

Introduction

THE EXCAVATION AT YINQUESHAN

Sun Bin: The Art of Warfare is a military treatise in the family of *Sunzi: The Art of Warfare* that has been lost for some two thousand years. The present translation and analysis is based upon a partial text which was recently recovered in an early Han dynasty tomb in Shandong province dating from between 134 and 118 BCE. What is the relationship between *Sun Bin* and this geographical location? Scholars are still undecided as to whether Linyi, the site of the 1972 archaeological discovery in which the *Sun Bin: The Art of Warfare* was recovered, was within the southern reaches of the state of Qi, which, as the kingdom that Sun Bin served, would seem appropriate, or within the precincts of Confucius' home state, Lu. The Yinqueshan tomb contained a wide range of military writings in a grave devoid of weapons of any kind, leading scholars to conclude that it was the last resting place of a civilian official interested in military affairs. A detailed discussion of the archaeological site, its contents, and the profound implications of such discoveries for our understanding of classical Chinese culture—in this case, particularly military culture—is to be found in the appendix: "Background to the Excavation at Yinqueshan." New finds continue to be made, and such exciting discoveries necessitate a continuing reassessment of the classical period in Chinese history.

After the initial find, the Yinqueshan Committee devoted some two years of research to the 4,942 bamboo strips and strip frag-

ments on which the texts were written before making the preliminary results of this work known to the world in February 1974. For details of the early reports, a catalog of the contents of these tombs, and the best efforts of contemporary scholarship to date the tombs and identify the occupants, see the appendix describing the excavation at Yinqueshan at the end of this book.

Perhaps the most significant and exciting textual material uncovered in Tomb #1 is the additional text of the extant *Sunzi: The Art of Warfare*, and the portions of the long-lost *Sun Bin: The Art of Warfare*. At least, this was the judgment that prevailed at the time of the find in 1972. One factor that amplified the importance of these militarist texts was the historical context of the discovery. They were recovered in the midst of the Anti-Confucius and anti-Lin Biao campaigns, and were seen as upholding the Legalist line being promoted by the Gang of Four. As a consequence, the Yin-yang text, documents of enormous cultural value, were largely ignored. This situation is being rectified with the publication of the Yin-yang texts translated and annotated by Robin Yates in this same Classics of Ancient China series. Contemporary archaeologists in a 1985 revision of the earlier 1974 report, summarized the overall content of the bamboo strips in the following more general terms.¹

The Han strips from Tomb #1 can largely be divided into those of which we have extant traditional texts, and those where the texts have been lost. Since the text provided by the Han strips and the extant text are often different, it is not always possible to keep the two categories clearly separate. In the first category of extant texts there are:

1. *Sunzi: The Art of Warfare (Sunzi bingfa)* and five chapters of lost text
2. *Six Strategies (Liutao)*: fourteen segments
3. *Master Weiliao (Weiliaozi)*: five chapters
4. *Master Yan (Yanzi)*: sixteen sections

In the second category of lost texts, there are:

5. *Sun Bin: The Art of Warfare (Sun Bin bingfa)*: sixteen chapters
6. *Obeying Ordinances and Obeying Orders (Shoufa shouling)*: ten chapters

7. Materials on discussions of government, and discussions on military affairs: fifty chapters

8. Materials on *yin-yang*, calendrics and divination: twelve chapters

9. Miscellaneous: thirteen chapters

In addition, there are many left-over fragments, and the process of reconstruction goes on.

The 1985 first volume of the Yinqueshan Committee's anticipated three-volume set includes reconstructed texts for all of the documents 1–6 listed above; the remaining materials will apparently be made available with the appearance of volumes II and III, although there has been an extended delay in their publication.

From Tomb #2 we have a calendar for the first year of the *Yuanguang* reign period 元光元年 (134 BCE) of Emperor Wu (r. 141–87 BCE) of the Western Han (202 BCE–CE 8). It contains a total of thirty-two strips. The first strip records the year, the second strip lists the months, beginning with the tenth month and continuing until the following ninth month—a total of thirteen months. Strips 3 to 32 then record the days, listing the “stem and branches” designations for the first to the 30th day of each month. Together these thirty-two strips constitute a complete calendar for the year.

There are varying opinions among scholars as to when the texts were transcribed. From the archaeological evidence (see the appendix, “The Bamboo Strip Manuscripts and their Dates”), we can estimate that Tomb #1 dates from between 140 and 118 BCE, and Tomb #2 dates from between 134 and 118 BCE. But the dates at which the texts were transcribed would, of course, be earlier than those of the tombs in which they were buried.

One potential clue as to the dates of the transcribed texts is the custom of avoiding the characters used in the emperor's name in texts copied during an emperor's reign. The Western Han, however, was not strict in its observance of such imperial taboos. The taboo names of Emperors Hui, Wen, and Wu all occur on the strips, and there are even instances of the less common characters of Empress Lu and Emperor Jing. The most that can be said is these texts from Yinqueshan seem to observe the taboo on the

first emperor of the Han dynasty, Liu Bang (r. 206–194 BCE), avoiding the character *bang* 邦, and using *guo* 國 instead, with one exception in the supplemental strips of Chapter 4 of *Sun Bin: The Art of Warfare*, “Tian Ji Inquires About Battlefield Defenses,” which might have been an oversight.

The contemporary scholar, Zhang Zhenze, concludes that the strips must actually have been written during the dozen years Liu Bang was on the throne.² Other scholars are more cautious, insisting the taboos are inconclusive evidence. Wu Jiulong, for example, discounts the taboo factor, and instead compares the style of writing with other recent finds.³ On this basis, he estimates the Yinqueshan texts were copied in the early years of the Western Han dynasty (202 BCE–CE 8) sometime during the period covered by the reigns of Emperor Wen (who ascended the throne in 179 BCE), Emperor Jing, and the beginning years of Emperor Wu (who began his reign in 141 BCE).

SUN BIN 孫臏 AS AN HISTORICAL PERSON

The “Sun” clan, originating in the large and powerful state of Qi in the middle of the sixth century BCE, established a tradition of military expertise that was passed down from generation to generation in a world where warfare was increasingly a way of life, and a way of death. On the killing fields, with carnage at a scale then unprecedented in human history, there was both a pattern and a discernible logic. In the waning century of the Spring and Autumn period (772–481 BCE) and throughout the succeeding, and aptly named, “Warring States” period (403–221 BCE), many of the more powerful kingdoms of the central Chinese plains, once ruled by vassals loyal to the House of Zhou, were usurped by powerful clans within their borders. The pattern was unrelenting internecine warfare, and the logic was zero-sum.

Sun Bin lived during the middle years of the Warring States period, when all the various kingdoms were fighting for their political lives. By this time, it must have become increasingly clear to the rulers of those states that the only alternative to final victory was annihilation. Among the competing kingdoms, Wei had de-

veloped most rapidly and had become the leading contender. Wei was hegemon of the central plains from the earliest years of the Warring States period, and while posing an ongoing threat to Han and Zhao, it repeatedly engaged and defeated Qin, Chu, Qi, and the other states, annexing large portions of their territories. After King Hui of Wei's ascension to the throne in 370 BCE, he, by launching attacks on all sides, created many enemies for himself. In the process, he violated his standing treaties with Han and Zhao, the two other states that together with Wei had previously made up the powerful state of Jin before its division in 403 BCE. His immediate purpose was to swallow up Han and Zhao, thereby restoring Wei to the glory of its parent, Jin. But Han and Zhao had developed relatively early themselves, and to meet the ever present threat of Wei, had redoubled their efforts to expand and strengthen their military capabilities.

During this period, Qi and Qin, the two powerful nations to the east and west, respectively, were on the rise, and were also preparing to resist Wei. When King Wei of Qi came to the throne in 357 BCE, he went to great lengths to identify and promote the most talented personnel, leading in turn to reforms in governmental policy, in the economy, and in the military organization, all preparations to match Wei and vie with it for control of the central plains. Duke Xiao took the throne of Qin in 361 BCE and, appointing the ruthless Shang Yang (who had been rejected by his home state of Wei) to strengthen his internal policies, moved swiftly to consolidate his position at the center. His strategy was to deploy his greatest military strength to the east with the expectation of reclaiming from Wei lands that Qin had ceded to it earlier. At the same time, Chu, to the south of Wei, prepared to advance north, while Yan, situated to the northeast of Wei, was gradually emerging as yet another power to contend with.

By the time that Sun Bin (ca. 380–316 BCE) appeared on the scene, the situation had escalated into a seven-way face-off, with the endless wars becoming increasingly ferocious. And one of the most intense and long-enduring struggles for hegemony during these middle years of the Warring States period was that fought between the forces of Qi and Wei.

The young man Sun Bin must have experienced a hard life. Since Wei, Han, Zhao, Yan, and the other states repeatedly invaded Qi during this time, the region in which he grew up must have suffered the ravages of war on several different occasions, and he must have learned of its hardships firsthand. These uncertain times undoubtedly had their affect on Sun Bin, for he left his home region and, as tradition has it, traveled up into the mountains to study with Guiguzi, the “Master of Ghost Valley.” In fact, the biographies of Su Qin⁴ and Zhang Yi,⁵ strategists who were, respectively, responsible for the “vertical alliance” against the state of Qin and the “horizontal alliance” against Chu, report that they too were students of the enigmatic “Master of Ghost Valley.” Although the historicity of Guiguzi and the authenticity of the documents that bear his name are topics hotly disputed, what is interesting is the purported association of many of the more distinguished strategists with a single lineage.

The *Records of the Historian*⁶ recounts that Sun Bin was born somewhere between the two towns of A⁷ and Zhuan⁸ in the state of Qi over a century after the death of Sun Wu, the first “Sunzi,” or “Master Sun.” The state of Qi can thus claim to have produced both Sun Bin and his illustrious ancestor, Sun Wu.

The name, Sun Bin, bespeaks of the personal tragedy experienced by this military strategist. The character *bin* 贛 can mean both the kneecap itself and the removal of the legs to the kneecap as a mutilation punishment. It seems clear from the historical records that Sun Bin received his name after thus being crippled as a consequence of the machinations of Pang Juan, his one-time fellow student:

Sun Bin had studied the art of warfare together with Pang Juan. After taking office with Wei, Pang Juan was appointed general in King Hui’s army. And, considering his own abilities to be inferior to those of Sun Bin, he secretly sent a messenger to summon Sun Bin. When Sun Bin arrived, Pang Juan, being afraid that Sun Bin would surpass him, became jealous of his rival, and through manipulation of the law, punished him by cutting off his feet as well as branding him, intending thereby to prevent Sun Bin from being seen.⁹

Although Pang Juan was successful in his initial attack on Sun Bin and was able to conclude prematurely his rival's service to the state of Wei, he made the fatal error of underestimating the resourcefulness of his enemy. Physical mutilation punishments not only disintegrated a person from his society by marking him as a criminal element, even worse, they were a source of shame and dishonor before one's ancestors. To fail to return one's body whole was an act of grave unfiliality and impiety. Such a person would be barred from the social and religious life of his community, and would be reduced to solitary menial service, or worse. Hence, Pang Juan did not anticipate the opportunities that Sun Bin would have to exercise his military genius in the service of a rival state. Despite his handicap, Sun Bin's military career was far from finished:

When an envoy of Qi went to the Wei capital of Daliang,¹⁰ Sun Bin presented himself secretly as a convict who had suffered mutilation, and put his views before the envoy. The envoy of Qi considered Sun Bin to be an extraordinary person, and secretly smuggled him off to Qi. The commander of the Qi army, Tian Ji, appreciated him and treated him as an honored guest.¹¹

As Pang Juan had become Sun Bin's most bitter enemy, Tian Ji became his foremost friend and advocate. The beginning of their lifelong partnership is captured in an anecdote which, although humorous, nevertheless reflects several crucial tenets of Sun Bin's military philosophy:

Tian Ji frequently bet heavily on horse races with the lords of Qi. Sun Bin observed that although there was not that much difference in the speed of the teams of horses, they could still be classified as first, second, and third best. Sun Bin then said to Tian Ji, "You just go ahead and make a large wager; I will see to it that you win." Tian Ji took Sun Bin at his word, and put up a thousand pieces of gold in a bet with the King and his various lords.

Just as the contest was to begin, Sun Bin counseled Tian Ji, "Pit your third-best team against their finest, your finest against their second-best, and your second-best against their third." When all three horse races were finished, though Tian Ji had lost the first race, his horses prevailed in the next two, in the end winning a thousand pieces of the King's gold.

Following this victory, Tian Ji recommended Sun Bin to King Wei. King Wei asked him about the art of warfare, and subsequently appointed him military adviser to the throne.¹²

What is the philosophical import of this event? First, it recommends that you must come to know the particular conditions that govern a situation so that you can manipulate them to your own advantage. This requires that you understand how conditions dispose you with respect to your opponent in an interdependent relationship along a *yin-yang* 陰陽 continuum, and that you translate the situation into the *yin-yang* vocabulary of complementary opposites: strong-weak, fast-slow, many-few, and so on. Finally, once you have arrived at an understanding of your own configuration relative to your opponent's, you must look for the critical factors (*ji* 幾) which will enable you to turn the unfolding situation into an opportunity.

The collaborative relationship between Sun Bin and Tian Ji in the state of Qi is chronicled in the historical records of the period, and extends from the intervention of Qi in the expedition against Zhao in 354 BCE, through Tian Ji's banishment from Qi and his reinstatement by King Xuan¹³ prior to the battle of Maling in 341 BCE. Although there seems to be some disagreement in our sources about the chronological sequence of these several episodes and the cast of characters, there is general consensus on the specific events themselves. Wei had advanced on and attacked Zhao. Pang Juan led a Wei army of eighty thousand, and laid siege to Handan, the capital of Zhao. Zhao sought help from Qi, and King Wei of Qi complied, but since he was somewhat intimidated by the military prowess of Wei, all that he was willing to risk was a small detachment of troops, which he dispatched to the border to join forces with the small countries of Song and Wey. The combined forces of Qi, Song, and Wey then laid siege to Xiangling on the southeast border of Wei. For more than a year, Wei had committed enormous resources to the siege of Handan, finally bringing Handan to the brink of collapse. At the same time, the armies of Qin and Chu began an advance on Wei from the west and the south taking advantage of its dwindling reserves. Seizing the

moment, King Wei of Qi determined to mobilize his troops for combat.¹⁴

The curtain opens with the deliberations leading up to the campaign against Wei at Guiling in ca. 354 BCE:

. . . Wei launched an attack on Zhao. Zhao was desperate and appealed to Qi to come to its aid. King Wei of Qi wanted to appoint Sun Bin as his commander, but Sun Bin respectfully declined, saying, “A man crippled by punishment is not qualified.” The King thereupon appointed Tian Ji as commander and made Sun Bin his chief adviser. Sun Bin was transported in a carriage covered with a canopy and encircled with curtains, and here he worked out his strategies.

Tian Ji wanted to lead his army directly to Zhao, but Sun Bin cautioned him, “One set on unraveling a jumbled tangle of silk threads does not strike at it with his closed fist; one coming to the aid of a party engaged in a conflict does not throw himself punching and flailing into the fray. If you go for the enemy’s throat by attacking his most vulnerable point, a stalemate will result in which the situation is bound to resolve itself. Now Wei is at war with Zhao. Its mobile forces and its shock troops are sure to be exhausted in the field, and the old and weak will be overextended on the home front. Your best ploy is to force-march your army to the Wei capital at Daliang, control the main routes and roadways, and strike where the enemy is least protected. He will have no choice but to disengage from Zhao in order to save himself. In so doing, at one fell swoop we can lift the siege on Zhao and reap the fruits of battle from a weary Wei.”

Tian Ji acted on this advice, and in the end, Wei indeed withdrew from the Zhao capital at Handan¹⁵ to engage the Qi forces at Guiling,¹⁶ where Wei was dealt a crushing defeat.¹⁷

In the *Records of the Historian*, the biography of Sun Bin concludes with a lengthy description of the battle at Maling in ca. 341 BCE:

Thirteen years later, Wei and Zhao launched an attack on Han, and Han sent an urgent appeal to Qi. Qi dispatched Tian Ji as commander who marched directly on the Wei capital at Daliang. When the Wei commander, Pang Juan, heard this, he withdrew

from Han and set out for the Wei capital, but he missed the Qi army which had already moved westward.

Sun Bin said to Tian Ji, “The troops of the ‘Three Jins’—Han, Zhao, and Wei—are always bold and fierce, and regard the men of Qi with contempt, Qi being known for its cowardice. One good at warfare will make an advantage out of this situation and turn it to account. According to *The Art of Warfare*,¹⁸ an army that force-marches a hundred *li* (approximately thirty-five miles) to gain advantage will lose all of its commanders; one that force-marches fifty *li* to gain advantage will reach the target with only half its original strength. When our troops first enter Wei territory, we should build one hundred thousand cooking fires; on the second night, only fifty thousand; and on the third night, just thirty thousand.”

Pang Juan marched in pursuit for three days, and was delighted, saying, “I knew all along that the Qi forces were cowards. They have been in our territory for three days, and more than half of their officers and troops have deserted!”

He then left his infantry behind and went in pursuit of the Qi army with his lightly armed shock troops marching double time. Sun Bin reckoned that, given Pang Juan’s pace, he should reach Maling after dark. The roadway at Maling was narrow and on either side were many natural blinds and defiles where troops could lie in ambush. He felled a large tree, and wrote on it in white, “Pang Juan died beneath this tree.” He then ordered ten thousand of his expert crossbowmen to take up positions in ambush on both sides of the road, and placing them on alert, he said, “After dark when you see a torch lit, let your bolts fly.”

Pang Juan did indeed arrive at the fallen tree at night, and seeing the writing in white, summoned a squad to light a torch to illuminate it. Before he had finished reading it, the full contingent of Qi’s crossbowmen discharged their crossbows, throwing the Wei army into great confusion and scattering them in retreat.

Pang Juan, aware himself that he was out of options and that his army would go down to defeat, cut his own throat, saying, “I may as well help the wretch make a name!” Qi, pressing its advantage fully, crushed the Wei forces and returned to Qi with the Crown Prince Shen of Wei as captive. And because of this, Sun Bin’s name became illustrious, and *The Art of Warfare* was known in the world.¹⁹

The account of the battle at Guiling related here is reinforced by other references in the *Records of the Historian*,²⁰ and the description of the battle at Maling is further retold in the *Records of the Historian*²¹ and in the *Intrigues of the Warring States*.²² Additionally, when King Hui of Liang (r. 370–319 BCE) recounts life's travails in the first book of the *Mencius*, he reports that:

When it came to my own time we suffered defeat at the hands of Qi in the east and my eldest son died.²³

In spite of this considerable amount of historical documentation, the recent unearthing of the *Sun Bin: The Art of Warfare*, with its detailed description of the Guiling campaign in its first chapter entitled “Capturing Pang Juan,” has raised certain questions about the historical accuracy of the other accounts of the Guiling and Maling campaigns, especially with respect to the identity and the ultimate fate of the Wei commanders in these two engagements.

The attention to specific detail in the *Sun Bin: The Art of Warfare*, together with its relatively earlier chronological position, give it an appearance of reliability. Indeed, if we collate the various references to the Guiling and Maling campaigns found in the *Records of the Historian*, the *Intrigues of the Warring States*, and the *Sun Bin*, and if we then exercise our judgment as to their relative accuracy, the most likely sequence of events would put Tian Ji and Sun Bin at the head of the Qi forces in both campaigns. On the Wei side, it seems that Pang Juan led the Wei army in the Guiling campaign, but was captured by Qi after his army was routed. Some thirteen years later, the inexperienced and unfortunate Crown Prince Shen of Wei led the Wei army to defeat, and was himself captured by Tian Ji and Sun Bin at Maling. The *Intrigues of the Warring States* makes much of the youthful incompetence of Prince Shen, a portrayal of him that seems inappropriate if in fact he was accompanied by the capable Pang Juan,²⁴ as several other passages in the *Records of the Historian* and the *Intrigues of the Warring States* recount.²⁵ Scholars who want to follow those passages and place Pang Juan and Crown Prince Shen at the same battle find support for their position in chapter 4 of the *Sun Bin*. Here, Sun Bin states, “. . . this was the tactic which I

employed in defeating Pang Juan and capturing Crown Prince Shen.” However, since Sun Bin was involved in both the Guiling and Maling battles, it is possible that he is referring to a tactic which he used in both campaigns—marching on the enemy’s capital, thereby forcing his opponent to disengage from an attack on an allied state and protect his own territory. In fact, the tactic applied first at the battle of Guiling, and then again at Maling, has become a classic move in Chinese literature and military strategy called “*wei Wei jiu Zhao*” 圍魏救趙—literally, laying siege to Wei to save Zhao.

The *Intrigues of the Warring States* provides further details of significant events in the lives of Sun Bin and Tian Ji, but attempting to date these events is complicated by the conflicting chronologies of the *Records of the Historian* and *Intrigues of the Warring States*.²⁶ In any case, the intimacy of the relationship between Sun Bin and Tian Ji was such that Sun Bin recommended that his friend commit treason in order to escape from court intrigues. Having fallen victim himself to a mutilation punishment through the jealousies of a court rival, Sun Bin was undoubtedly alert to the dire consequences of lowering one’s guard:

As commander of the Qi forces, Tian Ji detained Shen, the Crown Prince of Wei, and captured Pang Juan. Sun Bin asked Tian Ji, “Is the Commander capable of a coup d’etat?” Tian Ji replied, “What should I do?” Sun Bin counseled him, “Enter Qi without disbanding your army. Send all of your tired and infirm in first, and station your weakest men at Zhu. Zhu is on a major wagon thoroughfare where, in passing, the carts rub boxes and strike each other’s axles. If you send all of your tired and infirm in first and station your weakest troops at Zhu, one of your men can hold off ten of theirs, ten can hold off a hundred, and a hundred can hold off a thousand. Then with Tai mountain at your back, the Ji river on your left and the Tiantang prefecture on the right, move your heavy supply wagons into Gaoyuan and dispatch your light chariots and shock cavalry to attack Yongmen, the west gate of the capital. If you do this, the ruler of Qi can be put right and the Marquis of Cheng, Zou Ji, can be put to flight. If you don’t do it, you won’t gain entrance to Qi.”

Tian Ji did not heed his counsel, and indeed, did not enter Qi.

Tian Ji fled Qi and went to Chu. Zou Ji replaced Tian Ji as Chief Minister. Qi was afraid that Tian Ji might want to use the power of Chu to reinstate himself in Qi. Du He, a minister of Chu, said to Zou Ji, "I would like to help you get him to stay in Chu." He then spoke to the King of Chu, "Zou Chi's reason for not being friendly to Chu is that he is afraid Tian Ji will use the power of Chu to reinstate himself in Qi. The best thing for Your Majesty to do is to enfeoff Tian Ji in Jiangnan to show that Tian Ji will not be going back to Chi. Zou Ji will certainly be more inclined to get Qi to serve Chu's interests, and Tian Ji, a man without a country, will certainly be grateful to Your Majesty for being given a fief. And, if Tian Ji ever does return to Qi, he will certainly get Qi to serve Chu's interests. This is the way to use both of them." Chu consequently enfeoffed Tian Ji in Jiangnan.²⁷

Where the *Intrigues of the Warring States* is somewhat ambiguous about the dates of Tian Ji's banishment to Chu, the account in the *Records of the Historian* is rather easier to reconstruct. According to the *Records of the Historian*, it would seem that Tian Ji and his chief military adviser, Sun Bin, served King Wei of Qi (r. 378–343 BCE) in the Guling campaign against Wei in 354 BCE. It records that between this campaign and the assault on Wei in 341 BCE, Tian Ji, presumably accompanied by Sun Bin, was driven into exile in Chu by the machinations of Zou Ji, Marquis of Cheng, at the Qi court.²⁸ The plausibility that both Tian Ji and Sun Bin fled to Chu is also reinforced by the fact that King Wei of Qi late in his reign sent out armies against Qin and again against Zhao, both campaigns resulting ultimately in opportunities and decisive victories for the state of Wei. In both cases, the Qi armies were led into battle by commanders far less celebrated and experienced than Tian Ji and Sun Bin.

After King Wei of Qi died in 343 BCE and King Xuan (r. 343–324 BCE) ascended the throne, King Xuan, aware of the political origins of Tian Ji's banishment, recalled Tian Ji from Chu and reinstated him as military commander. It is likely that Sun Bin returned to Qi at the same time, since in the second year of King Xuan's reign, he dispatched both Tian Ji and Sun Bin against Wei in the Maling campaign. An account of Tian Chi's reinstatement

in Qi is contained in the following passage from the *Records of the Historian*:

The Marquis of Cheng, Zou Ji, and Tian Ji competed for favor in the court, and the Marquis of Cheng slandered Tian Ji. Tian Ji was afraid, and attacked one of Qi's border towns by surprise, but unable to gain a victory, he fled. It so happened that King Wei died and King Xuan came to the throne. He knew the Marquis of Cheng had slandered Tian Ji, and so he recalled Tian Ji, and made him a general. In the second year of King Xuan, Tian Ji, together with Sun Bin and Tian Ying, invaded Wei and defeated it at Maling. They took the Crown Prince of Wei, Shen, captive, and killed the Wei commander, Pang Juan.²⁹

The friendship between Sun Bin and Tian Ji was such that it can be fairly assumed Sun Bin was the companion and adviser of Tian Ji throughout these years, even when he is not mentioned explicitly in the historical literature. After the battle of Maling in 341, we lose sight of both Sun Bin and Tian Ji, and nothing is known for certain as to their ultimate ends.

In the state of Qi, the three families Chen, Tian (as in Tian Ji), and Sun (as in Sun Wu and Sun Bin) can demonstrably be shown to belong to the same ancestry. The original name of the lineage was Chen, the ruling house of the state of Chen. Chen was a small, weak state that suffered repeated humiliations until it was finally extinguished and annexed by Chu in 477 BCE. The Chen's fled to Qi, where another branch of their lineage had the name Tian (which would have had virtually the same pronunciation in the archaic language). Further, members of this Tian house had been given the surname "Sun" and enfeoffed in Qi by Duke Jing (r. 547–489 BCE) sometime after 523 BCE. Duke Jing ennobled his minister, remembered historically both as Tian Shu and Chen Shu, for distinction in attacking the kingdom of Ju. This same Tian house grew increasingly strong in Qi, officially replacing the Lu clan as rulers in 386 BCE, and then continuing this lineage until the victory of Qin in 221 BCE.³⁰

On the strength of this information, we can conclude that the "Sun" clan had distinguished itself in military affairs a decade or so before Sun Bin's illustrious ancestor, Sun Wu of *Sunzi: The Art*

of Warfare, came on the scene. We know also that Sun Bin came from a landed noble family, and further, that the relationship between Sun Bin and Tian Ji was based on blood as well as friendship.

The battle of Maling (ca. 341) in which Sun Bin captured the Crown Prince Shen of Wei took place in a region some sixty *li* (about twenty miles) north of where Sun Bin was born. Sun Bin's familiarity with that terrain and with the special features of the area would no doubt have been a major contributing factor in the ambush and rout of the Wei army.

As to the how and the when of Sun Bin's final disposition, the Han bibliographer, Liu Xiang (77–6 BCE), in his remarks on the "Debating Military Affairs" treatise in the *Xunzi*, identifies Xunzi's interlocutor, the "Lord of Lin Wu," as Sun Bin. However, a quick calculation would have Sun Bin over a hundred years old at the time of this supposed debate with Xunzi,³¹ making this an unlikely account.

Although we do not have any more specific details about Sun Bin as an historical figure, we do know that by the time of the compilation of the *Records of the Historian* in ca. 90 BCE, his military exploits had been such that his ". . . name became illustrious" and "his *Art of Warfare* was known in the world."³² His name frequently appears in lists of exemplary military leaders of the pre-Qin period,³³ and in the *Intrigues of the Warring States*, his troops are described as "soldiers who will eat human flesh and use the bones for firewood without ever harboring a mutinous thought."³⁴ In contrast with the ineffective Mencius, Sun Bin and his patron, Tian Ji, are celebrated for the efficacy of the military tactics that brought them fame and drew rival states in submission to the Qi court.³⁵ The *Records of the Historian* also includes Sun Bin on a list of pre-Qin figures, including no less distinguished persons than Confucius, Qu Yuan, Zuo Qiu, and Lü Buwei, who were all driven to achieve great things in the face of adversity: "Sun Bin, after he had his legs removed to the knee, discoursed on the art of warfare."³⁶ The ability to accomplish great deeds despite being the victim of a mutilating punishment was undoubtedly important to the compiler of the *Records of the Historian*, Sima Qian, who had himself suffered the humiliation of castra-

tion after coming down on the wrong side in a recommendation he made at court. The *Lüshi chunqiu*, compiled ca. 238 BCE, lists Sun Bin among the ten most prominent scholars of the Eastern Zhou era, including Confucius, Laozi, Mozi, Liezi and Yang Zhu. Important here is that at this historical juncture there was a written record in circulation associated with each of these figures. Although each achieved considerable distinction in his own right, they are characterized collectively in the *Lüshi chunqiu*—a text which typically took consensus as a high value—as sources of disorder because of the diversity and the fundamental incompatibility of their opinions.³⁷ Whatever the prominence of Sun Bin in the Western Han, it was not sufficient to keep his treatise *The Art of Warfare* alive beyond the fall of the Han in 220 CE. And it is only now, almost two millennia later, that we begin a commentarial tradition on what remains of his military treatise.

In the English language, Ralph D. Sawyer (1995) has made an important beginning with his detailed historical study of Sun Bin, providing us with a rehearsal of the persons and events of Sun Bin's world. Joseph Needham and Robin Yates (1994) have further brought this period to life with their analysis of the material cultures and the practical conditions of warfare. In our own reflections on the *Sun Bin*, we offer an argument for its philosophical importance in the history of ideas.

THE RECONSTRUCTED *SUN BIN: THE ART OF WARFARE*

Following the recovery of the *Sun Bin: The Art of Warfare* in April 1972, the Committee on the Reconstruction of the Yinqueshan Han Tomb Bamboo Strips began the painstaking work of identifying the several sources of the 4,942 strips and the process of attempting to reconstruct the original texts. The Committee published the initial results of its research in the February 1974 issue of *Cultural Relics* (Wenwu). The first estimates gave the *Sun Bin* a total of 232 strips, but a revised report in February 1975³⁸ increased this estimate to 440 strips with over 11,000 legible characters. As research continued, another revised version of the text was issued in July 1975,³⁹ putting the number of strips at

364, 187 complete, 109 partial, and 68 fragments, totaling some 8700 characters. For the sake of comparison, this is a third again as long as the received thirteen-chapter *Sunzi*.

The arbitrary element in the process of textual reconstruction, as well as the incomplete and tentative state of the present text, must be underscored. The “Record of Literary Works” (*Yiwen zhi*) of the *History of the Han Dynasty* and the Gao You commentary on the *Lüshi chunch’iu*⁴⁰—the last two historical sources in which the *Sun Bin* is mentioned before its disappearance—both describe the text as being comprised of eighty-nine *pian*—literally, “bundles of strips” (translated as “chapters”).

In the 1975 reconstruction, the Yinqueshan Committee divided the remnant text into two parts of fifteen chapters each. Part I contains discussion that has been attributed directly to Sun Bin himself, with the “Master Sun said . . . 孫子曰 ” formula occurring with considerable frequency. Part II is more discursive, and is without direct attribution. In Part I, twelve chapters retain their original titles, while three other titles have been restored by the collators, the restored titles being indicated by [square brackets] in the translation. In Part II, nine chapters bear their original titles and six have been restored.

The opening four chapters of Part I begin with an account of Sun Bin capturing Pang Juan at Guiling, and continue with a dialogue between Sun Bin and either King Wei of Qi or his commander, Tian Ji. The committee came to the conclusion that since the other thirteen chapters in this section contain the phrase “Master Sun said” and yet differ markedly in content and style from the remnant portions of *Sunzi: The Art of Warfare* unearthed in the same cache, they are probably from the long-lost *Sun Bin*.

Although the expression “Master Sun” does not occur explicitly in the fifteen chapters assigned to Part II, in 1975 the committee assigned them to the *Sun Bin* on the basis of content, style, and literary structure.

Yet, even at this 1975 stage of the reconstruction, many scholars expressed doubts that the fifteen chapters of Part II were originally sections of the *Sun Bin*. Zhang Zhenze, for example, prepared commentary on the entire thirty chapters, but took the

position that Part II lacks the internal evidence of authorship found in Part I, and as such, should not be attributed to the *Sun Bin*, but should be given a different title, and be included as a supplemental section.

The detailed reconstruction work has continued, and our translation is based upon the most recent revision of the text published by the Yinqueshan Committee in 1985, informed by appropriate alterations recommended by contemporary textual scholars, particularly Zhang Zhenze (1984) and Liu Xinjian (1989).

The most recent version of *Sun Bin*, then, includes only 16 chapters: the 15 chapters of the original Part I, plus one new chapter entitled “Five Kinds of Training Methods” (*wu jiaofa*) an addition made on the grounds that it begins with the “[Sun]zi said . . .” formula. Among these chapters, the original order of the 1975 reconstruction is retained, except that the new chapter is inserted as number 15 after “Coordinating Military Assignments” (*guan yi*) and before the final chapter, “[Strengthening the Military]” (*qiang bing*).

The sixteen chapters of Part I of the *Sun Bin* provide us with internal evidence that suggests a third party, quite possibly belonging to the “Sun” lineage, wrote down and edited some of the reflections on the military exploits and strategies which were associated with the historical Sun Bin. If the narrative were autobiographical, we would not, for example, expect “Master Sun” to refer to himself honorifically as “Master,” nor would we expect him to describe his own exploits with such unqualified admiration.

The first four chapters recount a dialogue between Master Sun and King Wei of Qi, and considering the parallel accounts in extant historical sources, are surely authentic. Chapter 16, [Strengthening the Military], records this same dialogue, but because it may not be the original text of the *Sun Bin*, it is tentatively placed at the end of Part I. Each chapter from 5 to 15 opens with the formula, “Master Sun said . . .” (We have translated this consistently as “Master Sun Bin said . . .” in order to distinguish Sun Bin from his renowned predecessor, Sun Wu). It is possible

that these chapters are from the *Sun Bin*, and is also possible that they belong instead to lost texts from Sun Wu's *Sunzi*. However, in terms of literary style and appearance, they differ markedly from the thirteen-chapter "core" text of Sun Wu's *Sunzi*, and they are also very different from the dialogical style characteristic of the newly recovered supplemental text of the *Sunzi*.⁴¹

There is an obvious difference between the literary style of the *Sunzi* and such *Sun Bin* chapters as chapter 9 "Preparing the Strategic Advantage (*shi*)" and chapter 10 "[The Real Nature of the Military]," which are woven around metaphors of military culture, or chapter 14 "Coordinating Military Assignments" which uses a purely parallel structure. It is likely that the "Master Sun" referred to in these chapters is Sun Bin, and hence the chapters can be included here, at least tentatively, as portions of the text of the *Sun Bin*. Even so, we cannot discount entirely the possibility they might be chapters of Sun Wu's *Sunzi*.

The *History of the Han Dynasty* tells us that by the middle Han, Sun Wu's *Sunzi* had eighty-two chapters. In addition to the thirteen-chapter core text, only five of the remaining sixty-nine chapters have been recovered from the Han tomb. The same source lists the *Sun Bin* as having eighty-nine chapters, but to date we have only fragmentary portions of sixteen of them.

Much of the other material concerning military affairs that we have included in Part II has been divided up into likely chapters and is certainly fragmentary remains of lost military text that has not as yet been positively identified. Some of these chapters might be from texts about which we know nothing, while some of them are conceivably materials that originally belonged to the *Sunzi* and the *Sun Bin*, although this opinion continues to lose ground. In this latter category, those chapters in which the physical appearance of the characters and the literary style most approximate that of the materials which have been positively assigned to the *Sunzi* and the *Sun Bin*, are "Ten Military Formations," "Ten Questions," "Overwhelming an Armed Infantry," "The Positions of Invader and Defender," and "The Expert Commander." At the very least, Part II is a reconstruction of essays on military topics that are of great value in understanding military thought in Sun

Bin's time. The Yinqueshan Committee has excluded them from the *Sunzi* and the *Sun Bin*, and has tentatively assigned them to Volume II, "Collected Fragments of Lost Texts," of the projected three-volume set.

In Part II of the 1975 popular edition of the *Sun Bin*, the members of the Yinqueshan Committee included those chapters which at that time they thought might belong to *Sun Bin*. The same Committee has revised this earlier opinion, concluding that it has discovered irrefutable evidence about several chapters among them that demonstrate that they do *not* belong to the *Sun Bin*, although the Committee has yet to supply the materials to substantiate its claim. This is the case, apparently, for [Common Military Mistakes] and [Fatal Mistakes of the Commander].

In order to provide readers with the broadest possible textual corpus, we have translated all of the chapters that have at one time or another been assigned to the *Sun Bin*, but have followed the Yinqueshan Committee in establishing a core sixteen-chapter text as Part I, and have then relegated the remaining chapters to Part II as an appended section of supplemental materials. Finally, we have collected additional textual material from commentaries, encyclopedias, and other sources, which has or can be attributed to the *Sun Bin*. Our translation of these materials comprises Part III.

ANALYSIS OF *SUN BIN: THE ART OF WARFARE*

An Overview

Since the recovery of the *Sun Bin: The Art of Warfare* in 1972, it has attracted considerable attention. As suggested above, the text has proven to be a significant find for the historian because it raises important questions about the historical accuracy of rival accounts of the Guiling and Maling campaigns. For the military tactician, it provides descriptions of military equipment, formations, and techniques that add to our understanding of ancient warfare. For the student of ancient Chinese philosophy, several chapters contain references to important philosophical ideas that gave structure to Chinese thought as it emerged in the formative period of pre-Qin China in the third and fourth centuries BCE

What then is the overall content of this *Sun Bin* text, and how does it compare with its precursor, Sun Wu's *Sunzi*? First of all, the text is not always linear and sequential in its structure, a condition which should alert us to the possibility of an alternative notion of what actually constitutes textual and authorial "coherence."⁴² In a tradition in which "philosophy" and "rhetoric" have retained a complementary *yin-yang* relationship, standards of evidence and modes of argument will be markedly different when they are compared with our own rationalistic tradition. This fundamental interpretive problem is further exacerbated by the fragmentary condition of the texts that have been recovered. Having made this point, however, we are still able to divide up *Sun Bin* thematically.

The first chapter, recounting the battle at Guiling in ca. 354 BCE, is both historical and dialogical. It is of a piece with chapter 2, which is also ostensibly historical. In this chapter, Sun Bin lectures King Wei of Qi on the importance and ineluctable nature of war, rehearsing as evidence the experiences of the ancient sage-rulers. Chapters 3, 4, and 16 also belong to this section, with King Wei of Qi and his commander, Tian Ji, putting queries to Sun Bin on a range of specific military situations in a question-and-answer format. Finally, chapter 18, a discussion between an unidentified interlocutor and a respondent, shares the same dialogical structure of chapters 3, 4, and 16, and it is a fair assumption that Sun Bin is providing the answers.

The dialogical mode for military treatises is also found in the *Mozi* and the *Six Strategies (Liutao)*, as well as the opening chapter of the *Master Weiliao (Weiliaozi)* which attributes the initial inquiry leading into the text to King Hui of Liang (Wei). The *Yin-yang* military theorists also made use of this format.⁴³

Chapters 6, 8, and part of 14 offer the standard discussion of the importance of taking into consideration factors such as climatic conditions and terrain.

A third grouping would consist of chapters 5, 11, 15, 29, and the first part of 14, all of which are devoted to the subject of the appropriate amount of attention being given to both human and material resources. The main themes of these chapters are the

importance of selecting, training, and promoting able personnel, and being adequately provisioned—major factors in determining victory and defeat.

Another set of chapters would be 7, 17, 28, and the latter part of 14, those dedicated to the deployment of troops in basic military formations and, with chapter 28, to strategies for laying siege to walled fortifications.

Chapters 12 and 13 are also concerned more broadly with maintaining the morale of the soldier, and more specifically with the ultimate test of morale: death on the battlefield.

The skills and the character (or lack thereof) of the military commander are the main themes of chapters 22, 24, 25, 26, and 27, where the strengths and weaknesses of the leader anticipate the philosophically most interesting portions of the remnant text.

Chapters 20, 22, 23, 30, and 31 frame the experience of warfare in the vocabulary of the familiar *yin-yang* continuum and the correlative pairs that define it: invader and defender, respect and cruelty, abundance and scarcity, politics and the military, concentrated and sparse, waxing and waning, and so on.

Finally, there are chapters 9 and 10 which explore metaphorically the origins and the suggestive possibilities of the key military terms: strategic advantage (*shi* 勢), military display/deployment (*chen/zhen* 陳/陳), adaptability (*bian* 變), and weighing with the lever scales/discretion (*quan* 權).

Sunzi and Sun Bin: The Overlap

Before we embark upon any kind of a comparison between the thoughts of Sun Bin and his ancestor, Sun Wu, or the *Sun Bin* and its ancestor, *Sunzi*, we must underscore the entirely tentative nature of this exercise. Given that, by the mid-Han dynasty, *Sunzi* had accumulated eighty-two chapters and *Sun Bin* eighty-nine, in both cases we are dealing with fluid, evolving, and often fragmentary texts. Again, the five recently recovered chapters of the *Sunzi*, and the encyclopedic remnants that they authenticate, constitute persuasive evidence that at least some of the “outer” chapters of *Sunzi* recount historical situations, and are dialogical in format.

This means that both Sun Wu's *Sunzi* and the *Sun Bin* were originally composed of both theoretical and narrative materials, thus closing the gap between the original structure of the *Sunzi* and its less well-preserved descendent.

Sunzi and *Sun Bin*: Textual Borrowings

In terms of style and content, then, the *Sun Bin* and the *Sunzi* share affinities to a degree that should not be surprising in texts of the same lineage, especially given their shared subject matter and the genealogical relationship of their purported authors. This overlap is most obvious in passages which are too similar to be accidental, suggesting that either *Sun Bin* paraphrased *Sunzi*, or both texts borrowed material from a third source. Consider the following few examples of a recurrent phenomenon:

Sunzi 1: If the enemy seeks some advantage, entice him with it. If he is in disorder, attack him and take him. If he is formidable, prepare against him. If he is strong, evade him. If he is incensed, provoke him. If he is humble, encourage his arrogance. If he is rested, wear him down. If he is internally harmonious, sow divisiveness in his ranks. Attack where he is not prepared; go by way of places where it would never occur to him you would go.

Sun Bin 3: King Wei asked, "Is there a way to attack an enemy whose strength is ten times ours?"

Master Sun Bin replied, "There is. Attack him where he is not prepared, and go by way of places where it would never occur to him you would go." . . .

Tian Ji then asked, "Are there any measures which can be taken when we have no choice but to engage an enemy that is both numerous and spirited?"

Master Sun Bin replied, "Indeed there is. Strengthen your fortifications and heighten morale in the ranks, enforce discipline strictly and encourage solidarity, make the enemy arrogant by evading his assaults, wear him down by luring him out, attack him where he is not prepared, go by way of places where it would never occur to him you would go, and make certain it is a long-drawn-out engagement."

Sunzi 6: Thus an army does not have invariable strategic advantages (*shi*) or any invariable position (*xing*).

Sun Bin 2: In the business of war, there is no invariable strategic advantage (*shi*) which can be relied upon at all times.

Sunzi 6: Thus being able to wear down a well-rested enemy, to starve one that is well-provisioned, and to move one that is settled, lies in going by way of places the enemy must hasten in defense.

Sun Bin 21: Where the enemy has the force of numbers, this commander can reduce him to a few; where the enemy is fully provisioned and supplied, he can reduce him to starvation; where the enemy has dug himself in securely and does not venture abroad, he can wear him down . . .

Sunzi 5: That the velocity of cascading water can send boulders bobbing about is due to its strategic advantage (*shi*). . . . He who exploits the strategic advantage (*shi*) sends his men into battle like rolling logs and boulders. It is in the nature of logs and boulders that on flat ground they remain stationary, while on steep ground they roll . . .

Sun Bin 31: Thus if flowing water has its own head, it can send boulders bobbing about and can stave in boats; if the rank and file are employed according to their own natural tendencies, orders will be carried out as naturally as the flowing of water.

Sunzi and *Sun Bin*: Thematic Continuities

Beyond passages of this kind which give evidence of direct textual borrowing, the *Sunzi* and the *Sun Bin* share fundamental thematic continuities. Without in any way attempting to be exhaustive, we can observe that the two texts hold to the following values and commitments, although in some cases, they differ importantly in their degrees of emphasis.

First, both texts have a common discourse in which “strategic advantage” (*shi*) is of signal importance as the central term in a cluster of expressions used to articulate the dynamics of warfare in *Sunzi* 1, 5, 6, 10 and *Sun Bin* 3, 9, 20, 31. Other shared technical terms which occur frequently are:

“the Way” (*dao*) in *Sunzi* esp. 1, 4, 10, 11, 13 and *Sun Bin* 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 18, 20, 23, 27, 31

“adaptability” (*bian*) in *Sunzi* esp. 5, 7, 8, 12 and *Sun Bin* 9, 17, 30

“weighing with the lever scales (= discretion)” (*quan*) in *Sunzi* esp. 1, 3, 7, 11 and *Sun Bin* 3, 9, 11, 14.

In addition to a shared technical vocabulary in the two texts, *Sun Bin* reiterates many of the basic precepts that ground the *Sunzi*'s attitude toward the military and its role in warfare. Again, some examples are:

Sunzi 1: War is a vital matter of state. It is the field on which life or death is determined and the road that leads to either survival or ruin, and must be examined with the greatest care.

Sun Bin 2: Military victory can restore states that have perished and revive lines that have become extinct, but failure to gain victory can result in one's territory being pared away and the altars of one's state being put at risk. For this reason, military situations must be examined with the greatest care.

Sunzi Ames (1993):193: Using the military is to gain the advantage; it is not a matter of being fond of it.

Sun Bin 5: . . . a distaste for war is the kingly military instrument.

Sun Bin 6: You must go to war only when there is no other alternative.

Sunzi 2: The expert in using the military does not conscript soldiers more than once. . . .

Sun Bin 6: Thus go to war at the appropriate time, and have no need to call up troops a second time.

Sunzi 7: . . . if an army is without its equipment and stores, it will perish; if it is without its provisions, it will perish; if it is without material support, it will perish.

Sun Bin 2: There is no army in this world which can be secure in its defenses and strong in battle if it is poorly provisioned. . . .

Sunzi 5: Disorder is born from order; cowardice from courage; weakness from strength. The line between disorder and order lies

in logistics (*shu*); between cowardice and courage, in strategic advantage (*shi*); and between weakness and strength, in strategic positioning (*xing*).

Sun Bin 30: It is because the enemy force is concentrated that he can be made sparse; it is because he has a full force that he can be made hollow; it is because he mounts a sudden direct advance that he can be reduced to a regular advance; it is because he is speedy [that he can be made slow; it is because he is numerous that he can be made few; it is because he is fresh that he can be made weary] . . .

Sunzi 5: For gaining strategic advantage (*shi*) in battle, there are no more than “surprise” and “straightforward” operations, yet in combination, they produce inexhaustible possibilities.

Sun Bin 31: That the combination of “surprise” and “straightforward” operations produce inexhaustible possibilities is because troops can be divided up.

Sunzi 2: In joining battle, seek the quick victory. . . . Thus in war, I have heard tell of a foolish haste, but I have yet to see a case of cleverly dragging on the hostilities.

Sun Bin 5: . . . its (the military’s) material means lies in its returning home upon a speedy resolution to the conflict. . .

Sunzi 9: In war it is not numbers that give the advantage.

Sun Bin 3: The perspicacious ruler and the commander who understands the way (*dao*) . . . do not count on the main infantry forces alone for success.

Sun Bin 20: Do numbers mean certain victory? If so, we can decide the outcome of battle simply by totting up counting rods. . . . force of numbers does not guarantee victory, and being numerically few [does not necessarily mean defeat].

Sunzi 8: There are five traits that are dangerous in a commander: . . .

Sun Bin 26: The fatal weaknesses of the commander are as follows: . . .

Sunzi 10: These six situations are not natural catastrophes but the fault of the commander.

Sun Bin 27: The fatal mistakes of the commander are: . . .

Sunzi 10: Kinds of terrain include the accessible, that which entangles, that which leads to a stand-off, the narrow pass, the precipitous defile, and the distant.

Sun Bin 8: As to the relative merits of five kinds of terrain: . . . There are five kinds of terrain which lead to defeat . . . There are five kinds of terrain which are absolutely fatal . . .

Sunzi 4: For this reason, the victorious army only enters battle after having first won the victory, while the defeated army seeks victory only after having first entered the fray.

Sun Bin 4: . . . Having foreknowledge of victory and defeat [before going into battle] is what is called knowing the way (*dao*).

Sun Bin 12: Engage the enemy only when certain of victory . . .

Sunzi 11: If you can get ahead of him to seize something he cannot afford to lose, he will do your bidding.

Sun Bin 18: Attack those positions that he cannot abandon, taking him away from his strongholds.

Sunzi 6: The ultimate skill in taking up a strategic position (*xing*) is to have no form (*wu xing*).

Sun Bin 31: To dominate that which has form (*xing*) by means of that which has no form is a surprise operation.

Sunzi 6: Thus, of the five phases (*wu xing*), none is the constant victor; of the four seasons, none occupies a constant position; the days are both long and short; the moon waxes and wanes.

Sun Bin 31: In the pattern of the heavens and the earth: when something has reached its extreme, it then returns; when something has waxed full, it then collapses.⁴³ This is exemplified by [the sun and the moon].⁴⁴ Flourishing and fading succeed each other. This is exemplified in the succession of the four seasons. Some prevail, others are prevailed over. This is exemplified in the succession of the five phases (*wu xing*).

Sunzi 6: Thus if one can anticipate the place and the day of battle, he can march a thousand *li* to join the battle. But if one cannot anticipate either the place or the day of battle, his left flank cannot even rescue his right, or his right his left . . .

Sun Bin 8: On the battlefield, the day is the essential consideration.

Sunzi 6: Thus the expert in battle moves the enemy and is not moved by him.

Sun Bin 21: The expert commander is able to make the enemy troops roll up their armor and advance to distant quarters, to force march at double-time, to get no rest in spite of debilitating fatigue, and to get no food in spite of hunger and thirst. And because the enemy is thus pressured, he is bound to be defeated.

Sunzi 3: The side on which the commander is able and the ruler does not interfere will take the victory.

Sun Bin 5: . . . for the ruler to keep the commanders under his control will lead to defeat . . .

Sunzi 13: Thus the reason the farsighted ruler and his superior commander conquer the enemy at every move, and achieve successes far beyond the reach of the common crowd, is foreknowledge.

Sun Bin 20: Thus, the intelligent ruler and the commander who has mastered the way (*dao*) of war are sure to have fore[knowledge] and can have successes even before the battle begins . . .

Sunzi 3: Therefore, the best military policy is to attack strategies; the next to attack alliances; the next to attack soldiers; and the worst to assault walled cities.

Sun Bin (34:ix) The expert in using the military has three basic strategies which he applies: the best strategy is to attack the enemy's reliance upon acuteness of mind; the second is to attack the enemy's claim that he is waging a just war; and the last is to attack the enemy's battle position (*shi*).

Sun Bin 33: In the Warring States period, Sun Bin, the commander of the kingdom of Qi's army, addressed the King of Qi, saying, "Now, of the ways of assaulting another kingdom, aiming at its heart-and-mind is the best. Concentrate every effort on first subduing its heart-and-mind. Now, that which Qin relies upon as its heart-and-mind is the power of Yan and Zhao. In swaying the rulers of Yan and Zhao, do not resort to empty words and banal language. Rather, we must turn their minds by means of actual advantages. This is what is called attacking its heart-and-mind.