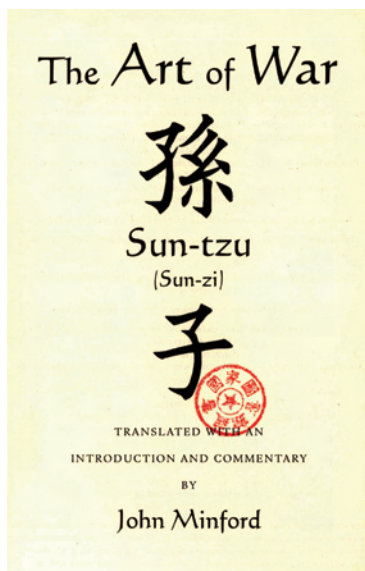




Sun Tzu—The Ultimate Master of War



English edition of *The Art of War*.

is an amazing coincidence of history that the three great works which form the very foundation of Chinese traditional culture, namely the *Analects of Confucius*, the *Tao Te Ching* by Laozi and *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu, were written by three men who lived in roughly the same period.

In 1722 the French Catholic priest Joseph Amiot first introduced a European audience to *The Art of War*. Since then it has been translated into about 30 languages around the world. The English language has a well-known expression: “Business is war.” Perhaps that is why so many businessmen today in America and round the world find the ancient military lessons of Sun Tzu of surprising relevance to their own 21st century careers and aspirations. They find in the ancient military manual invaluable insights into how to operate a successful business in a competitive, cutthroat environment and how to predict



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and adapt to future business and international trade trends.

In the U.K., *The Art of War* enjoys an equally eminent reputation. Some of its theories, strategies and tactics are still widely applied in fields such as military affairs and economics. Even in the most famous military colleges, special courses on *The Art of War* are being taught.

Why has such a mania for the theories of Sun Tzu

On December 9, 2004, Wu Yuzhang (left), President and CEO of the China Office of the Volvo Trucks Corp., gave a lecture on marketing and Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* to students of Peking University. Picture shows he was invited to be an advisor to Peking University.





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A stone tablet inscribed with Mao Zedong's inscriptions reading "One who knows the enemy and knows himself, will not be in danger in a hundred battles."

developed in Western intellectual circles and indeed among common people? One significant reason is that Sun Tzu represents an authentic Oriental worldview. With the increasing integration of the world economy and development of what has become known as the "global village," both Chinese and foreigners need to deal with each other on a scale never previously witnessed; moreover, in order for



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western companies to penetrate the vast potentialities of the Chinese market, they need to come to some sort of understanding of the thinking patterns of the Chinese people as well as grasping how it is that the Chinese approach and solve problems. Indeed as Sun Tzu himself observed, “One who knows the enemy and knows himself, will not be in danger in a hundred battles.”

Working on “The Art of War”

When Sun Tzu reached the age of 18, an incident occurred which would alter the entire course of his life. His uncle Tian Rangju, the Da Sima of the Qi State (a position that would effectively equate to that of Board of Defense in today’s world), lost his eminent position as a result of intrigues and power struggles and died of a subsequent



Portrait of Sun Tzu in Sun Wu Yuan in Suzhou.



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illness. Inevitably Sun Tzu and his grandfather were affected by the fallout from Tian Rangju's fall from power.

In 517 BC, Sun Tzu, not yet 20 years old, was forced to leave his home. He chose to move to another militarily strong state, the State of Wu, in the southern lands of China. Turning his eyes one last time to gaze on his homeland, the young Sun Tzu must surely have recalled the joyful days spent with his family. What feelings of longing and regret must have crept over the young man as he embarked on an

The State of Wu was located in what is Suzhou of Jiangsu Province today. Picture shows the Sun Wu Park, which was built to mark Sun Tzu, in Suzhou.

