and men more highly trained? (7) In which army is there the greater constancy both in reward and punishment?

14. By means of these seven considerations I can forecast victory or defeat.

15. The general that hearkens to my counsel and acts upon it, will conquer: let such a one be retained in command! The general that hearkens not to my counsel nor acts upon it, will suffer defeat:—let such a one be dismissed!

16. While heading the profit of my counsel, avail yourself also of any helpful circumstances over and beyond the ordinary rules.

17. According as circumstances are favorable, one should modify one's plans.

18. All warfare is based on deception.

19. Hence, when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far

away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near.

20. Hold out baits to entice the enemy. Feign disorder, and crush him.

21. If he is secure at all points, be prepared for him. If he is in superior strength, evade him.

22. If your opponent is of choleric temper, seek to irritate him. Pretend to be weak, that he may grow arrogant.

23. If he is taking his ease, give him no rest. If his forces are united, separate them.

24. Attack him where he is unprepared, appear where you are not expected.

25. These military devices, leading to victory, must not be divulged beforehand.

26. Now the general who wins a battle makes many calculations in his temple ere the battle is fought. The general who loses a battle makes but few calculations beforehand. Thus do many calculations lead to victory, and few calculations to defeat: how much more no calculation at all! It is by attention to this point that I can foresee who is likely to win or lose.

## GLOSSARY

**choleric:** extremely irritable or easily angered; irascible

**graduations:** arrangement of degrees, levels, or ranks

**marshal:** to gather, arrange or lead (as a group of people) in an orderly way

### Document Themes and Analysis

The first chapter of *The Art of War* consists of twenty-six points or sections meant to introduce and set the tone and purpose of the broader work. Each of the subsequent dozen chapters deals more intently with the themes introduced here. To begin, the document emphasizes the importance of its subject: “The art of war is of vital importance to the State.” The matter at hand, warfare, is not to be taken lightly, but should be approached with care and great deliberation, a concept echoed throughout the first chapter and the entire treatise.

In sections three through fifteen, Sun Tzu describes five factors to be considered before engaging in and while conducting a military engagement. These five factors—moral law, heaven, earth, commander, and method and discipline—are dealt with in the remaining sections of the chapter. Moral law suggests the rightness of bringing a people into agreement with their rulers before undertaking warfare. The people must follow if the campaign is to succeed. Heaven refers to the environmental condi-

tions of battle, such as the seasons, the time of day, and the weather. Earth denotes the physical geography of the environment, its terrain, the distances involved, and various other hazards. The commander signifies the nature of leadership, which the author states should encompass “the virtues of wisdom, sincerity, benevolence, courage, and strictness.” Finally, method and discipline relate specifically to military organization and behavior, including the costs of war and the structure of the forces.

Together, these five factors are described as paramount for military leaders: “He who knows them will be victorious; he who knows them not will fail.” Section thirteen, in particular, provides questions to guide one’s deliberation on these factors. The author suggests that he can determine the victorious party in any given conflict by judging the combatants’ advantages based on these factors. The implication is that the victor is more likely to be the group with the people’s will, with the most capable leadership, with the best advantages of environment and geography, with the strongest military discipline and



The beginning of The Art of War in a classical bamboo book from the reign of the Qianlong Emperor.  
By vlستا2, bluefootedbooby on flickr.com.

force, with the most training, and with the most consistent system for reward and punishment among its ranks.

The document goes on to advise that flexibility and adaptation are key attributes to success. The remaining sections detail what circumstances and approaches might prove most helpful to military generals in winning their wars. Sun Tzu emphasizes the deceptive nature of war: when possible, trick the enemy forces. Take advantage of their weaknesses and keep them confused. Do not stick to what might be considered proper rules of conduct and battle, but attack when the opportunity presents itself and when the enemy is least expecting it and least prepared. Other points of advice include riling temperamental opponents in order to compel them to make foolish decisions and movements.

The chapter closes by circling back to its original point that warfare requires planning and consideration. Ultimately, the treatise suggests that victory is most likely to go to the leaders who think and plan most effectively.

The essential theme of *The Art of War* is one of military theory and the significance of military influences during the latter half of the Zhou dynasty in China. Much of the period was dominated by rivalry and conflict among feudal states. This document and its focus on questions of military strategy, leadership, and discipline reflects some of the dominant considerations of the time among Chinese leaders and authors. It proved highly popular among the generals of the Warring States Period.

At the same time, its intense and thorough investigation of these matters has proven to stand the test of time and to be as relevant to later generations as it was at the time of writing. Sun Tzu's ideas would go on to influence many later strategists, including such varied figures as Chinese communist leader Mao Zedong, Vo Nguyen Giap, and Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam, as well as Colin Powell of the United States. The work also proved influential beyond the realm of war, as it became a popular text in business, sports, and other strategic endeavors. In this way, it represents not only the concerns of ancient Chinese civilization, but also the broader condition of human civilization.

—Christina Dendy

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# Chronological List

c. 500 BCE: Excerpt from <i>The Art of War</i> , Chapter 1 . . . . .	3
c. 450 BCE: <i>The Doctrine of the Mean</i> , Section 2. . . . .	8
c. 300 BCE: Excerpts from the <i>Dao De Jing</i> . . . . .	13
c. 262 BCE: The Edicts of King Ashoka . . . . .	199
c. 250 BCE: The Duties of a King, from the <i>Arthashastra</i> . . . . .	211
c. 200 BCE–200 CE: Excerpt from the <i>Bhagavad Gita</i> , Chapter 1. . . . .	227
c. 100 BCE: The Laws of Manu, Chapter 1 . . . . .	215
c. 80 CE: “Lessons for Women”. . . . .	17
c. 1001-1014: From <i>The Tale of Genji</i> . . . . .	115
c. 1185-1371 CE: From <i>The Tale of the Heike</i> . . . . .	123
1305: Report from China . . . . .	23
1368: The Hongwu Emperor’s Edict . . . . .	27
1655: An Account of India and the Great Moghul. . . . .	231
1773: India Regulating Act . . . . .	237
October 3, 1793: Chinese Emperor’s Rejection of British Trade Request. . . . .	31
August 29, 1842 and June 26, 1843: Treaty of Nanking . . . . .	35
1844: An Account of U.S. -China Trade Negotiations, 1844 . . . . .	43
1853: Economic Program of the Taiping Rebels . . . . .	49
June 25 and August 8, 1853: Karl Marx on British Rule in India. . . . .	241
March 31, 1854: Convention of Kanagawa. . . . .	127
April 7, 1868: Meiji Charter Oath. . . . .	133
1898: China’s Hundred Days’ Reform. . . . .	54
September 6, 1899: Open Door Note. . . . .	139
1900: Henry Cabot Lodge: Speech on the Retention of the Philippine Islands . . . . .	273
1901: Boxer Protocol . . . . .	61
May 1902: “Subjugation of the Philippines Iniquitous”. . . . .	279
1905: The Treaty of Portsmouth . . . . .	143
April 26, 1915 to May 8, 1915: Japan’s 21 Demands and China’s Reply . . . . .	151
1918: Sun Yat-sen: “The Three Stages of Revolution” . . . . .	69
March 1, 1919: Korean Declaration of Independence. . . . .	159
November 1921: The Problem of Japan—A Japanese View . . . . .	163
March 1922: Mohandas Gandhi: Statement at Trial . . . . .	249
February 23, 1932: Henry Stimson to Senator Borah Regarding the Nine-Power Treaty . . . . .	169
December 7, 1941: Fourteen-Part Message from Japan to the United States and Secretary Hull’s Response . . .	178